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400 10/4/1852 *From:* Ward B Howard

*To:* Nephew [O O Howard]

OOH-0378

Peekskill

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Peekskill 4 Oct. 1852

My Dear Nephew

Myself, Elizabeth & Mrs Henry intend visiting our friends at NewBurgh on Wednesday next by the ½ past 9 ock train from here.

It is by the particular request of the Miss Phillips' and Mrs Henry & Elizabeth that I ask you to join us either at Garrison or Cold Spring. We will return at an Early hour in the Evening.

Will not Capt Brewerton allow you a furlow to meet our Cousins from Chicago whom you have never seen. I sincerely hope he will grant you this favor on the present occasion.

All join in love to you.

Your affectionate Uncle  
Ward B Howard

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401 10/8/1852 *From:* O. O. Howard

*To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0379

West Point

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Friday - West Point Oct 8th 52

My dear Mother,

It is very late - after taps. I cannot write you but a few lines. Your letter I got to day. The news it contained makes me feel very badly. I want to see Charlie, to be with him, to tend him. if he should be in any danger, do not as you value my happiness neglect to write. Another blow - Lizzie's letter which I got at the same time I did yours, tells me that her mother is very sick, very low, cannot be moved only to have her bed made - is in great pain - breathes hard &c. It seems dreadful to me to be bound here. I should have applied for a leave immediately - but I feared I would not get it, since you wrote so encouragingly about Charlie towards the close of your letter. If Lizzie should write to you or to father that her mother is much worse than she is now, I wish father, if Charlie is very sick to write me this simply requesting me to come home - or that he wishes me to come home immediately since certain unforeseen circumstances demand my presence.

Any way - only that the request may procure me a leave for a week or ten days. For if Mrs Waite should not live it is absolutely necessary that I should be there. I hope this will not take place. May God be with & protect you all. I will write more tomorrow. You will get this Tuesday, whereas you will not get the one I write tomorrow till a week from tomorrow. Give my love to Charlie. I do love him indeed & would give anything to be with him. I know he will be taken care of. I fear Lizzie will make herself sick.

Remember me to all

From your very affectionate son  
O. O. Howard

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402 10/9/1852 *From:* Rowland B Howard *To:* Brother [O O Howard]

OOH-0380

South Leeds

*Source:* Bowdoin

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South Leeds Oct 9th 52

Dear Brother

Charles continues more comfortable although we have to sit up with him every night as yet. I am in hopes that his Fever is gradually wearing off, but he is quite low. When he recvd your letter directed to Kents Hill he was so sick that he did not understand much of it, but we shall reread it to him now that he is a little better.

Florus Jennings is yet alive, but I believe the Dr thinks that he cannot recover.

I squeezed out time to attend one Club on Thursday evening. It has not increased in Members since you was here but has become very much more active and efficient. We have prosecuted three Rum sellers in town and have Warrants for a number more. The general opinion seems to be that now that Temperance men have made such exertion to sustain the Law, now is the time to execute it, and from what I can hear I think that it is being executed with a spirit and vigor before unequaled. I went with the Officer the other day to search John <Rees> premises and we succeeded in bringing away a load of Gin which will probably be destroyed and the Old Gent subjected to a fine of twenty-dollars and costs. The latter item is not small I tell you. This was his sentence at his trial. In default of payment of the above the Maine Law takes him to Jail. You get your Advertiser regularly I suppose and hear all you wish to in regard to Maine elections and politics. It is the candid opinion of many Democrats as well as Whigs that the Whigs might carry Maine for <Leah> but at this time from Temperance and other causes there is a dearth of political feeling and excitement in both parties and therefore I think Maine will line up to its natural instincts which are of course "locofoca". They have a Scott & Graham Club in this town but it is rather a lifeless and spiritless concern. All are perfectly agreed and therefore none have particular interest and the State is in much the same political condition that Leeds is. I saw John & Hellen yesterday at Lewiston. They as well as myself were on a visit to the <Seven> Mile Mirror which you saw in Portland. I took Dellie & Roscoe with me. They were much delighted with the painting and music.

Aunt Lucretia's folks are well. All of her family have left her. Melvin & family & Rodelphus left about a week since and Lucia has gone to Mr Barrows school. Yesterday the first passenger train was run on the new Rail Road. The train was for an excursion party visiting Lewiston. They ran from Norris Ferry in Livermore to the Junction. The passengers say the Road rides first rate.

The Wide Wide World as you say is a charming work and I am going to buy it for Mother the first time I have a chance. Do you read any now? If so, what?

I have the tooth ache most all of the time and night it is as Arza says 'tedious'. Arza is comfortable but cannot help himself at all. He is hauled around the room on trucks. Dellie is engaged in a dried apple speculation and I can hear that Cog Wheel Machine rattling in the other room. He thinks he is making a great deal of Money. I hardly ever saw as many apples as there are this year. Loisa has gone to Easton to visit her friends. She took the trip all alone. Huldah & George are about moving to Livermore Falls to live. I believe George expects some employment aboard the Rail Road. I have not time to write more today and you must try to make this ill digested mass of stuff suffice. And believe me

Your aff bro  
Rowland

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403 10/9/1852 *From:* O.O. Howard

*To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0381

West Point N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Point N.Y. Oct 9th 1852

My dear Mother

You may be wondering why I wrote last evening and so late. My evening's lesson was very long and quite hard so that I could not finish it, till "taps". If I did not write you & Lizzie both last night I could not get a letter off the post till Monday morning, so that as usual you would not get your letter till Saturday nor Lizzie hers till Thursday (perhaps Wednesday). I was too anxious to admit of this delay.

A second perusal of your letters and little Closson's persuasive sympathy made me look upon Charlie's sickness differently from my first impressions. I had waited so long for a letter, had fancied you sick, father sick or Rowland sick, by turns till I was wholly unprepared to receive any bad news. The first words of your letter I read at dinner, where you said you would take your sheet & write by the side of my sick brother, quite unmanned me. I could not read any more & had hard work to eat any dinner, and then, when I came to my room and read Lizzie's letter written in such a strain as though she was trying to conceal from me a heart full of grief & foreboding, it made me long for my freedom to fly to her and to Charlie. I thought of getting a leave. I planned it all out at the drawing Academy, where you will always find me from two till four. But Little Closson who had noticed my sadness at dinner, came to my room after drawing, advised me to give up trying to get a leave till I had heard again, for should I try & fail I would feel worse about the matter than if I had not tried to get a leave. Then I did not know but you would blame me for doing it without your writing me to come.

Last Monday I received a letter from Uncle Ward stating that my cousin from Chicago, Mrs Henry would be at Newburgh with her little family and that he & the Misses Philips seriously wished me to come up asking it as an especial favor of the Superintendent that I might be permitted a leave of one day. I applied, not thinking that it would be granted, but Col Lee let me go. I spent a very pleasant day with my friends at Newburgh. Uncle took me all over Newburgh to show me the beauties of the village and the relics of the Revolution yet extant. His daughter has two children - one is a beautiful little boy of about four years I should think and the other a creeping baby boy. I got back in season this time and went on with my duties as if nothing had interrupted them. Never mind my first late or the ten demerit. Since I performed my punishment without a single murmur or bad feeling and am getting on admirably, you need not be unhappy about it.

You must recollect that there are more than ten thousand regulations of minor importance, which can be learned only from your own or somebody's else experience which has come to your knowledge by the daily publication of delinquencies. It seems that, now, there cannot possibly be one of the whole system of reports, which I do not know. Since my misfortunes do not bring a wrinkle to my forehead or a murmur into my heart, why should you be unhappy for me. My liability to forget little things has been gradually lessening. West Point life is made up of little things, every half hour in the day has its peculiar duties. The mind must be constantly on the watch. Should I not be constantly careful about little things I would run up my maximum of demerit in a month. If I had been a fourth Classman this year my excuses would have taken off every report I have had, but now they have to stick if I am so unfortunate as to get them.

Since I have set foot on West Point this time I have been trying to do right. I have reflected more, read my Bible more for I do not let a night pass without reading one or two chapters & pondering them in order to try to understand them and apply them. I have been cheerful all the time, taken things coolly & philosophically, and have not been impatient once. I do not say this to praise myself, but to show you that I have already begun to remedy those faults which are so annoying to one's self and to others.

You need not strive to interest me when you write. Do you not know that you cannot write any thing uninteresting to me? Did it ever seem that you could? When you can get time & are not too tired tell me all about Charlie, how he looks, what he says. Have Rowland read to him when he is able to bear it. I wish I could be there. I could do so much - and he would love to have me too.

You wish to know what I recite in daily. From 8 till ½ past 9 I recite in Mechanics every day excepting Sunday. My monthly standing in this branch of mixed mathematics will read Philosophy No such or such or one.

Last Sunday Jerry Lothrop and Warren came up to see me. They remained with me at my room half an hour. I was on guard & could not be with them longer. Warren was dressed in Citizen's clothes as when you saw him.

We ride every other day on the plain with Lieut Sacket for an instructor, and now we have to ride. We wear a heavy saber slung from a leathern belt around the waist and dress as I used to at home in my shell jacket. I generally get a fine horse - a different one every day. Sometimes I get a hard one that taxes all my equanimity to keep me down on the saddle, but I am pretty well at home on a horse's back.

Write me just as soon as you can, or let Rowland every week - if it is not three lines so that I may know how Charlie is.

(Saturday afternoon)

I received a second letter from Lizzie today. Her mother was much worse. She thinks she will not get well. does not say she wants me to come home, but I know she does, if I only could. I might perhaps if I would go & make a confidant of Mr Lee (Col Lee I mean) but I cannot.

Give my love to all. I am hoping for the best. I have no doubt all the ways of Providence are right and we must try to think so.

From your affectionate Son  
O.O. Howard

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404 10/17/1852 *From:* O.O. Howard

*To:* Brother [R B Howard]

OOH-0382

West Point N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Point N.Y. Oct 17th 1852

Dear brother

I really think it has come your turn to have a letter. When I write a letter home it is usually intended for all, still I know there is a particular pleasure in receiving a letter directed to yourself in person, saving this, that the letter is a good one. Without making this reservation, however, a letter from a brother is always more than acceptable to me whether it be a good one or not. If it turns out to be full of unusually interesting matter I count this as clear gain.

Since you have written me you probably have received two letters from me at home and know of Mrs Waites' sickness. The manner in which Lizzie wrote her first letter informing me of her mother's sickness frightened me somewhat, but she has kept me informed of every change for better or for worse. Her disease was a species of cholera and was very rapid in its progress. She is much better now. She has been out of her head a great deal & very nervous allowing scarcely any body to do anything for her except her daughter. Therefore Lizzie has worn herself almost out in watching sitting up nights coupled with her anxieties.

Now I feel more anxiety for Charlie, for his constitution is so slender, that I dread much the state in which his fever will leave him. Mother says he bears his sickness very manfully. I am glad for this, since a want of good courage will do him much harm. I hope to hear soon that he is able to sit up & to walk about. Tell him it is a great blessing if one must be sick to be sick at home, where you have every care tendered through love & sympathy, where every want is supplied even before it is asked. I would like much to see him & talk with him, and be with him while he is sick, but circumstances render it impracticable unless he is sicker than I hope from the bottom of my heart he is, or will be.

I presume you have my standing for the month of September before this. You will perceive that I took quite a start in drawing. I had last week the tenth mark in the class in drawing. So you see that one need not give up, because one year's trial fails to exhibit any marked superiority in his capacity for the fine arts. "Labor vincit omnia" as usual. By it I graduated first in Mathematics - by it I overcame the seemingly invincible hatred that certain individuals, I mean a great number, entertained for me here. And under the action of the same force, I have started up in drawing, yet I fear I cannot stay up.

The only society in this institution is the Dialectic. I have lately joined it, and enjoy its discussions very much. It meets Saturday evenings and those who belong to it are permitted to be absent from Quarters the whole evening. Our debate last night was upon the question: Is a Congress of Nations desirable? And upon this question which I had not heard of till I got to the debating room I made my maiden speech; and got considerable credit for the manner in which I handled the affirmation. The society is composed of picked men, selected from each class. I was happily disappointed in it. The southerners are full of gas, seldom ever speak to the point, but have a great flow of language.

You asked me what I have been reading. My leisure time has been spent for the most part in writing letters; but I have found time to read the Wide Wide World & Queechy by Miss Warner, who lives on the Island between this & Cold Springs - who by the way was here at Church to day. She is tall and very ordinary in her appearance generally. Her father, who comes with her to Church, is quite an old gentleman & personates well I should think Old Mr Kinggan, Flada's Grandfather. I have read the Reveries of a Bachelor, Dream Life and a part of Larnett, by IH Marvel. The latter you may not yet have met with. It is a satire upon the various characters that aspire to respectability in City life. All of this writer's works are well worth the reading. He too was here last summer, while I was at home.

I want you to write me often to tell me how Charlie is getting on, if nothing more. How is mother? Is her health still good, with all her cares and watchings? She need have not the least anxiety for me, since I am getting on admirably, with nothing to trouble but this bad news from home & from Lizzie.

I have experienced one inconvenience. My room was entered some day last week while my room-mate &

myself were absent. My writing desk opened & my money, what I had left, taken out & carried off. Many others have lost money just so of late. I never felt the sense of poverty so much in my life as when I discovered my loss. For I remembered that I had settled up with father and I owed a dollar for some pieces of music that I had bought - was just then going to get the money to pay for them - & lo! all was gone but twenty five cents, which I presume was left to console me.

I am considerably out of debt on my check book, having bought nothing except a few little necessaries on that account since my return. I think at the end of this month, I will be \$28 dollars out of debt and then my equipment fund up to this time amounts to \$48, making \$76.00 yet this does not take away my sense of poverty, for this money, never comes into your hand in the shape of hard cash.

Give my love to all. Tell mother she must not exert herself too much. Charlie must make haste & get well. Thank Dellie for his letter. The last was decidedly the best he has written. The Advertiser does not say much about the Law - or about Maine affairs now; but has enough to say about the Argas, Generals Scott & Pierce & the coming November election. Again remember me to all.

From your affectionate brother  
O. O. Howard

Ask Dellie if he loves chestnuts. Tell him that my friends Closson and Chapman and myself went out yesterday afternoon into the woods and gathered as many as we could eat & they had brought home their caps full. They picked them up & hulled them while I being a Yankee climbed the trees. The chestnuts are surrounded by a thick prickly covering or shell - three or four encased in each shell. Ask Dellie if it would not be fine to have as many chestnuts as he could eat without paying anything for them except the labor of gathering them.

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406 10/19/1852 *From:* Rowland [Howard]

*To:* Cadet Oliver O. Howard

OOH-0383

Leeds

West Point, N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Leeds Oct 19th 1852

Dear Brother

Mother says that she has entirely filled her sheet and if I write any I must take another. I am going to Readfield this morning and have only time to say a few words.

Charley is getting along a great deal better than I expected and as well as any of us could hope for. He is dressing himself this morning and sits up most all of the time.

I wrote to Lizzie last night. I wish that she had written me about her mothers illness. I am now quite anxious to hear from them. I think Mrs W must be better or we should have heard something from her before now.

I am glad that you had a day at Newburg and glad that you enjoyed it. May you have as many such occasions as your discipline will allow.

We are all well. Charley sends his love. Dellie is picking potatoes.

Good By.  
Rowland

[Envelope]  
Greene Oct 26  
Cadet Oliver O. Howard  
West Point  
N.Y.



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407 10/30/1852 *From:* J. N. Jewett

*To:* Friend [OO] Howard

OOH-0384

Madison Wisc

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Madison Wisc Oct 30th 1852

Friend Howard

I have been in the receipt of your last letter for a few days & take the present opportunity of replying to it. I can in some manner appreciate your feelings whilst laboring under the doubt & suspense of hopes & fears relative to the illness of your friends & relations. I was once similarly circumstanced myself and though the stroke of Providence then fell more heavily upon me & my family then I am happy to hear it probably will upon you & yours. Still the uncertainty of a few days seemed more intensely painful than the sad reality. As I said I am happy to learn that your friends are recovering & presume that before this they are restored to their accustomed health.

You ask me for a description of my journey to the West. There is very little of it to tell. I came so rapidly that I seemed hardly to have started before I was set down in this very serene quiet little town of Madison. You must know that I started on Thursday & on Tuesday next following I was here - only six Days & I stopped one Day & two nights out of that time. Soon we shall be able to reach the city of New York from this region in about two Days there at longest. Railroads are already within about 40 miles of us in one direction & 50 in another & both are pushing on towards our town. There is "a good time coming" for us I hope & it is at no great distance. But this is aside from my travels.

My journey from Portland to Boston was by cars of course. At Kennebunkport Upham (who was in college during our Senior Year) came on board but left at Lawrence. This was the only acquaintance I met on the route. I left Boston at 5 o'clock same evening for Fall River where I took the Boat for New York I arrived there in the Morning at about 7. I immediately entered a hack to drive to the depot of the New York & Erie Railroad - the length of this road is, as near as I can remember, about 468 miles. I rode about 280 & stopped for the night at Elmyra where I left my umbrella. If you will possess yourself of it, it shall be yours - a liberal offer truly. I again took a seat in the cars on Saturday Morning at 6 o'clock & reached Dunkirk on Lake Erie at about 12. From this place to Detroit, Mich. I proceeded by Steamboat & arrived in the latter Town on Sunday Morning. I remained there till 5 o'clock P.M. & took the cars for Chicago riding all night. In the morning early I was in this metropolis of the West. But I did not make a long stay. At 8 o'clock I took the Steamboat for Milwaukee, and got there safely towards evening. Here I stopped to call upon some old acquaintances from the East & the next Morning again took the cars for a short ride of about 40 miles & from there the Stage for Madison, where I arrived at about 9 o'clock in the evening. On Wednesday morning I went out home. I took them a little by surprise for they were not expecting me quite as soon. However they seemed very willing to excuse the intrusion & to make the very best of my unexpected arrival that they could. I presume they have long ago pardoned me for coming sooner than they expected.

I have been in the office where I am now sitting just 8 weeks. Enjoy myself as well as circumstances will allow, which by the way is pretty well, & am getting to be quite a Lawyer. I am not positive yet, that I shall locate myself in this vicinity. I have written to Bell of the class of '50 - and shall put a letter in P.O. tonight for Jennings in Arkansas and one also for a <man> in Chicago, making inquiries respecting the prospects to those several regions for young attorneys. I have also an eye out for any good opportunity nearer home.

Next Summer I shall make a pitch somewhere and of course would like to do so under as favorable auspices as possible. "Where there is a will there is a way" is the old saying. I have the will & hope to find the way.

As to Perley's imaginings respecting the letter I wrote him from Yarmouth, I have but little to say. I do not think I would have used him as he used me. I had been more with him, felt more confidence (in a private way) in him, had more fully divulged to him my purposes & thoughts, & in short had been more intimately & sincerely attached to him than to any other person for at least the last 3 years of my residence in Maine. I had been to Portland frequently (generally contriving to do a little business at the same time) especially almost to see him (where I was always very kindly entertained at Mrs. Waite's for which she has my sincere thanks) & he never came from Portland to Yarmouth (though repeatedly urged to do so) to see once. He called a few times only on his way home or back, & even then it frequently happened that I could not persuade him to stop longer than

over one train of cars.

Considering these circumstances, I expected nothing else than that he would spend at least one day & perhaps 2 or 3 with me at the close of his school last summer as he was aware that I was about leaving the county with no present prospect of returning very soon. I was disappointed & provoked when he called on Monday Morning & said he was going on in the afternoon train. I said very little to detain him after I found he was determined to do so - and as I knew that he had no good excuse for being in such haste - I came very naturally to the conclusion that he esteemed me less than I did him for under such circumstances I would have yielded to his expressed wishes of my own accord.

I always endeavor to forget when I am forgotten & Perley has not yet written in reply to my letter (which was I admit rather a repudiation of his friendship) in order to <recover> any false imputation which I may have put upon him. Perchance he may not think it of sufficient importance to do so & I would be the last to urge it upon him tho I would have done it long ago had I been in his place & he in mine. I did regard Perley as my very best Friend but feelings change I know & often words are empty sounds. Thus particular have I been to state my relation to him. I regret it exceedingly but it does not belong to me to correct the misunderstanding if indeed that is all there is of it. I shall hear from you with pleasure, at your convenience.

Yours truly  
J. N. Jewett

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408 10/31/1852 *From:* R. H. Gilmore

*To:* O.O. Howard

OOH-0385

South Leeds

*Source:* Bowdoin

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South Leeds Oct 31th 1852

Dear brother

As Charley was going write I thought that I would write to you. Charly has got most well. He has got so that he eats most any thing. He walked up to Mr Bates last week. Elizabeth Manwell is to work. She came here last Friday and Aurilla Barrows came down here with Elizabeth and Friday evening we had a kind of a party. And Lucia Leadbeter and Mary J Lothrop and a Morse girl that works at Mr Lothrops. Aurilla played on the Eolian and sang and so did RB Charley Elizabeth and Mary J Lothrop aunt Martha jane and Mrs Haines. Esq Haines's wife came here last Thursday morning. Mother and aunt Martha J Mrs Haines went up to uncle Ensign's. Afer dinner RB went up to uncle Ensign's at night. Mother stoped at the Band meting and RB at the club. When RB and Mother came home, Rowland had the little colt, and the little colt ran as hard as he could and R.B. could not hold him in, then she run away again and then RB fitted the Bridle so that she could not run. Mother and RB stoped at Mr Morrill. Just then Henry Brewster came along and Mother got in with him. When Mother got home she asked Silas to go and meet RB. Mother was afraid for she thought that R was <>. When Silas met RB he had <lot> to our long Barn down to the other house. When RB got home he found that the little red colt had broken the fender of the carage or the lether be fore the seat and we shall be obliged to get it mended.

Friday morning aunt Martha J and Mrs Barnes rode down here and staid untill Saturday noon. RB carried them down to the depot R.B. then came back and carried Aurilla home. We received a letter from Lizzie last night. She said that her Mother was beter. R.B. has greatly been engaged in polatics Lately. I suppose you know to morrow or next day that the Election is of the President.

I believe this letter is the longest letter I ever wrote, but I must not forget to tell you what a great meeting we had. It was a great Whig meeting Mr Goddard spoke and Hon S P Benson spoke. Mr Goddard gave the history of Gen Scott. They expected that the new engine would come and bring the folk but it did not come untill eight in the evening. Her name is Leeds. She weighs 16 tuns. Father says she went from the junction to North Leeds in 15 minutes - the distance of 17 miles and the road is not level. The folks say that the road is up and down all the way. I went to meeting today on the ridge & there was not only 14 there. I went into the new school house. It is done allmost. The seats are new and most every thing it is painted new. The collar is yellow.

I have wrote all I can think of.

from your affectionate Brother  
R. H. Gilmore

[To] O.O. Howard

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409 10/31/1852 *From:* O. O. Howard

*To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0386

West Point N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Point N.Y. Oct 31st 1852

My dear Mother,

I fear you will imagine because there is more than the usual interval between my letters, between this & my last, that something unusual may have happened. Last Sunday I did not write, because I thought it too bad that my letters should be a whole week on the way. I knew that I might find time during the week to write you & then my letter would seem fresher. But procrastination deprived you of a letter. And two things, out of the line of the invariable monotony that prevails here, was the cause.

1st. The two hours & a half that I have had heretofore to myself every other day - that is, tuesdays, thursdays & saturdays in the forenoon, are now entirely consumed in riding. One half of our Class have been joined to the first class, and together we form a squadron. So we ride double the time we did before - that is all the time that both rode when we rode separately.

2nd. The first of the past week, the president of the Dialectic society came to me & said that this association was to have a public meeting - and wished me to make a speech upon the Question under debate. To this I consented, and have spent all the leisure moments I could find in preparing myself for the occasion. The meeting came off last night. All the officers (nearly) & many ladies of the post were present. Little Closson was my opponent on the question, "Is the influx of foreign population for the best interest of our country." Little Closson is very eccentric and very smart, and though he did not have much argument, he got a great deal of applause. He kept the house in a roar of laughter. 'Twould have done you good as it did me to hear him talk. He has always been my best friend & I liked to see him do so well. My speech came after his, was pretty strong & to the point, some of it extemporaneous. I exerted myself to my utmost & I waked them up. I saw that the officers were surprised to see that I could do so well.

Col Lee was present & took a great deal of interest in the debate. A finer looking man you never met with. He is a little above the medium height. His hair is just turning grey and he has a very clear dark eye that seems to take in everything at a glance. I do not wonder, he is considered a superior man. His son resembles him much.

This debating society has done me much good. It enables me to take my proper stand here. I always wished to be estimated fairly - at least to have the esteem that I fancy my desert. Hence I am glad of the opportunity to show that I have got some sense over & above the mere capacity of study.

Your last letter did me much good. But it troubles me that you let things wear upon you so, because, to speak as I think, there is no need. The soul is capable of rising above petty grievances and even real calamities. And if the matter of worldly goods, of property which experience has taught you is such a real convenience should disappoint you; if it should fly from you & deprive you of the mother's privilege of contributing to the worldly comfort of your three boys why, you should remember that the basis of their happiness is not wealth. You may remember that you have striven to inculcate into their minds principles, that will be of more real value & encouraged habits that will ever promote their welfare, and render them one of these days if not now, very grateful, more grateful to you, than if it had been in your power to cradle them in luxury & thus foster their inclinations to idleness & ease.

You speak of religion. Once I gave way to idle speculations but I have discovered the futility and unsatisfactory states of mind which such speculations carry with them. I have found that it is no mark of a mean mind to take for granted many things which my present understanding cannot reach. It is enough & more than enough for an intellectual being to exercise his reason upon those things which he can understand. I wish a clear head & a simple heart.

You speak of grace. Grace is never exercised towards the unwilling & rebellious heart. But it is a hard thing to be what one knows the christian ought to be. It is hard for a selfish nature to become unselfish, harder for one who hates, to love the object of his hatred. It seems almost impossible, for the proud heart, to imbibe contrition

for the man who has been vain his life long, vain of his talents, vain on account of his position, vain on account of the applause he receives - to lay it aside, and give credit where credit is due to the Giver of all things. And yet all this must be accomplished, before faith can come to the soul, before Grace, though it may be extended freely all the time, can be at all appreciated.

I consider it a glorious thing to be a christian, but it is of no avail to be a professing Christian, it will not make this life easy & full of happiness, & can give no possible serenity for a future world. I really believe if a person is unhappy under the little trials he may be called to undergo, he is not a true christian. I have respect for sacred things, but I am as far from being such a christian as the simple doctrine of our Savior requires "as the East is from the West" as Professor Spirole says. I have hatred, jealousies, vanity, ambition & pride mixed up in my composition. I cannot bend my knee before my Father above, with a humble, hoping believing heart. I look about me & acknowledge intellectually that God is, that he is the maker & ruler of the universe, that all the blessings that I enjoy & have enjoyed since I first drew breath came from Him. Yet it is all an intellectual conclusion, there is not love, no hearty appreciation of all this. I cannot do good for the sake of doing good. I expect a reward. And as an instance of the vanity that <dries> up my heart, I keep thinking I am pretty good, keep justifying myself in every fault I commit. These are thoughts that pass through my cranium in my reflective moods. I am not unhappy, because I have no appreciation of guiltiness.

Tell me my dear mother, your thoughts upon such things. It may be a pleasant task to you, because you fancy me careful of all things else, but not of those things which you consider of the most importance. If I do not speak of what you tell me now, the time may come when I will. The feeling often passes through my heart, that I was placed here in this world for something, and that something is not to lead a foolish, useless, selfish existence.

Tell me of Charlie. Providence is kind to let him stay with us. Give my love to Rowland, father & all. Give my love to Charlie & tell him to write me as soon as he is able. My love to Dellie & tell him he must write again.

My health is good. I am doing middling well in my studies. Let me hear from you often if it be but little. Home is a grand place, though it may be for the interest of the young man to leave it, he looks back upon it as a sort of an asylum.

From your affectionate son  
O. O. Howard