
423 12/19/1852 *From:* Eliza Gilmore

To: O.O. Howard

OOH-0392

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds Dec. [19] 1852

My dear Son,

It is now two weeks since we received a letter from West Point, I was truly disappointed, last evening when the mail came in, but recollecting, that I mentioned (R's immediate departure for Topsham) in Charles letter, I thought he was the favored one, and consoled myself that nothing had befallen you. R has written two letters home since he went to Topsham, which are quite satisfactory. Mrs L was here a few days ago, said she had received letters from Warren since his return to West Point, but he had not then seen you. I am glad to learn from your letters, that your intellectual enjoyment have increased and that you feel more like one moving in his own proper sphere than formerly. Yesterday I went to Wayne to visit Arza, found him quite comfortable though not able to go out. He can rise onto his feet with the help of two canes, and then walk half bent to the table or bed. An abscess on each side that discharges constantly and one limb drawn half way up - a good appatite and the tones of his stomach good, has grown quite fleshy, seems in good spirits, cheerful, and social. I met with Mr Sampson in a store, said his wife was about house but in poor health. I told him I would call, but your father made different arrangements about returning and I was obliged to go the rounds with him in consequence did not see Mrs S.

I have been out to church to day. Mr B gave us two very good sermons. The morning service was pointing out what our heavenly father required of us as Christians and the afternoon service was requiring repentance and the final consequence of not repenting. Very few people attended meeting so little is the privilege of the Sabbath regarded in this place.

We have good sleighing, with but little snow. Our little grey horse carried us swiftly over the ground to church, and then home again. I saw Laura and John, and wife and boys. They all looked nicely.

Your father is very much engaged filling out his papers, preparing his yearly report for the railroad company. Our rail road is completed to Livermore Falls, in spite of all the hindrances heretofore endured. A survey is now going forward from Livermore Falls to Farmington to extend the road to that place.

We have sad news from Sacramento City - almost the whole city in ashes. My interest in Addison, and Mr Sargent has been all alive, and Ann and Sarah must have had a fearful time of it but not so much so as if they were there in the fire. O! What an amount of harm or suffering must have been in that flaming city. We have had the <Alton> California a paper which gave a particular account of the fire and the relief they received for ten days. I have not visited Hallowel for a long while, but believe they are all in pretty good Health. William made quite a long visit at John Otis' and Maria has been stoping in Portland a long while the past fall. I understand C.H. Strickland is going out to Orleans this winter. Frederick is put to a farmer in Gloucester for two years. Melvin Howard is confined to his room - will probably never go out again. We have a good school this Winter. Boys are very much engaged in their studies.

I am very much pleased, every day with Charlie's developments of Character. He seems to have an abiding principle. He is a great benefit to Rodolphus. R truly loves him and likes to please him. Although he is a selfish little fellow, he is willing to 'shant' do well. The teacher has offered a prize to the one of the class, who shall stand at the head the most nights. Dellie says he wants Charlie to have the prize if he can't. He studies evenings to get his lessons. I am seated near the stove by a table in the front room and Charlie reading near me. Dellie came in a little while but found this room a little too quiet for his nature, and went out.

Roland A has been confined to the house for a number of days with one of his feverish turns. Began to go out this morning. Our daily rounds are much the same as usual. some days a plenty of irish coming in to receive their pay out of the treasury, which makes some variety.

I was told at Wayne that J. Moulton is married to Lucy Foss, W.Foss's daughter of North Leeds. Elder Foss has three daughters less now than last year at home. I saw Morison Foss yesterday who is depot Master and Post Master at North Leeds. One might suppose those were quite profitable offices, but I think in this case, the

honor is greater than the profit. I saw him open his mail. He had perhaps one doz. of letters and as many newspapers. I don't know how much freight he has to mark, everything seems to be tending towards the railroad.

Mr Brewster has built a new store on the line of the railroad. Orman Wing has shut up his store, and gone to Mass, and taken his wife and child with him, in consequence of being detected in selling wine unlawfully. He passed through a course of the Maine liquor law and paid his fine, which so enraged him he could not be peaceable with any one. John Keen is now being passed through the ordeal I understand the Supreme court have found him guilty, this last week, probably will be obliged to lay in jail a while. How many wretched family he has caused. I feel no regret at having justice overtake him in the form of the Maine liquor law. Our Ladies T. B. meet every two weeks but so not full as in warm weather.

Your father says he shall go to see his Mother this Winter. If he does I intend to go as far as Portland, with him and stop with sister Martha while he is gone, and call on Mrs Waite and Lizzie.

This is my third page, filled. I fear it will hardly pay the way from reading, although I determined to write, I had nothing in particular to write to you except to remind you of the uncommon long time since we heard from you. R. wrote me he had written you a long letter, and now should be looking out for one from you, said he should write to Lizzie soon. Your father has not been in here once to hurry me about my letter, but I expect him every minute for I hear him on his feet now. I think there is a letter on the way for me now if you are in good health, or nothing else has befallen you. I shall draw to a close.

With much affection
Eliza Gilmore

[to] Oliver O Howard

417 12/5/1852 *From:* Rodelphus [Gilmore] *To:* Otis [Howard]

OOH-0393a

South Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

South Leeds, Dec 5th 52

Dear brother

As mother was going to write to you I thought I would write to you. Charlie has come home from Portland. He came home last Friday morning. I am well, all but my leg. Last Tuesday morning I fell down and cut a place in my knee about 1 or more inches. But it has got most well now, so I think I can go to school tomorrow for it commences tomorrow. Mr Gancelo Petingill is going to teach our School. The cars are runing over our new Road. Father brags over them. He says that Mr Morse (the Engineer) says that this Engine is the best runing one he ever saw. Father says the cars are the handsomest in the State of Maine. I shall go to school tomorrow and study and read in the Town's Fourth Reader, Mitchells Geography, Smith's Arithmetic, Welds Grammar. It rains today and there is no meeting to day. Winter does not come upon us yet. We have not had more than an inch of snow yet. All the snow is rain. It is so warm here that we have rain in the place of snow. Wm Otis was here last Thursday all day. Mother received a letter from you last night. Charley received one to last Tuesday. Last night there was a blind Girl's Concert. They were two ladies by the name of Coy and Nelson. Every body could go in for 12 ½ cts. R. A. went, but no body from here went but him, for it rained hard as it could. Nancy is sick today. George Lothrop has moved up to Livermore Falls and is going to keep Tavern. It has been cold enough to freeze the ice so that I could skate on it. I have wrote all I can think of now.

And so good by Otis.

From your affectionate Brother,
Rodelphus

To Otis

[This letter is continued on the next letter from Charles.]

418 12/5/1852 *From:* Charles Howard

To: O O Howard

OOH-0394a

South Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

South Leeds Dec. 5th 1852

My Dear Brother

My last note to you; you remember? was written in Portland. I had a very pleasant visit in Portland, stoped there untill Fryday morning at 7 oclock. Lizzie wished me to stay still longer, but I could not because our school begins Monday. And I certainly do not wish to lose any of my schooling this winter, for unluckily I have lost it this past fall. But I will not complain but will be sure and improve what time I do have allowed me to attend school. Yes I think it quite a misfortune my losing my time this fall. It seems to me more so now just as I am commencing to study Latin, and also all studies with more earnestness and perseverance. For I am old enough now to appreciate the value of an education. And also know that now while I am yet young is the best time to aquire one. I speak of an education as though it could be finished but I do not think that I shall ever or at least very soon finish mine. But what I learn (or add to my knowledge) now will never have to be learned again.

But I wish to tell you about my visit in Portland. I enjoyed myself much. I think Lizzie took much pains to entertain me, for which I am very thankful to her. She went out with me as often as she had time to show me the wonders &c of Portland. She went over in the ferry to Cape Elizabeth with me to see the fort. Perhaps wishing to give me a little better idea of West Point, but that hardly could be. For I think as many times as you have pictured your situation to me, my ideas of it cannot much be improved. While in Portland I stayed part of the time with Aunt Martha. I was with her most of the nights for Uncle Henry was away from home and Aunt was afraid to stay alone. Uncle Henry is sittling up his business for he thinks of going a tour to Philiadelphia & New Orleans soon. Aunt Martha had not concluded whether to keep house or not while he is gone. She went to Hallowell last Wednesday on a visit & to bring home her little girl Lizzie who has been there about two weeks.

I was pleased to hear while in Portland that I had a letter in rest for me from Otis at home of four pages. And since I arrived mother has handed it to me to read. And last night we rec another one. You speak of the weather's being delightfully pleasant at West Point this fall! I can say the same of Maine for it is now the 5th of Dec and no snow to be seen nor signs of it, even last night and this forenoon we have had a warm rain! It seems much more like Spring than winter. You wished me to forgive your blots, but I did not see many to forgive but what I do see I willingly forgive hoping that you will grant me the same favor for I see that I have made a large blot by some water which doped from my sand box. We certainly have had no sleighing this fall nor have we had any thing near it.

Elias Lothropps death was very sudden to us all here as well as you for we had had no warning. You can have no idea of Mrs. Lothropps grief. She was almost crazed by the news. Speaking of Mrs Lothrop reminds me of what a time Lizzie and I had in getting to the cars that morning that Warren went through Portland, for the cars started some time before we got to the Depot but we got in after they started. A man helped Lizzie on. She was quite anxious to see Warren. We rode up to the Boston depot and back safely but had a hard time geting on.

I have had a short pause in my writing. I paused to eat my dinner & while eating Mr Berry came in. Then after dinner we had a sing. Mr Berry praised my playing on the Aeolian much. I have got so that I can play 6 or 8 tunes pretty well. I thought as you do when I read of Mr Websters death and of his belief to the last. I thought that it should & would influence those who had not so good & sound a mind & judgement as he.

I am very glad Otis to hear you say that "my health is good I am doing well in my studies & have no enemies" Yes Otis I am very glad that you are enjoying yourself. But I hope you do not enjoy your situation in the army well enough to remain there more than your four years. You see I suppose by the date that today is sabbath day. There was no meeting today and if there had been it rained so this morning that our folks would not have gone, but it has released off this afternoon. It is so dark that I cannot write any more now. And I must go and do my chores. Good night Otis. And write soon.

From your affec brother

Charles

P.S. I have just returned from a 4 o'clock ride to the Depot with Rowland.

[To] O O Howard

421 12/12/1852 *From:* Rowland [Howard]

To: Brother [O O Howard]

OOH-0395

Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

Topsham Dec 12th 1852

Dear Brother

Although I think that I do not owe you a letter yet I am not sure that you would direct one to this place, unless informed of my whereabouts. I came here a week ago tomorrow and room with and recite to a College Classmate of yours, Mr Francis Adams. He appears like a ripe scholar and a good fellow. We board at Mrs Frosts having a fine room and good table. I think I shall study pretty well this winter and enjoy myself too, if my health remains good. I directed a letter of Charley's to you the day that I came away and so I suppose that you have as late news from home as I can give you.

On Saturday I went over to the College, to see old friends and find what kind of a class I was about to enter, and remained there until this morning. The Students have at this time almost all left it being very near the close of the term. Saturday and Sunday evenings I heard O. S. Fowler of N.Y., the great Phrenologist, lecture. The first time on Phrenology the second on Temperance. It was the most finished Temperance lecture I ever heard. It took up and treated the evil and remedy in a masterly manner, arguing the question by Phrenology & Physiology. He fortified his position by facts and Science and finally proved the Maine Law as the greatest preventitive of drunkenness yet found and consequently the greatest preventitive of crime. I have not enjoyed myself of an evening so well for a long time. I went into hear Mr Adams preach yesterday afternoon. They have had those wretched hard seats in the students gallery, cushioned, and they are now quite comfortable for much so that I don't know but that I shall turn orthodox if I return to College. I have been reading Prof Hitchcocks (who you will remember takes Prof Stowes place) eulogy on Webster delivered before the Students. I would send you a copy if I could obtain one. I had just previously read Theodore Parkers and I was rather disapointed in the Profs. When Pres Wood's comes out I will endeavor to send you one. It is spoken of very highly.

Greek and Latin come rather hard to me after so long a vacation but I am getting a little used to them again. I am reviewing in both now. Bowdoin seems to be flourishing, the three lower classes having over 40 members in each. I have a very pleasant almost elegant boarding place and if I have good health I see no reason why I should not enjoy myself and make good improvement.

I think I will write to Lizzie in a few days for as I am among strangers, I am doubly grateful for the letters of Friends. I believe it is pretty well settled that I never do rec letters unless I write once twice or three times before hand. Lizzie though has always answered me. But however I suppose that most of you think that I don't labor much on my letters and I might as well be writing as not, and it is about so. I expect by and by to fall in — with some body that I shall not wish to see my scrawling hand and awkward paragraphs. Some one whose very little opinions I shall deem — but there! You know all about it, so it's no use for me to tell what queer possibilities are in the unknown future. Two of the mildest fellows in the present senior Class have become pious, Southgate & Crosby. I knew them both before their change but do not know nor cannot understand them since, Otis.

There has never been anything that has so shaken and thrown down all my doubts on these matters as the death bed of Webster. Not that I regard or ever did regard Webster as a true hearted Christian as we have been taught to understand the term, but in his last hours when he had to <> and quietly finished all his Earthly <> there is something startling in the <> acquiescence of that great mind in <> those simple but eternal truths. If there <is> one thing more than another that makes a man an infidel it is pride of intelect. He is so surprised at the extent of human capabilities, he concludes that they are <>. What man had the intelect, and who so proud of it as Daniel Webster. Yet what was all that greatness when the shadow of Eternity crept upon him. He knew how weak, how fearful weak even he was, those were the words of a tottering child. "Thy rod, Thy staff, Yes, that is what I want." I feel, and I cannot if I would, avoid it, that if the strength of Webster was such weakness that if he needed the <> and the Staff of God. When he approached <> dark valley and shaddow. Who shall do <wit> I cannot reason. I am too small, too weak but Webster could reason and he when the hour of trial came could find but <> source of power, and then he placed his <>. I have said these facts have made a deep impression upon me, they and the thoughts <> have suggested have swept away all <> in regard to

<>necessity.

My mind is convinced of this last and yet for the total absence of desire & feeling <> the matter. I am persuaded I should be <> Christian. We all look upon great men with reverence. We have watched them in our Country and seldom do they say one word or write one sentence in behalf of Bible Truth. I mean great political men, the members of our Congress, the lawyers of our Courts, the writers of our literature, all keep silence on these matters like Willis belie their own thoughts by their own acts. I will come back and try (for I don't know as you feel as I do.) I have looked at all these and thought they <> through life and many of them die without religion and why shouldn't <>. The avocacy of religion is left mostly with those who make it their hole profession, not only basing their hopes of a future world below it, but also their livelihood for the present <>. I have regarded these as slight evidence compared with the great needs of my Countrymen <> - when I see them one after one surrendering <> like Webster on the threshold of the tomb. I am convinced that man must surrender elsewhere. Does the early or the late man make the best terms with his God! It is only a question of time. I don't know now as I ought to send <> but if I do, don't misjudge me. These are my own secret thoughts expressed without arrangement or care. I don't wish to appear wise. I only desire to make a confidence of my brother as I would of one who is kind and trustworthy. I have written so far without stoping. I hope you can read it and I hope you will forgive its faults. Write me soon at Topsham. I've got lots of things to say to you but I will not write them now, but perhaps I may change my mind before I write again and not write them at all but good by, tonight and God bless you as does your
Aff Brother
Rowland

[Note: Pages 4 and 5 have their edges glued together, making some of the words hidden.]

422 12/13/1852 *From:* O O Howard

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0396

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Dec 13th, 52

My dear Mother

Since I have a few moments leisure after returning from Chemistry I will begin a letter to you, in order that I may at least get it into the Post Office in time for you to get it Saturday. I feel a little dull to day as I usually do Mondays, for I get up at four o'clock. This practice may do very well for those who can retire early, but to get to sleep about half past ten & be up at four is rather too much of a good thing to suit my taste. I think every Monday afternoon, as soon as I begin to feel stupid & dull: "Now you will learn to get your lesson Saturday so that you can have a good sleep next time till reveille", but Saturday always manages to pass over without my Monday's lesson being got.

(Tuesday Dec 14.)

It is now after taps. I have put my quilt to my window to conceal my light, so that I am safe from being reported. Yesterday, when I was writing, a young man came into my room, who had to be entertained & he staid so long that all my leisure time was consumed. I was on Guard this evening besides having a very hard & long lesson for the morrow which I made out to get over once just before the 'taps' beat. After I got to bed, I began to think how anxious you would feel if you did not get a letter Saturday. So although I feel tired & sleepy I will try to write you a few lines now to let you know I am well & write you a long letter next Saturday or Sunday. I shall have to study pretty closely between this & January or I will lose my standing in Mathematics (Mechanics) this January. You will observe I have been second for two months. Mr Ruger 1st, Lee 3d. I would have been 1st last month but for one bad recitation. If I do well at the January examination, I shall expect to retain my place still.

I went to see Warren, Saturday while the battalion was at supper & staid with him about an hour. He brought me into his little room, a bowl of coffee with some bread & meat, so that I made a grand supper. He told me he saw you all. Said Charlie looked a little pale, when he met him on the cars with Lizzie at Portland.

I received yours, Charlie's & Dellie's letter last Friday. Ask Charlie why he says he hopes I do not like well enough at West Point to remain in the Army after I graduate from this place! Ask him what he thinks I am to do. What I am good for, if I ought to study three or four years more for another profession, with poverty staring me in the face. I have not made up my mind yet on the subject. I think, however, I shall remain in the army at least a year. In either of the Corps that I will be likely to go in, the duties will be very light. I shall have good pay & about half of each day to read whatever I may wish & study law.

Give my love to all. I will not write more tonight for I am too tired.

From your affectionate son
OO Howard

I presume Rowland is at Topsham already, is he not. Mr Adams was a very good hearted good principled man. I liked him very much. He may be a little too quiet for Rowland.

Yr son -
O O Howard

[Envelope]

[Postmark] WEST POINT N.Y. 1<?> DEC

Col John Gilmore

South Leeds

Maine

Paid Chg. Cadet Howard

424 12/19/1852 *From:* Ward B Howard

To: Nephew [O O Howard]

OOH-0397

Peekskill

Source: Bowdoin

Peekskill 19 Dec 52

My dear Nephew

Can you make us an annual visit the coming Christmas, come down on Friday Evening & return on Sunday. Myself and your Cousins would be highly gratified to have you with us on that occasion, separated as you are from family & friends with the exception of my family. I flatter myself your Commanding Officer Major Smith (I think it is) will grant you the privilege of this annual visit to your affectionate Uncle & Cousins.

Yours Sincerely
Ward B Howard

425 12/20/1852 *From:* O. O. Howard

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0398

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Dec. 20th 1852

My dear Mother

When I last wrote you my letter was of necessity so short, that I hesitated about sending it till I could fill it up better, but I thought you might feel some unnecessary anxiety if I delayed writing so long. This evening my lesson being unusually short I have concluded to devote my spare time to you. I mailed a letter to Rowland this morning, in answer to one I received from him a few days ago. He wrote me a very good letter indeed, seemed well pleased with his situation at Mrs Frosts, as well as with his instructor Mr Adams. I am glad that he has got so good a place and am in hopes he will now persevere in his studies to advantage.

I received a letter from Uncle Ward to day giving me a pressing invitation to spend my Christmas with him & his daughter. So many have applied for leave to visit relatives who may be living anywhere in this vicinity and have been refused that I think it highly improbable if I succeed in getting a leave. I dislike to put so kind a man as Col Lee usually is to the necessity of refusing me a favor. He says leaves of absence interfere with our studies now. He will not have objection to granting us favors during Camp.

I am looking for a letter from yourself. If you do not write me oftener I fear you will get so out of the habit of writing that bye & bye you will not write at all.

I believe Charlie is the only one who speaks plainly his opinion upon my remaining in the army after I graduate. I would like your opinion too. Does it not seem rather too bad to have spent all this time in hard study & not reap any immediate benefit from it? Would it not be better to take up with the pay of the army officer, with his duties which are generally in no way very arduous, till from rest I had recovered sufficient energy to prosecute my studies further & fit myself for some other profession? Is it wise or right for me to throw myself on the world in comparative poverty with all the uncertainties of life on my shoulders, when in my profession, in the profession I am studying for, there is certainty of a livelihood? Ask Charlie these practical questions - let him think of them and answer them as he thinks.

Had I the head of Daniel Webster undoubtedly a struggle with poverty might tend to develop my dormant energies, might call into action hidden talents and give power & character to an intellect filled with a heterogeneous mass of shapeless material. But however much vanity may make me swell with importance, after all I am only O.O. Howard, whom it becomes never to trust to chance for his fortune while he is within the haven of security. Still I have not resolved to remain in the army yet. In all probability I will not many years, for many reasons.

Some civil profession is more in accordance with my taste. I want a home - a permanent home. Peremptory Orders, sudden & unexpected changes of Station, any little foreign difficulty, which leads the government to put itself in shape to resist danger, then & many other matters of a like nature are not very consistent with the quiet of a domestic life that I covet. Again I would like to have it my power to go to war or not as I thought it my duty; if I thought the cause was a just one - our homes - our liberties - our institutions under which ours has become so happy & prosperous a nation, if I saw them in danger, it would be my duty in common with that of every son of America to be ready & willing to defend them. The only real importance ones life has is its usefulness or its capacity for usefulness. And if like the Martyrs of old or like our fathers that we so much reverence, we see that the sacrifice or the exposure of our lives is the only alternative by which those principles can be maintained that involve the interests of millions, then it becomes us if we would be noble & generous to make the sacrifice. It is always a hard doctrine to maintain with mothers & brothers, or with those whose affections may be attached to you, but it is the doctrine of common sense.

But on the contrary if I believed from my heart a war to be unjust, I would have difficulty to ask the blessing of my God to rest upon me in its prosecution. The army officer, even here in America, is not his own master, the citizen is or may be. Hence on this account the position of the latter is preferable. What may be my lot hereafter, I know not - life itself may not be spared me. Now it is my duty to do my duty, and if I keep on this all will be well.

We had the proceedings of a General Court Martial published this evening. Four or five young men were suspended for one year, three dismissed whose sentences were afterwards remitted. One of those suspended was my old room-mate Henry N Lazelle. His offence was merely speaking to a reporting officer (a Cadet) about a report & asking him if he meant to insult him, telling him if he thought he did he would strike him. Had I been the Cadet Officer I would have told him to strike away if he wished, but I would not have given him such a report. I once gave Lazelle a pretty good whipping in that big room where father found me (a year ago) last summer, for telling me I was a liar &c. So I do not think he would be likely to say much to me about any report that I might give.

I continue to get along very well in my studies. I got in Mechanics a maximum every day last week - 3.3.3.3.18. This you would think was doing pretty well. You perceive too by my monthly standing that I am getting on a little better than last year. In Chemistry not so well as I expected. I study it very hard but I cannot remember it as it has to be got here. I never was good at storing up a list of separate, independent facts. Such is Perley's fort. But after all I do well in it. I never can make it seem that I do well, unless I do the best, which is an impossibility in everything & at all times.

Rowland wrote me that Melvin Howard was worse. If you see any of Uncle Barna's family, remember me affectionately to them & especially to Melvin. I fear I have seen him for the last time. I saw Warren not long since. He was well. His Corps is engaged in study now, as usual in the Winter. How does Charlie get on with his studies under your teacher? Where does the latter board? Remember me to Uncle Ensign's family. And tell Aunt Aurelia that Uncle Ward tells me always to send his love in my letters to her. Rowland said he wished I would write to Thomas. I would like to, but I cannot. I can not do justice to my present correspondents which are few indeed, since with the exception of Lizzie they are confined to my own family - you, Charlie & Rowland. Once in a great while Peleg & I exchange letters. Good night. Give my love to Charlie & Dellie. They must improve their time this winter. My love to father Rowland & all. We are having a rain storm indeed. No snow yet, but plenty of mud. God bless you all.

From Your affectionate Son
O. O. Howard