
523 1/1/1854

From: Otis [O O Howard]

To: Dellie [R H Gilmore]

OOH-0487

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Jan 1st 1854.

My dear Dellie,

I have already written two lengthy epistles tonight, one to Lizzie & one to Mother, but as I fancied your disappointed looks that will spread itself over your countenance every time mother breaks the seal of a letter from West Point with nothing enclosed for you. I began to have a pressing sense of my unpardonable neglect & could not resist the temptation of stealing another half hour from sleep, in order to pen a few thoughts to you if they are not so bright as you might expect from a young gentleman who has had a double dose of education. But the very awkward, disconnected sentences that have their birth on the disputed territory, situated between the country of Wakedom & dreamland are often the most entertaining by far. You see, we have so many common sense matters to deal with in ordinary every-day-life that we get surfeited with them, so we say "anything for variety". We can laugh at a fool for his folly & at the odd man for his eccentricity - while the wise remarks of a rail-road man are too dry & stale to possess a spark of interest.

My room-mate has gone to the Hospital & I am all alone. He poor boy is afflicted after the manner of Job, only not to such a degree, since he has but one thorn in the flesh. He has been lying on his bed for two days looking pale & disconsolate. I took the part of Job's comforters. Only I did not try to convince him that it was for the sin of self-righteousness, that he was afflicted, but I laughed at him & after gave him the <old> prescription - "patience, patience my boy"! I told him of my six month's experience, three at a time, & of the rich times I had on furlough where these grievous afflictions were particularly calculated to render the spirits sore & by an equal reaction make the body sorer.

I am glad you are going to be such a nice boy this winter and learn so much. You must as you undoubtedly have done, get Rowland to tell you what you had better study as he can tell better than I can.

Our class chose horses by lot while I was at Peekskill - so that we now have each a horse that we call our own. They chose for me one called Ritchie, a very good horse. He is smart & has one good quality, he never stumbles or falls. I shall ride him & him alone till I graduate next June. A week ago last Wednesday I rode a horse name Dike. After riding all together a while our platoon was halted & each one required to ride his horse by himself twice or three times round the riding hall. My beast was contrary at first & said he wouldn't go. After getting a decent whipping from our instructor & a good spurring from myself he started at a rapid rate but with the wrong foot foremost. Mr Sacket said "don't ride him so fast", just as I was passing the corner, at that instant all four of his clumsy legs went from under him & he came on his side with me in the saddle as a consequence my foot was under him & got slightly jambed, but the tan bark was soft & it did not hurt me much. I got up before the horse but could not ride any more that day. I am well now. So you perceive I am slightly prejudiced against horses that cannot keep their feet under them.

Good night - a happy New Year

Your affectionate brother

Otis

524 1/1/1854

From: Rowland [Howard]

To: Brother [O O Howard]

OOH-0488a

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds Sunday Jan 1, 1854

Dear Brother

I wish you a happy new Year! And scores more of the same sort. We have all exchanged the new years greeting this morning and would be much pleased to make it verbally to you. But wait a little while and I am in hopes we shall all be united again at home.

We are literally buried in snow. Two storms of eighteen inches each accompanied by gales of wind, have piled the snow mountains high. The road between this and the School House is filled from wall to wall, as you used to see it but if possible, worse than ever!

The drifts are ten and fifteen feet deep. The change is sudden for when I came home a little more than a week since the ground was bare and people were earnestly wishing for a little snow. Now they have it in abundance. The drifts prevent all traveling and they must content themselves to stay at home and count themselves happy if they have warm houses and a plenty of fuel. The cars do not make their regular trips and we have no mail for four days and Saturday night has come and passed without any letter or newspaper. This is something that seldom happens to us.

I left Brunswick the next morning after our Examination. (Wednesday) The Examination passed with as much credit to me as I deserve. I took a little screw in Greek & French and got off pretty well in Latin and Mathematics. That Geometry is very easy, but I expect to bring up against something in that branch before long.

I have kept school now for one week but have not had a full attendance of scholars since the first day on account of the Storm. The scholars all appear kind and obliging. They call me Rowland out of school and are very familiar but they appear to like me and try hard to please me. The school is not like the one that Townsend undertook to keep in the same place. All those great boys have left, except Silas Bates and two or three others of his age. The School House is new and comfortable and I see nothing to prevent my having a pleasant winter if my cold gets better. My cough is very bad now but I have considerable faith in Mothers doctering.

Lizzie has not answered that long letter that I wrote her before I left Brunswick. Charles wrote her a few days since and I added a note. I fear she is sick. Perhaps she is offended that I did not write her before, but I did not feel a bit like it till after the "reconciliation".

I have not been about in Leeds any yet and have not learned "the gossip". They have three singing Schools, a dancing School and a debating Club in Town. Solomon Lothrop has been <mulct> in the sum of two hundred dollars for selling Rum. This decision has almost killed the old man and has created considerable excitement in certain quarters. Gramother is at Uncle Ensigns but will return to Hallowell as soon as the traveling is suitable. I have not seen her yet.

Monday Evening.

I have kept school all day and am now seated at home, tired enough helping Father about his books. The boys have a Juvenile Temperance Society, and I have scribbled down a slight Oration for Dell to deliver at the next meeting. I told him and Charles not to trouble me any more about it and they have spent most of the evening in getting it out as I would a Greek Lesson. Some of the words both bother them dreadfully.

Our old neighbor Alvin Lane died last night after the long illness which has afflicted him for years. Walter Bishop, Jo's youngest son, was brought home on the cars yesterday a corpse. He has been working in Ohio lately. He died suddenly and the first warning of his fate that his friends received was his coffin.

Father keeps the worst kind of pens, paper and ink. So this letter is as you see perfectly horrible. Our kind wishes are all with you during your coming Examination.

Charles will answer his good long letter before long and Dellie will send a note in this. Mother will write a word or so. Let us hear from you frequently.

Your affectionate Brother
Rowland

[Continued on the next letter from Eliza Gilmore]

527 1/1/1854

From: R. H. Gilmore

To: O O Howard

OOH-0489b

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

[Continued on the previous letter from Charles]

Leeds, Jan 1st 1854

Dear Brother

As it has been but a short time since I have written to you, I shall write a short letter. It is the first day of the Week, first day of the Month and of the Year. Our School has begun with a stormy week. It has snowed every other day. Our house is well banked up for the rest part of the winter. Mr Berry is in here. He says the snow is three feet deep where it has not blown of & we have a hard time of it going to school. They did not beat out the roads until yesterday in the afternoon. One night when we were coming home we froze our ears, most all of us. George Bates froze both of his feet the same night. After all the trouble we have had, it snows hard now, the snow that came this morning, is 4 inches deep, (all Snows) I have got most tired of such weather.

Charles Rowland & Mr Berry are singing. Charlie is playing on the Aeolean. Mother & Catharine are getting dinner. Mother says it is ready now.

I have just eaten dinner. We had some sauce and Beef steak. Charles says he shall write a letter to you soon in answer to your long one that you wrote him last. I am well and all of the rest of us are the same. Answer Soon.

I hope you are well and will get through your examination well.

Your affectionate Brother
R.H. Gilmore

O. O. Howard

526 1/1/1854

From: Charles H Howard

To: O O Howard

OOH-0489a

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Dear Brother

"I wish you a happy new year"

Charles H Howard

Your Brother

Jan 1st 1854

[Continued on the next letter from Dellie]

528 1/6/1854 *From:* C. C. Everett

To: Dear Fellow [O O
Howard]

OOH-0490

Brunswick

Source: Bowdoin

Brunswick Jan 6 '54

My dear fellow

At a meeting of the class of 50, held the 7th day of Sepr last, it was noted that a testimonial be presented to the first of the class who should become a father. Our esteemed class mate William P. Frye having sent in his proposals therefore claiming to be the father of a young lady of some weeks; and no one petition having appeared against him; the Testimonial aforesaid has been awarded to him.

You will please, therefore, forward to me, as soon as possible the sum of \$2.00, or in default thereof, such less sum as may seem to you convenient to be expended for the above purpose.

At the request of Frye the present will be a Cradle - instead of the Baby Jumper originally contemplated.

In accordance with another vote taken at the same time, you will please inform me of any change in your residence &c and at any rate report yourself every year at Commencement time.

Yours truly
your friend & class mate
(signed) C. C. Everett
Secretary

529 1/15/1854 *From:* O. O. Howard

To: Mother & Brothers

OOH-0492

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Jan 15th '54

My dear Mother & brothers

I received your very long & kind letter in good time, but as I have been busy in preparing for the Examination I have not yet replied to it. I will only now write you a few lines to let you know of my health & prosperity.

I have been examined in Engineering & in International Law & Logic. I did very well indeed on my demonstration in Engineering & did not fail on but one question "or questions" and that was unimportant. I came out fifth. In logic I did well too. Got slightly confused once and as others did remarkably well I came out 6 in law & logic. We will be examined in Mineralogy & Geology tomorrow. I will soon give you a detailed history of the whole affair.

After my Explanation to Professor Mahan, he & Capt G. W. Smith have treated me very kindly & behaved towards me after the same Gentle manner on the Examination. I have my ups & downs, but on the whole am quite happy. I fight away when in hot water & enjoy the cool breezes when I get out. Mr Abbot & I have made up & I have the good will of all my classmates. Shall graduate finally as high as third.

Give my love to all. I will write soon.

Yours affectionately
O.O. Howard

531 1/23/1854 *From:* Susan V. Greble

To: [O. O.] Howard

OOH-0493

Philada

Source: Bowdoin

Philada January 23d 1854

My dear Mr Howard

After remaining silent for so long a time, I fear now to address you lest you will say that selfish motives impeled me to write to you, and yet I would not have you think for one moment that we have forgotten the pleasant hours which we passed at West Point last summer, my reluctance to write to a stranger must plead my excuse for so long delaying to write to you, and now that I am so very anxious about my dearly loved son, I can not suffer my pen to remain longer idle, but must seek for the cause of John's silence from you.

It has been six long weeks since I have received one line from one who is so dear to me. I have feared that John must be ill or that he may have a broken leg, or an arm, from having fallen from his horse. Last week to make me more anxious, Major Crossman's son informed me that there was a Court Martial being held on some Cadets for disorderly conduct. Now at any other time I should not have thought of my dear sons being involved in any thing of the kind, but not having heard from him, I have been induced to think that he may have suffered himself to be led into temptation.

On Tuesday last I wrote to him, and then told him, that he must write immediately, and have been looking anxiously for a letter every day since Thursday, and as there is yet no news from him, I thought it best to write to you. No matter my dear Mr Howard what has been the cause of my dear John's silence, I look to you to tell me all, if sickness we will be with him, as soon as the news reaches us. If from any other cause, who so able as his parents and home friends, to sooth his wounded feelings. If nothing is the matter with him, which God in his Mercy grant, we will of us next summer laugh at the fears of a loving Mother.

We will all be very glad to see you Mr Howard, at any time.

Mr Greble joins me in many good wishes for your future welfare, and Loui with kind regards wishes to be remembered to her loved brother's friend. When did you last hear from Pinkie? How does the Major succeed in his courtship? How often I think of him, and just as often feel provoked to think that he pushed things so far last summer. I have often thought that he saw that we were all too happy, and that made him brake up the harmony of our feelings.

With sentiments of esteem I am my dear Mr Howard Yours truly
Susan V Greble

P.S. Loui is now writing to her brother and our letters will accompany this.

Yours
S. V. G.

532 1/25/1854 *From:* W.L.L. [Warren L
Lothrop]

To: Otis [O O Howard]

OOH-0494

Source: Bowdoin

Jan 25th [1854]

Dear Otis,

I received your note with the money enclosed. I am pleased to hear you have recovered from your accident. I heard of it the day it happened & went to the Hospt to see you, but the Dr was absent & I could not get in. I also met with an accident about two weeks ago, while riding out, the horse fell on my right leg tearing off the skin & bruising it in a horrid manner. I was off duty about a week on account of it.

I returned from N.Y. yesterday - went down to meet Jane (Elias' wife) who has gone on to New Orleans to spend the winter with her brother Ruggles. I did not see her as she stopped at the St Nicholas. I wrote to her to stop at the Astor House, & expected to meet her, but I suppose the gentleman with her preferred stopping at the St. Nicholas. We were both in N.Y. about 24 hours at the same time. I was greatly disappointed. She sent a note to me at the Astor, but I got it a few moments too late.

I met Emery, (or Armory, I don't know how he spells his name) at the St Nicholas. I had quite a chat with him, & satisfied myself that he is a "bad boy". I also met your Uncle John Otis at the St Nicholas, & had a long chat with him. I told him of the accident you met with & he seemed to think you would get killed yet. He had been on to Philadelphia. Every thing with me goes smooth.

In haste & truly yours
W.L.L. [Warren L Lothrop]