
455 4/6/1853

From: C H Howard

To: Brother [Rodelphus
Gilmore]

OOH-0425a

Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds Topsham April 6th 53

Dear Brother

I will do as I said and write you this time though I think it will not be a good letter for the first thing I did was to make a mistake ie. in writing Leeds instead of Topsham. It is Wednesday afternoon, Rowland has just left our room to go to Brunswick. I am all alone so if stillness while writing will make a good letter, I see no reason why this may not be that.

It is still in my room but I can hear noise enough from out of doors. Children playing, wagons passing & cars a roaring past too, can be heard at most any time here by quite a deaf man. The cars passed a few minutes ago & immediately afterwards we saw a little boy walking along, from the depot towards our house. And who do you think we thought it was? Rowland saw him first, & spoke & said, there was a little boy coming who looked just like Del. I ran right down to the front door, but found to my disappointment that it was no such a boy.

If you ever do come down to Topsham, you will find Mrs Frosts house to be very nearly opposite to the depot. After leaving, the depot you go a few steps, then come on to the main street, which is called Elm St because of the many Elm trees that are placed on each side of it. Most of these must have been planted here many years ago, for they now are large trees. A little way above Mrs Frost's on this street & between it & the Academy is an old two story house inhabited by only one person & that & old crazy woman. I have heard say that she is quite wealthy, if she is, she does not show much of it, for she wears one of those old white coats like Jacob Baily's instead of a dress.

Up on this St a little farther, on the north side of the road is the Academy. It is a pretty large building though not quite so large as the one that you saw at Kents Hill. It is built of wood & painted a kind of red like the depots. On the inside it is divided into two large rooms one above & the other on the ground & besides these there is a small room called the recitation room on the ground floor. In the room above the ladies stay & recite in some things to Miss Griffin who is the female teacher of the school & come down below to some. Mr Adams has the care of the large room below in the forenoon & part of the P.M. Rowland has it the rest of the Afternoon.

Thursday morning.

I did not finish my letter last night but studied, in hope of rec a letter from home this morning. I shall go up to the P.O. after breakfast & see if there is one. We rec a letter from Otis the other day. He has a bile so that he is excused from drill, dress parade &c. Dellie you must write me a good long letter on the recpt of this. I don't know any thing about affairs at home now, so you will have plenty of material for a long letter. Breakfast bell hurray.

Rowland will finish the letter Dellie after having been to the P.O. Give my love to mother & all. I hope father will go to N.Y. for Otis will be so glad. You & Mother are preparing to go to Portland now I suppose. When I look this over I find I have written very poorly by writing fast. Mr J Perley is to teach writing school here the last of the term. But I am encroaching upon Rowland.

From your Affectionate Brother
C H Howard

[Continued on the next letter from Rowland, April 7 1853]

456 4/7/1853

From: Rowland [Howard]

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0425b

Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

[Topsham April 7 53, continued from the previous letter from Charles to Rodolphus, April 6 1853]

Dear Mother

I can but think that you are sick or away from home as I have been to the Post Office this morning (Thursday) and found no letter from home. I receive them this morning when they are mailed on Tuesday. Charles and myself are enjoying good health.

We had a letter from Otis a few days since. He writes that he is well except that little trouble which Charles mentioned. A boil is troublesome, but he gets rid of Parade, which I should think would be quite a relief. I suppose that he writes you that the new Sec of War, Jeff Davis is introducing some reforms into their drills and general discipline, making the former more difficult and the latter more strict.

I see that Uncle Ward has got some kind of an office. Do you know what it is? I am glad for him for I suppose he needs it, and I have understood from you that he has been a soldier in the Democratic ranks for some time. Of course he deserves it. I am glad to see that your R.R. is doing so well. 89 passengers per day is quite a crowd and would afford some income, if they continued at the same rate. Lizzie has not written me lately and I have no news from any one else. I was so disappointed in not receiving a letter this morning that I hardly know what to write.

Friday.

I hear from Aurrilla that you are preparing to go to Portland about this time and so I conclude that you are there. If you rec this before you go, I wish to invite you come and see us. After you get away from home it will not make much difference and surely you will not value the expense. You can come down here and return to Portland any day you chose. Or if you prefer going directly home from here, you can go as far as Yarmouth and from there home. Peleg will give you information as to what train you should take in Portland. Get a ticket for Topsham and in an hour you will be just at our door.

George's death has given us a very melancholy surprise. I will write more about him in my next. Dea Cary is a great loss to your Church and Society. He was an upright man and good citizen.

Love to all.

Yours affectionately.
Rowland

Write particularly of Georges death.

460 4/13/1853 *From:* Eliza Gilmore

To: Son [O O Howard]

OOH-0426

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds April <13>th 1853

My dear Son,

It is a long time, since I have written you. I thought when I received your last, it would be but a few days before I should write you a long letter, and then I had a number of things to say, in particular but now I do not know what they were, for I have been sick nearly ever since. I believe I have not had a Physition for eleven years until now. I have had quite a severe attack of Neuralgy in my head and attended with a bad cough, which are now wearing off. The attacks in my head are not so severe, neither do they last but a short time. My cough is loose and not very troublesome, as I manage it, whether it really is any better or not only from the course I pursue, I have had so many blisters, and mustard poltices on me that I am quite an invalid.

Rowland and Charles were punctual to their resolve to write to Mother once a week. They appear to have tolerable good health, what I most fear is a failure in their health. My visit to Portland is over for the present, as I cannot even look out of doors without giving me pain. Your father has been extending the time ever since January, to visit his friends at Easton, and look after Arza's affairs, but my indisposition and the affairs of the railroad have delayed him so much, that he cannot go at present. A very long piece of railroad fence is now pressing upon him.

The frost is out of the ground, and stakes can be driven, and the fence must be made, to stop damages to the company. So I see no way for him to leave at present. A Haines of Portland went to New York, (at the time I mention that your Father talked of going) to make some payment on the bill for Iron for the railroad.

I was very much gratified with the general tenor of your last letter. Your advantages for high attainments, have been far superior to mine, but your mother never once felt any sacrifice in what she has done for her sons, but always would be glad to do more. I feel such an expanding desire for my children that it is inexpressible, but never in those feelings have I looked forward to their filling high stations, but to their being fitted for such stations. I do not allow myself to look into the future but my constant course is to submit it to Him who holds the destinies of all things. Daily experience shows us the uncertainty all things worldly, but it is a happy feeling to think ones children will be a blessing to the world, that their influence is for the intellectual improvement of their fellow beings. If it is so, let their course be onward; onward.

When it occurs to me that I may be called to eternity any day, and leave my boys I shrink to think what would be the worldly situation of my boys. But my trust must be in the same Being, "who takes this mortal breath" can direct our steps aright in this wearying world. If in such a case you should ever be led to reflect on any course your mother has pursued, recollect she has used her utmost endeavor in her situation to keep her property for her sons but if you fail of obtaining it, depend on your own resources, cultivate an understanding that will stand the test against all worldly goods.

Your father says he has always felt since he has had the care of my property like one who holds a property in trust, but this is a subject I seldom approach. The death of George W Jones on his way to California seems to make quite an impression on me. I have spent many pleasant hours with George. Last summer he did not seem as he use to, some times he would be George again. But George found a watery Grave.

Amial is in this neighborhood at work, when the family received the news. Pethuel wrote him a letter, detailing the particulars of his death as they came to them, and adds Amial you must bear it as well as you can, for I don't know but it will kill Mother. He died in four day sail Sanfrancisco, with the Panama fever. He had a fever in the fall which unfitted him for such a journey.

Mr Currie's family arrived at S— the 22d of February all in poor health but the little boy - six or seven years old, George has been with us so much I feel as though one of us had passed to eternity. Lucia Turner has been doing my housework this winter and, is still with us. Since G's death she keeps up a screeching kind of laugh a great part of the time. I have my fears that Lucia is destined to an unhappy life. Her flesh wastes almost as fast as if a fever was upon her.

Deacon Cary and his son Orman have lately died out of one house. They were both members of our baptist Church.

Our Maine liquor law seems to have gained in strength by legislation, it seems we have nothing to fear this year, as regards the law. I sincerely hope we shall retain the law long enough to test its value.

I have received a very good long well expressed letter from Miss Aurilla Barrows, now at Topsham, she gave a very pretty description of Topsham, her Boarding house, and all her employments and the river, the female department of the academy. The letter was on the whole worth reading and answering which I shall do soon. Mr Barrows called here this afternoon. He is very well pleased Aurilla's situation. Mr B-ws tell us that Mrs White is to be buried tomorrow, her funeral at one o'clock, the death of our neighbors makes such an impression on us, that our pens record them almost involuntarily.

Your father keeps teasing me to stop writing for fear of fatigue, but my subjects are so common place, they require very little intellectual labor. Our farm is set for the year. It seems as though if you and Lizzie could come this year we should be more at leisure & should be glad to see Lizzie, but she had such a poor visit last year, and I feel so uninteresting, I am afraid to invite her here.

Friday morning fifteen minutes of ten and the distress in my head is less severe than usual, although I feel it sensibly. It has began at six or seven, and began to pass off at twelve this morning. At nine I felt but little of it, and now it is not so severe but I can think tolerable clear.

Your father is gone, and I seemed so quietly situated, that I resolved to fill out my sheet. The sun shines beautifully over the vast extent of snow, that fell yesterday. The water is dropping from the eaves of the houses, and indeed it seems quite a fitting time to say pleasant things to some dear friend, if anyone could collect their thoughts sufficiently. I hope my son you are in a cheerful enjoyment of life. Rowland and Charles spoke of your troublesome biles, one of the troubles we creatures are subject to. I hope however they are over before now.

Perhaps the foliage at West Point is already showing itself, to the gratification of the lover of the beauties of nature. With us, we have thought it quite forward, to be so the farmers could plow and sow oats and peas, but the snow that fell yesterday will stop them for a few days. I suppose at West Point the river, trees, and government buildings, officers house, soldiers barracks, gravel walks, Cannon, and imitation brestworks, have become one and the same thing to you, you pass them and repass them, daily without notice, I would like to know every day how you spend your time, but again your little perplexities would annoy me with out adding to your comfort.

Rowland says in his last letter, that uncle Ward has got an office under government <Troy>. What is it? I am glad for him, if he is capable of filling it. Perhaps he will retain it some time.

The last I heard from your Aunt Ann she was alone, in Brooklin, Perry being at sea, and Silas had gone to Canada with his father, in some of his wild speculations and Sarah had come to Maine with her husbands relations, at Calais and that vicinity. The last I heard from Hallowel our friends at that place were all well, as usual. I am quite anxious about Ann. I wish to know how she was getting along, and whether Perry got out of his troubles at Charleston. Well, write me as often as is consistent with the occupation of your time. I shall enclose a two dollar bill in this.

Yours with Motherly affection.
Eliza Gilmore

O. O. Howard

457 4/11/1853 *From:* Rowland Howard

To: Cadet Oliver O Howard

OOH-0427

Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

Topsham Apr 11th 1853

My Dear Brother

We had rather sad news from Leeds the other day. Mother has not written for some time but we heard it through Aurilla. The most painful part was the death of George Jones. He had lived at our house so long, and was of such a mild and amiable disposition, that we had learned to love him. Poor fellow. He died in pursuit of wealth. California always had strange attractions for him, especially after hearing Rolands marvelous stories after his return. He at last obtained the wished for opportunity and sailed with his brother in law, but he never lived to see what he really believed was an EL Dorado. We have heard no particulars in regard to his death. It is a sad thing for his Mother and his family, & Mrs Berry (Melvin) says it is a terrible blow to Lucia, but I think that her volatile disposition will soon recover from the shock. She loved George and she labored hard to obtain him, and to have the cup dashed from her when almost within reach, must be a bitter disapointment. I think that such disapointments more seldom leave their trace with the young, than is generally believed. But doubtless, when no new object presents itself for their affections, and they are compelled to spend their days in single blessedness, they will cling with tenacity to the old love, and throughout all their long years of disapointment, they will relate such a circumstance as the reason for their forlorn situation and constant repinings.

The other death was that of Dea Cary. I always regarded him as a good man and therefore an honor and an ornament to the Church and Society in Leeds. If you and I ever attend that meeting again together, as we used to do, we shall miss him from his accustomed seat at the right of the pulpit. Don't you recollect how quiet and attentive he used to be through the long sermons, rising perhaps at the close of service to give some notice of interest to the Church and People. He had a good heart and a ready tongue, and it will be long before they can find one to fill his place in the Leeds Society. The Church at L is in rather a deplorable State. If a column stands firm and unflinching in battle, keeping their ranks and maintaining their disaplne, it matters little if the shot of the enemy takes down some of their men even if they are their best and bravest. With evolutions as regular as when on the parade ground, the places of the missing men are supplied and the unbroken Column stands ready to again renew the battle. But let the army be undisaplined and at each soldier be his own commander, and march according to his own mind, and that mind influenced by superstition and prejudice (as was the case with the Scottish covenanters) and the loss of men can never be endured, their places can never be supplied and their enemy will in the end triumph. The latter state is that of the Leeds Church and it seems to me as if Sin and Death must finally triumph over them. But still we are allowed to hope for better things. Yesterday I heard Rev Jo. Hutchinson, who I believe used to preach in Leeds. He is decidedly a queer one, and some of his ideas had the merit of originality, if nothing else.

Leonard Maxim came over and stoped with me Saturday night. Sabbath morning we took a walk on the bank of the river above the village, towards that old fashioned Meeting House which you will recollect we used to pass in those delightful rides to and from College, with the old white mare. The May flowers (trailing Arbutus) are just beginning to blossom. We got a good large handful of them, and today, their fragrance makes my room very pleasant.

The Street in Topsham is dusty and has been so for a week, but vegetation advances slowly on account of the cold nights. The weather in Maine is similar to Indian Summer. After the Sun is up in the morning, the air is warm, pure and delightful, but in the afternoons, the cold wind comes down from the snow covered hills and the evenings are quite chilly. This has been our weather for three weeks. The farmers are plowing and I have seen early peas sowed and potatoes planted but they will not come forward much until the ground is warmer. The grass does not start yet, and the boys as usual are having great times playing ball in the fields. Our Fast day occurs on Thursday of this week.

You spoke of our Liquor Law there bids fair to be nearly as much excitement growing out of the new amendments as there was in regard to the old law. The worst rummies that we have, used to say they like the old law, but do not like to see it executed. These new amendments take care of that very thing, viz. the execution of the law. I have heard its opposers talking freely in Brunswick and this town. They say now that the old law was enough, if they could only have let it alone. Shephard said so in our State Senate. The Portland

Exposition says so. So I begin to think we are getting at the root of the evil. It is true as you intimate that every reform has at some time a reaction in progress, but it is also true, that after their action a reaction, reforms like physical substances, at last find a medium. And at that point they remain. I am expecting a reaction in the Temperance movement in Maine, at some future time altho there are no indications of it at present, but I shall not expect that reaction until Rum is driven from all of its hiding places in our midst. And we shall be better able to resist the reaction, <> we can be while it retains a strong foothold among us. Look out for some new <emegra> next June. Rummies say Gov Crosby has his head in the same noose that Old Hubbard did. He ought to have believed such an enormity

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I am rather in hopes she will come. I asked Lizzie to come with her if she could. I have received no letter from either of them since I wrote you last. Mr Adams send his respects. What Office is it that Uncle Ward has got. Do you know? I hope is worth something to him as I have understood from you that he had the air of a poor and disapointed man. I am sorry for that boil and hope that it is better by this time.

I shall expect a letter before a great while. The details of your West Point experience are very interesting to me. Never fear being tedious but give me a good long letter. This letter looks no better than my poor offspring are wont to do, but you will excuse it. I must now go to my School, so good by.

From your affectionate brother
Rowland

Cadet Oliver O Howard

458 4/11/1853 *From:* Otis [O O Howard]

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0428

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Apr 11 1853

My Dear Mother,

I intended to have written you a letter yesterday, but I began one to Lizzie and after finishing that I did not have time to write another. I thought I would not write after taps lest it should unfit me for the duties of the morrow. We usually go to chemistry at eleven & return at twelve & I determined to devote the hour after I came back before dinner to you, but Professor Bailey had some experiments with the microscope to show us & kept us the whole hour. After dinner as you may remember we go to drawing & draw till four. Then to drill & drill two hours, then to evening parade, which takes up nearly an hour. Then to supper. After this we run about, walk or visit each other for half an hour when the bugle calls us to our book & our studies. Do you ask why I am not studying? We have a review lesson, and I think I can get it in the morning between reveille & breakfast. At any rate I am going to write you a letter & run the risk else you will not be likely to get one this week, then you will imagin all sorts of things.

So here's for a letter. In the first place your son is very well, in very good spirits, not doing very well in his studies for he is bothered with his poor memory, which all his application has failed to remedy; so that chemistry which ought to be the easiest study in the course very often procures a partial failure. But this does not matter - if we do the best we can, it is all that we can exact of ourselves.

I am reading during all my leisure moments the book that Professor Sprole gave me - Nelson on Infidelity. I have read it almost through and with every page I become more & more convinced of my ignorance of the volume that I have had in my hand if not in my breast from boyhood. It has set me to thinking & to reading with renewed interest. I went to one of my friends, borrowed a volume of Clark's Commentaries, commencing with the prophet Isaiah, and am trying to read understandingly.

It is disgraceful to a boy born & educated in a Christian land to be ignorant of the Bible. Those prophesies which tell us in brief the history of the world, and which are proved by rigid facts to have been written, thousands of years before the events predicted by them transpired, ought to possess an incalculable amount of interest for the scholar, independent of his duty as a native of a Christian land & a son of Christian parents. I am glad I take pleasure in such studies, for I hope that they may finally result in something more than a mere assent to the truths involved in them. If I had time I would like to correspond with a Christian divine, who was wholly acquainted with the business of his life theoretically & practically, but now it is better, perhaps that I make converse with my own thoughts.

Master Dellie perhaps is expecting a letter. I wish he could have one, but if I cannot write him now I will make up for it by & by. Tell him to be sure & not be idle, for he will sooner than he anticipates be a young man. It may be a received maxim that education begets pride & untoward ambitions and unfits the young man for manual labor, but it is a mistake. 'Tis not knowledge that does this, but the ignorance & folly of the majority of men, who have stamped one of the most worthy vocations as unbefitting the gentleman. I still say that if necessity should urge it I would take a pride & a pleasure in raising my own bread. Why do you not then do it? It is because I feel myself now better fitted for other things. You need not be surprised to see me yet settle down as an unpretending industrious farmer, although such a thing is rather improbable. I hope my brothers will all feel like me in this respect. It will save many hours of anxiety & many pangs of disappointed ambition.

Lizzie is expecting you - desires much to see you. You must love her for she has been a true & faithful friend to your son. Her love has been a safe-guard many & many a time of which no one knows but the object of it. I chose her, I don't know why. I loved her and I could not enumerate the causes. But this love has not developed in me, wild, aimless & romantic fancies, but tended to foster the good feelings of my nature & filled me with good & sensible resolutions which ever awaken & fortify right principles. It has not made me weak & remiss in my studies, but if anything had an opposite effect. I am glad it has been so & I wish I was to be circumstanced so as to afford her happier prospects, than I shall be able to.

I was intending to tell you of a remarkable case of somnambulism - a Cadet walking post in his sleep but I have

not time or room now. I will reserve the account for my next or to amuse Dellie. You thought I was doing remarkably well to come out 7th in Drawing doubtless. Nearly all the Class had commenced painting but me. As it was new to them they got low marks for a time & I continuing penciling got a better mark than they. My genius in the fine arts is not yet remarkably developed & I fear it will always be diffident of appearance.

Give my love to all. Remember me to all at Uncle Ensign's, Aunt Aurelia's, Uncle Barna's, Aunt Lucretia's &c. Warren L was well the last time I saw him. He must have written home once or twice since then. I seldom have any unhappy moments excepting sometimes for a few moments after I have done badly in Chemistry or tried in vain to paint passibly a mountain. I want to see father. Is he coming?

Your affectionate son.
Otis

I would not send you such a foolish little envelope but it is all I have.

459 4/12/1853 *From:* Rowland [Howard]

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0429a

Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

Topsham Apr 12/53

My Dear Mother

Although you cannot receive this until Saturday yet I thought I would write a few lines immediately after receiving your letter of the 3d and Dellies of the 10th inst. The most painful news is that of your illness. Dellie tells it very well for him, yet I cannot gather from his letter what is its nature and extent. He says the Dr visits you regularly I know this would not be the case unless you had some thing considerably worse than your common ill turns. He says it is a lung fever but I must still hope not. Let me believe that it is the result of the change of Season and that remedies will soon overcome it. I shall wait with a great deal of anxiety until I hear from you, which I am in hopes to do on Thursday morning. Mrs Berry wrote Aurrilla that you were talking of going to Portland the present week. As soon as I heard it I wrote to Lizzie to be sure and tell you to come down here and see us. Dellie intimates that you would have done so if you had not been taken sick.

We heard of Georges death and Dea Careys through the same source as above. Poor George! He never realized his dreams of California. His good constitution and moderate habits availed in nothing when attacked by disease in another climate. I pity his poor Mother. George had a good heart and a kind and amiable disposition. He was generous and happy and had he lived he never would have made enemies, but would have been surrounded by warm and confiding friends. His errors were of the lesser kind - more of the head not the heart. Young, happy, hopeful. We must say Good by. How I wish that Roland would take his death to heart, and be more forgiving, more kind, and more indulgent to the faults of his friends, while he more strictly guarded his own heart. I have at times partaken too much of that misanthropic spirit which he too frequently indulges in. But I have found human nature almost every where the same. Men are not what they should be, and we must take them for what they are. The faults of others must be indulged else how can ours be forgiven by them. Dea Carey is an almost irreparable loss to your Church and Society. He had a good heart and a ready tongue and I fear it will be long before his place will be filled in the Leeds Society. May the bereavement teach them to finish their dissensions and become more united, while they have an opportunity.

I heard Rev Joseph Hutchinson Sabbath day. Did he not preach in Leeds some years since. I did not remember him. I liked his Sermons pretty well. His expressions had the merit of originality if nothing else. But I thought I could gather from them however a little vanity, but that can be easily forgiven him if he is a good man.

Lizzie, from what I wrote her, will expect to see you almost every day, and I suppose she would have seen you if you had not been sick. Dellie says Father has put off going to Massachusetts perhaps you will yet be able to accompany him as far as Portland. I was surprised to see your letter dated the third until Dellie told me the reason. I have got a little head ache today other wise Charles and myself are very well. I wrote Otis six pages yesterday and Charles will write him in a few days so we will make up for the lack of letters from home, while you are unwell. Dellie wrote us the longest letter he ever did in his life. If he keeps on improving his letters will soon be worth a dollar apiece to his brothers. Charles & Mrs Frost have been fixing up a project for you there to ride down to West Bath to Mrs Footes, when you come to see us, but I tell Charles we cannot spare you to West Bath unless you stop here some time. I shall leave this letter now until Thursday when I am in hopes to hear from home again.

Thursday.

I have been to the P.O. this morning and got not letter from home. We fear you are not improving as we were in hopes. Dellie thought you would write Tuesday forenoon. <That> Day is cold and rainy. We have no School. We shall expect a letter from home now every day. I shall mail this that you may receive it on Saturday. Good by.

Your aff Son,
Rowland

[Continued on the next letter from Charles on Apr 14th 53]

462 4/14/1853 *From:* Rowland [Howard] *To:* Brother [O O Howard]

OOH-0430 Portland

Source: Bowdoin

Portland Apr 14, 1853

My dear Brother

As I know my last letter could not possess much interest to you both from the nature of the subject and the manner in which it was treated. I am now about to write a few lines which will be more interesting from my locality than any other cause.

I came in yesterday morning and shall return to Brunswick this noon. Lizzie is sitting beside me heming a handkerchief which I have just purchased, her eyes are better and look as well as ever. She has been at the Waite <for> better times, when I came in on this, and yesterday morning. I never saw her look more interesting than when the exercise gave a glow to her cheeks and a certain earnestness and spirit to her manner which her ill health sometimes prevents. Lizzie has changed her dress now and sat down with me. She appears quite cheerful, and has none of that troublesome cough which worried me when I saw her last (in October). Yesterday was Fast Day and we had no Recitations. I spent the forenoon here, and the Afternoon and evening with my particular friend, Frank Gilman. I also slept with Frank and have returned here, after breakfast this morning. Last evening Frank & I attended a Concert of the Sacred Music Society. (Lizzie did not choose to go) and I enjoyed the Concert exceedingly. The Oratorio which they sung was one on which we have been drilled this winter, and the words and music were very familiar.

Something in music, that we have heard before, always sounds best.

Mrs Waite has not entirely recovered from her illness, but is still quite weak, but she appears in good spirits and says she thinks she has a long <> of life.

Mother wrote me a few days since a letter overflowing with love and tenderness. Charles wrote the same day and appears to have a good time at Kents Hill. Rodelphus wrote me a letter of three pages and was very enthusiastic over one that he received from you, a short time before. They tell me of the death of Mrs. Turner, Esq Turners wife. This is not unexpected.

We have a Temperance Society in College numbering 50 good sound men and we are working in a quiet, social conciliatory manner to gain new accessions from the ranks of those who get drunk on Fast Days.

Mrs Waite sends a great deal of love and says she is glad that the four years are nearly up. Lizzie don't know to whom I am writing. Mr Perley is at Livermore. Miss Ellen & mother are here. The family appear pleasantly situated. I have no more time to write as I leave for Brunswick in a short time. I remain with much love

Your Brother
Rowland

I wish you would drink with me some of Mrs Ws bark beer. It's good.

464 4/17/1853 *From:* CH Howard

To: Brother [O O Howard]

OOH-0431

Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

Topsham April 17th 1853

My dear brother;

Rowland brought me from the P. Office a letter of the usual stamp, ie. in length & quality, from you, last evening. I answer so quickly; for it seems you have not heard from home very lately, from which we had a letter, not containing so desirable news as could be wished for, a few days since. Dellie wrote me the letter of four pages, enclosing one of two pages from mother, written a week before the date of his, which was last Sabbath, a week ago today. I will copy some parts of it in his own style, then you can draw your own inferences, in regard to mother's situation at the present.

"Why mother did not write was because she was sick." "She was threatened with the lung-fever." "Dr Bolster came here three times." "She is getting better now; she got up this morning by 7 o'clock." Then our mother has been sick Otis, but how sick I am unable to tell. He says in another place. "Mother said that I should write for her, now she is not able to write." "She was calculating to come to Topsham to see you if she had not been sick." "She will come now if she gets well." &c.

In another place "Mother intends to write Tuesday forenoon to you, if she is able." If mother had written at that time we should have rec. the letter last Thursday, instead of that, we have not yet rec. one. I hope we shall have one tomorrow or Tuesday, which will be the case if one was mailed Saturday at Leeds.

You do not have near so much leisure time as I do. I wish I did not have so much, you wish for more. I do not apply myself to study near so closely as I ought. And especially this past week have I had much play-time. In the first place there was our usual Wednesday afternoon, which I had to myself. It was as pleasant an afternoon as ever I witnessed. Rowland went out after May flowers & for a walk. I thought I would study & actually came up in my room & took my Algebra for a short time; but I found that I could not study with any profit, & so concluded to take my walk also in the pure and fresh air.

I went across the Railroad bridge, went over to Brunswick grave-yard. I went alone; I had not been there since, (do you remember!) I went with you & Mother, also accompanied by Mrs Greene. I remained there quite a long time, read nearly every, or the inscription on nearly every grave stone there.

The next day was fast day in Maine; so we had no school. "It was not pleasant today", my Journal says (for I have a journal) "but hailed a little in the morning, was cloudy & rainy all day long." "I read Putnams monthly in the forenoon & during the day wrote a letter home." That night an inch of snow fell, but was melted away by the hot sun the next day.

Then Friday evening I went over to Brunswick & heard the Macomber girls sing for I had no lesson to get for Saturday afternoon, but then I had enough to study if I had stayed at home. Rowland & Mr Adams went over too. Then Yesterday forenoon I studied, then again in the afternoon I went to walk. But in the evening, after Rowland & I sang some, I took my Algebra. I am nearly as far advanced in that as any in my class. Those who are in advance of me do not perform all the questions & I do, but I shall soon over take them I think, although they have studied it before, for I have gained upon them since I began. They being some what in advance of me when I commenced. As the first bell has rung for meeting I must prepare to go.

After leaving my letter this forenoon, I started to go to the Baptist church with Rowland, but at a little distance up the street we met several of his old classmates, with whom I used to be acquainted at Yarmouth, & hearing that there was to be a baptism up to the Freewill church, we went with them up there, and after listening to a short sermon, we with the rest of the Congregation repaired to the river to witness the baptism. There were four persons baptized. I should think Otis, that you would be somewhat abashed in the presence of such great men unless you know more than they do, or at least if I judge you by myself I should think so.

I do wish I did feel a little more fearlessly. I try to overcome this bashfulness pretty hard, but still I have not done much toward accomplishing it yet. I entered to declaim every week this Term, so to become an

unabashed speaker if possible. Your explanation before Sir James Alaxender was of the polarization of light. There are 10 or 12 pages in my Philosophy devoted to this, but this is exceedingly short I suppose compared with your study of it. Are the undulatory & wave theory the same? I supposed that they were, if they are, I suppose I can study in my Philosophy just about enough perhaps to give me a slight idea of what your demonstration was, & that is all.

Yes Otis, I like Phil- & Chem-. Very much & should be glad to have you write much about these & I might derive some benefit perhaps from what you might write; though I know you might write much very much, which would be far beyond my comprehension. Yet I hope to have a knowledge of such sciences, "One of these days" as well as, my brother. Although I know it will require application & perseverance, properties which I know are more prominent in my brother than in myself, although I mean to possess both. Surely these traits have not shown themselves much in my course of last week, as you know I have pictured it to you.

Some young men need much caution to keep them from studying too hard, so as to injure their health, while others, (& there are very many of this class), need much, very much admonition to make them study as much as they themselves could wish or as their friends wish them to. I think I come much nearer to this latter class than to the former; for I know that there is no danger of my studying too hard. I shall never therefore have any thing to fear, from that source.

But there seems to be another chance coming along to take me from my studies if I am of a mind, to go, this very next week. They are to have a poem from Tutor Pike in Brunswick lyceum; & I am almost of a mind to go as I have never heard any thing of the kind, & as he is a man of some note. Did you ever hear him speak? I would like to get some advice from you Otis, in regard to such things. I like always to go where I can acquire knowledge. I rather go to a lyceum lecture than to twenty concerts & I should not have gone to the concert if I had not had my ticket given me.

I think your adventure with Cadet Arthur was about as amusing as anything I have ever heard of occurring at West Point. We had a little laugh over it, I tell you. Rowland said that it was just like you to be carrying him up to his room in your arms, "Otis is always dipping into every thing."

Rowland has had a Cyclopedia of English literature, this even & for amusement instruction &c has been getting Mr Adams to see how many of the poets he could quote & how much of them he could quote. Now they are on American poets. Rowland does better quoting than Adams, ie verbatim. I think that Rowland remembers what he reads very plainly. This I cannot seem to do as well as I could wish. Though I think that I do not learn very hard but seem to be wanting in memory, though perhaps if I should <have> something to call up what I have read I should remember it better.

It has now got to be half past ten, Sabbath evening. So Adams says, on whom we have to rely for time, this is past my bed time.

From yr Affec Br'hr
CH Howard

Mr Adams wishes me to remember him to you.

465 4/18/1853 *From:* Rowland [Howard] *To:* Brother [O O Howard]

OOH-0432 Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

Monday Morning Apr 18 [1853]

Dear Brother

The news of mothers illness came very unexpectedly, but from what Dellie says, I hope that it is not serious, or at least is leaving her. Had she not been sick she would have visited Charly and myself by this time. Do you recollect Horatio Howard? Charles Howards son. He has some remembrance of you. He appears to be a good fellow and a fine scholar. This is his first term of Medical Lectures.

Yesterday was a very cold uncomfortable day. But there were two Baptisms, one on each side of the River, opposite each other. There are to be a number more.

You seiged that fourth classman in a very characteristic maner. I could relate many anecdotes of your prowess under similar circumstances and some how, you know, you always get hurt.

Miss Annie Bartlett has been down to Brunswick but I did not see her. I have not heard from Lizzie for a long time. Henry Gilbert has lost another of his daughters. Topsham news, there is none. Ditto Colege. Ditto Leeds. Ditto Portland. Hoping to hear from you in answer to my last long (if I recollect) letter. I remain as ever

Your affectionate Brother
Rowland

466 4/21/1853 *From:* CH Howard

To: Mrs Eliza Gilmore

OOH-0433a

Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

Topsham Apr 21st 53

Dear mother;

I am sorry that it has so happened that you will be obliged to defer your visit to Topsham. Yet I am glad that you have recovered your health sufficient to write us a letter, for I began to think, not having the letter at the time Dellie mentioned that you were not recovering & I find by your's that you were not well enough to write at that time. But I hope you will now soon regain your health. It seems very unhealthy at Leeds this spring of sickness & death is the only news we hear from there. Esq Turner it seems is most gone now & Mrs White was just buried. Such is what we have found in every letter. I hope we shall not hear of any more deaths, although I know all are for the best.

Then father is not going to Mass or New York? Otis will be some disappointed when he hears that for he anticipated having much pleasure from his visit. I had a letter from him a few days ago, he seems to be enjoying himself. He told of an amusing occurrence which happened even at West Point the other day. It was of a fellow's getting up from bed in sleep, & performing his usual military exercises. At last Otis carried him to his chamber & placed him back in his bed.

I suppose then if you do not come here mother, there will no one visit us from home this term. If any one should I should like to have some of my summer clothes such as my shirt & pants, for it is growing warm. Besides my clothes are growing thin, verging to a hole in some places. But I can make them last by getting them mended if there is no other way. All but my best pants, which I have been wearing for two or three days, are worn through at the seat but one of the boarders promised to mend them but I have no pieces, but darning will do for a little while. And some of these hot sunny days my face gets burnt with my little caps. still if there is no other way, I can get along with what I have.

Dellie writes a real good letter every time. Tell him to try hard on writing well, as well as all other things & he will do it. He writes a good lot of news. One thing that seems rather misterious to Rowland & me is why he has so much to say about Mr Rangley a man whom I scarcely ever saw in my life. I'll tell you mother, what we have surmised as to this. We have concluded that he must have moved on to our farm. Is it so? I suppose Dellie thought that you had written to us all about it.

22 Apr

Last evening I went to hear a Poem at Brunswick lyceum given by Sarra S Pike. It was a very pleasant evening. Mr Maxim who you know is one of the Medicos at B came over here just before night & went with us back to hear the poem. It looks this evening very much as though it would rain. The grass already begins to look fresh & green, but I think a rain would help it.

Yesterday about noon there was a vessel launched here, one which has been building here for some time. Mr Adams & the school went to see it launched, but I was obliged to study so as to get my lesson.

Give my love to all at home, it will not be a long time before I shall be there too.

From your Afec Son
CH Howard

Mrs Eliza Gilmore

[P.S.] Aurilla has a bad cough which troubles her very much in School and out. She needs her mother to cure her up. Like all young girls she is rather imprudent of her health. Remember me to Aunt Lucretia & Del, Mrs Woodman.

[Continued on the next letter from Rowland on Apr 21 53]

467 4/21/1853 *From:* Rowland [Howard] *To:* Mrs Eliza Gilmore

OOH-0433b Topsham

Source: Bowdoin

[Continued from the previous letter from Charles on Apr 21st 53]

Topsham Apr 21st 1853

My Dear Mother

You can't think how pleased I was to hear from you, at last. The letter was mailed at Hallowell and we got it two hours afterwards. I am very glad that you are getting along so well and am in hopes that by the time I see you, you will look and feel the same as ever. Otis writes Charly in good health and spirits. Tutor Pike recited a very fine Poem last night before the Lyceum. He is a young man of much talent and promise. The son of an old Brunswick Schoolmaster. I shall recite all of my Lessons to him next Term.

I have written two letters to Lizzie since I have received one from her. I suppose she has not heard of your illness and is still expecting you in Portland or She would write. You mentioned something of our clothes in your last. I have been compelled to wear my best coat and pants pretty common this term especially in school, and my back has become so much worn as not to hardly decent. My <burck> coat has come to mending at the Elbows, and of course begins to look very rusty for Sunday, after mending it all of the week. I think I must have me a new coat of some kind to wear for best during the Summer and Autumn. I would get measured now and have one made at the tailors here if I had the money to pay for it. But as Father has suggested that I get nothing on the credit system, I shall wait for a remittance. I must get a coat that will do for Sabbath during the Summer and be suitable to wear to New York if I go at the close of the Summer Term.

I have not settled with Dr Peaslee yet for his consultations & prescriptions. I have had no means of knowing his bill as he has not been in the three times that I have called upon him. It must be a gratification to you to know that his medicine helped me and that Charles has not been so well for six months as now. He is fast recovering his usual spirits and muscular energy. The settlement of Charles bills and other expenses may be deferred until my return at the commencement of the next Term, but I have thought it best that I have the money now for these two things. The Dr's bill, I should suppose, will not be over three dollars as I consulted him but three times and had pretty long conversations. Such a coat as I wish for and as you would wish me to have under the circumstances would be about \$14.00. If you and Father think it for the best, I should like to have him enclose this amount (17-) in you next letter.

Cousin Horatio's Term closes so much before mine that we shall not be in Leeds together unless he stops there some time. I have not seen him very lately.

Remember me to Father Dellie and all the rest of the family. We still feel anxious about your health. Write us a few words just to let us know how you are getting along, if nothing more by Tuesdays mail. Dellie writes as though he was a very busy and important personage. I am glad to hear that he is making himself so useful.

Think of me still as your affectionate Son.
Rowland

468 4/26/1853 *From:* O. O. Howard

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0434

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Apr 26th 1853

My dear mother,

I received your last kind letter in good season, and should have answered it Sunday but I thought my letter would appear to you new or fresher to know that I wrote it but a day or two before you read it, since if I put it in the office tomorrow morning you will get it just as soon as if I had put it in on Monday.

I had not dreamt that you were sick and so sick for a long time and I knew nothing of it. I got a letter from my brothers at the same time I got your letter telling me of the same unpleasant news, that my mother had been very sick but was now convalescent. I hope from my heart that you will be well entirely when this reaches you. I presume it will do your poor head no good to dwell on your sickness, so after telling you of the affectionate sympathy of your son - and that nothing would make him happier than to be with you now and be able to minister to your comfort & if possible soothe your pain, and talk with you when you might be able to hear it. (But this may not be at present).

I will pass to other things that will be pleasant for you to know. Since I last wrote you I have been made an officer - Quartermaster - Sergeant, with the fair prospect of becoming Quartermaster next year. You will of course be curious to learn the advantages of this office. This officer belongs to what military phraseology is denominated the staff. I do not have to attend roll-calls, drills, or parades. I do not have to carry a musket but wear a sword and sash to Sunday morning inspection and to Church. All my duties except Academic duties - riding & Artillery - are to inspect 1/2 barracks for damages every Friday night, to open the storerooms & remain by them for a time every Sunday morning after inspection, to attend Sunday morning inspection. These duties of course are easily performed. I wear a pair of chevrons on my arm at all times. You may remember this insignia of Cadet Officers, Each officer of different grade has a different badge. Mine is the second office in my class, and by far the most desirable one. It was very unexpected to be thus raised from a private in ranks and put above 15 or sixteen sergeants of my class.

The vice president's death [William Rufus King] was announced in orders last night. This morning 13 guns were fired at reveille, at 12 o'clock we will fire as many more and at parade 30 will be fired. At ten o'clock today we all paraded & listened to the announcement by the President and Secretary of War of the departure of their brother in official honors accompanied by a brief obituary. Death seems to deal inspiringly with us as a nation cutting off our first & greatest arm sorely afflicting those who are left to us. But it becomes us to acknowledge the wisdom of Providence even in chastening us.

My brothers wrote me about George's death and that of Dea Carey. But they did not tell me that Orman C- had died too. I do not know what will become of Leeds. I have always felt a deep respect for Dea Carey for I believe him to be just what he professed - a good Christian, an upright honest man. I hope Lucia will recover from the effects of her disappointment which must have come so sudden, so unexpected, upon her. Her hopes were undoubtedly as bright, her love as real and deep as mine. And they were crushed. But though it may pale the cheek, and embitter the cup of life, yet it is needless & wrong to cherish & aggravate these feelings of bitterness, which end in gloom and melancholy. It is not a proper tribute to the memory of the one that's gone. Still no one is capable of interpreting the state of another's heart, the feelings, the tender cords that may easily be broken and certainly the one who has not felt such a insight of disappointment is incapable of appreciating the feelings of one who has. We are all very practical, can easily predict the course we would pursue, but it needs experience to make us feel a proper delicacy & sympathy for those who suffer.

We seem to have a great amount of cold rainy weather this month. I fear it may injure some of the farmers' early crops. I presume however, very little has yet been done in Maine except to sow some oats or work in the garden.

Capt Williams brother made me a call the other day, while the battalion was at drill, and I spent a very pleasant hour with him. He is a very fine young man, pleasant & gentlemanly. I call on him about every Saturday. He is staying here with his brother to read. He likes the place much.

The foregoing I wrote this morning between ten & twelve. I have now just returned from drawing. The battalion is gone to drill. Isn't it grand to have so much time to myself? I did not tell you of all the honors that have been conferred on me. Last Saturday night I was elected vice president of the Dialectic Society, and am told that I will have to deliver the oration on the fourth of July next. This last does not portend anything like ease.

I am very anxious to hear from you again. You must not be anxious about property. We have been boys highly favored and if we have not or do not fit ourselves for the duties of this life sufficiently to take care of ourselves we are not worth much.

I got the dentist to extract a tooth for me the other day & he made bad work of it. He crushed it & then failed to get out the roots, so my tooth is in a worse state than it was before - rather troublesome.

I was sorry that it happened so that father could not come to N. York for I would have been very much pleased to have seen him. We have only one month more before June, but in that time there is an abundance of study. I wish it was over. I want to get into the last year. This is the hardest year we will have I fancy.

Remember me affectionately to all my friends & relatives. Thank Dellie for me that he wrote me so good a letter.

From yr affectionate son
O. O. Howard