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573 1/20/1855 *From:* Otis [O O Howard]

*To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

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Watervliet Arsenal

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Watervliet Arsenal

Jan. 20th 1855.

My dear Mother

I have taken up my pen to write you a few lines this morning in the hopes of getting a reply from some one of the family for I am no little anxious to hear from home. I wrote to Rowland some time ago, but have received no answer. I hope his cold did not grow upon him. I have not heard from Lizzie for some time and cannot tell how she is getting on. I have applied to Washington for a leave of 20 days commencing on the 5th of February, but have not yet got a reply. Maj Symington who is now president of the Board of Ordnance has gone to Washington, went yesterday. He says he will hasten my leave, so that I may know certainly before hand that it is granted.

I have been into society very much since my return. The parties which are now quite frequent, will be over before Lizzie comes. Since very few people in this part of the Country have parties during Lent.

I am very anxious to hear from Lizzie. She has so much to contend with of which I never dreamed till I was home last. Her mother cannot bear the idea of being separated from her, and I fear does not enter into our arrangements with a very hearty good will. I shall be glad when the wedding is over and we are fairly settled here at Watervliet.

Day before yesterday I visited Mrs General Wool, of whose husband the secretary of war is so disposed to Congress. She is one of the most interesting and sensible ladies I have met. She got upon the subject of her husband's treatment & could hardly stop. I intended to stay ten minutes & was obliged to remain upwards of an hour. Army officers have splendid advocates in their wives.

I wish you would write me if publishment is now in vogue in Maine. It is in New York.

Give my love to all.

Your affectionate Son  
Otis