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576 5/26/1855 *From:* Otis [O O Howard]

*To:* Wife [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-0527

Watervliet Arsenal

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Watervliet Arsenal  
May 26th 1855

My darling "Little Wife",

This is the first note I have commenced to you since our marriage, the first time I have written that appellation that struck us both at Uncle Oren Whitman's and caused the flushes to mantle your cheek that one I mean that Aunt Lucy spoke of suggested by the title of a book, "The Little Wife." I hoped to have found a letter, will get it tomorrow probably. You know I am full of hopes & fears like a fond husband that I am, but I will not bore you with a rehearsal. I will not say much about the sense of loneliness that came over me when I entered the familiar quarters here & was almost of a mind "to gloom" a little - no I will tell you of these things that are felt & not easily described when you get back. Now to the point. I left you, with a tear or so in your eyes - you know where & when. I went immediately in search of Mr Pease's office - Tremont St. for Uncle, nobody there but an old man who takes care of the rooms. He let me put my bag in the office. I went to the Tremont House next. Saw Mr Carter of Troy and talked with him, he has been in Boston for some time on business, asked after Mrs H & wanted me to say a good word to his friends at home if I saw them. I went again to Mr Pease's, Uncle had not come & waited some time, then went to the American House to find him.

When I got back the third time I found him & talked with him an hour or more. When I left him to go to Cousin's at East Cambridge I took an Omnibus at Brattle St. It was soon full; one gentleman besides myself. The rest women - after the seats were filled four more of the fair sex jumped in. The horses could not start then up the hill and began to be fractious and backed round slewing the Omnibus into the middle & across the street. One woman who sat next to me had a little child, a "borrowed one" as she styled the "little brat" about 2 years of age. The child was getting squeezed, so I took it in my lap. Like a parcel of fads all these women fourteen or fifteen of them then jumped up & screamed. I was mad of course, but calmly told them to be seated, but no. The unruly creatures would jump out behind. The woman with the child among the rest. She begged of me to follow with the "little one"; but no I wasn't going to make a fool of myself so I sat still. So did the other gentleman & one or two women to their credit. The Omnibus turned round (not over) & draw down Brattle St, took a turn round the square & returned to the head of the same. The woman with the borrowed child came rushing in; "where's the baby! Where's the baby! Why she (Twas a Gal) and I were having a grand ride. The woman with the borrowed child said she was afraid I would carry it off, it was such a dear little thing. All the while I'd been thinking what the deuce I should do with it, without you along when night came. I could put it on the back & lay it on its little (that part that aches so when the baby has eaten too much or got worms). Well the little one gave me a kiss and the borrower a multiplicity of thanks as my 'Bus ride was brought to a close.

I got a good hearty welcome at Cousin Olives. She wanted to see you. Sent her love to you & says tell Lizzie she must come right here when she returns. I got a good welcome too from Mr Hazzard when he came to dinner. He brought his horse to take his baby to ride. He gave it up to Ollie & Roddie, who took me to ride to visit cousin Martha (Martin) at Old Cambridge and go to ride where we pleased. We paid the visit to Martha. Then went on past the Colleges, saw Henry with wife, Mrs Hardy, daughter & Laura in somebody's garden. They came and inquired if you got to the cars in season &c. Said Watertown Arsenal was about three miles distant. So the boys & myself concluded to go thither. I went with them accompanied by a polite old clerk to all the store houses, shops &c, saw Capt Wainwright & the young Mr Webber don't think Watertown can compare with Watervliet - not so many buildings by half - surrounded by a high peaked-top board fence. It is on a small stream of water, and the grounds within are very prettily laid out and are now looking finely. I attended the trial of John Chapman for the murder of Cozzens committed in Framingham Mass. The Court House is but a step or two from cousin Olive's, you may remember. This Chapman is a small handsome young man with beautiful hair. He looks slender & innocent. I (who do not mean to boast) believe I could whip four of such as he is. Still if he did the murder, he must have thrown a big Irishman, half as heavy again as himself and struggled with him through two or more rooms to the outer door and all this he must have done against a man of double his strength struggling for dear life. When I looked upon the fair face & delicate form of the youth I said in my heart it is inevitable. He came from Maine. I heard a part of his defense, not very able but I don't think he can be pronounced guilty of murder, though circumstances seem to show that he was accessory for by a falsehood he decoyed the old man out to meet his untimely death. It was a sad thing to me to listen to that trial yesterday. I

think the lessons I learned did me good. How important it is to live in such a manner as to completely disarm suspicion. Ollie Hazzard is here. He was to have a weeks vacation from tomorrow. So I asked his father to let him come with me. He was a companion for me on my way back & will be so here.

Birdies are well - glad to see me back undoubtedly, fed them a little with large seeds from my hand. You haven't been out of mind since I entered this front room except perhaps while I was reckoning my expenses & setting them down. All well I find - haven't been to the major's yet. Boggs says if I could go into my old room & sleep tonight, I would wake up tomorrow morning & think the past three months had been a dream and that I had not been married at all.

I should inquire how you find our mother & aunt & all, but expect you have told me already by the letter that's coming. My love to all and may God bless & protect my darling wife. Good night.

Otis

I am a little tied up before I heard the young men come in from visiting Mrs Thornton about ½ past ten. They called out Ho! Ho! "I called the guard" as usual & went down. Both the young men & Ellen 1st and Ellen 2nd asked after you, how stood the journey. Ellen thinks this part of the house boring without you. I won't say I do for you would enjoy your visit & be very happy. Your mother must not bother you about your being a weak little thing &c. I shall have to scold if they do not all be very cheerful & make your first visit after your marriage very pleasant to you & to themselves. Tell mother what a good husband you have got & how good natured he is to all who help him to make his darling happy. Accept another Good night &, as Shunk would say my best wishes for a "miserable time"

Otis

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577 5/27/1855 *From:* Lizzie [Howard]

*To:* Husband [O O Howard]

OOH-0528

Auburn

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Auburn May 27 1855

Evening 4 o'clock

My dear Husband

I have been to Church - have had my afternoon sleep, and now I do not know what to do with myself unless I write to you. I hope you will mail me a letter before you receive this. I am very anxious to hear from you, to know how you got home, and to learn how you get along alone at Watervliet. My darling Otis, what shall I do? I see I must keep all secrets locked in my own bosom. (Erza has brought me some puffed corn. (We are at Aunt Sarah's.) Would you not like some?)

I think I shall go to Leeds this week and was telling Mother that if I made all my visits, and she got quite well I should not stay as long as I intended. Mother is getting better very fast. I found her quite sick and busy writing a letter to me. I wish she was boarding where it would be more pleasant for her. She does not wish to go to Watervliet. I think she will board with Aunt Betsey, this summer. Uncle Hicks does not live in any better rent than he did before they moved, so she can not board with them. In the spring Uncle Everett thinks of building a new house, and till then I wish she could find a pleasant boarding place, but if she can be contented where she is I will say nothing. I only wish it otherwise because here she does not have a room to herself excepting her sleeping room.

My dear Otis. I have learned a great deal since I have been here, and learned it indirectly. I am going to tell you the truth and that is I do not want to come to Maine alone again. It is at this time of day - twilight, that I think most of you alone at Watervliet. I ought to be there, and now I find myself disappointed in some things. I wish to be back to Troy. I will be happy and cheerful all the time I am here, but when I get home I shall do just as I wish.

I spoke with Mrs Gould coming home from Church. She leaves Lewiston next week.

Uncle Hicks made us a call since I wrote the above. He has gone now.

I hope to get your letter before I go to Leeds. I do not know as I shall wait till it gets here, but go to Leeds and have it forwarded to me. I think now I will go to Leeds Tuesday afternoon, and stay till Friday or Saturday, but I wish you to send all your letters to "Lewiston Falls" as I shall be here the most of the time.

I am coming home just as soon as I can get away dear Otis. I like to be here and see my friends, but I want you to be with me.

Evening nine o'clock.

I have been talking with Mother about going to Troy which she had rather do, stay here or go there. Her health is so poor and is so feeble, I am willing to do any way almost. She finally says, that she would not want to go till another winter. I see that she wants something to look forward to. I will write very often to you, my husband, and I wish you to do the same. Mention no secrets to any but me, but I need not caution you I know.

Remember me kindly to my friends at Watervliet and tell Mr Boggs, I shall surely stay eight days, but shall say nothing about the three weeks he mentioned. I would like to write to Miss Mary but with making and receiving visits I do not expect to find time to write only to you.

Now good bye, and believe  
I love you with my whole heart.

Your affectionate  
Lizzie

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578 5/29/1855    *From:* Otis [O O Howard]    *To:* Wife [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-0529                      Watervliet Arsenal, N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Watervliet Arsenal, N.Y.  
May 29th 1855

My dearest wife

I received your welcome letter this morning. I was looking for it hoping to get it as early as Saturday night or Sunday morning and therefore was a little disappointed , but it is all right now.

I was sorry that you did not find mother in better health and am glad on her account that you have made your visit so early. Ellen has made frequent inquiries for Mrs Howard, seemed pleased to hear from you through your letter and said tell her when you write that we wish her back.

The table Ellen wanted you here last Saturday and Sunday she said. We had company. Lieut McPherson of the Engineers stationed at New York & Lieut Cogswell of the infantry, instructor of Infantry Tactics at West Point, besides a Young Lawyer Jackson from Albany, friend of Mr Cogswell's. McPherson is a classmate of Boggs. I like him very much and so would you, since he is a good hearted, honest, straight-forward fellow. He wanted to see you much, and said that though he had not seen you he must leave his kindest regards for you. He slept on Laura's iron bed stead and when he came into our chamber to adjust his collar, I gave him a rose that had just blossomed on the rose bush. He thanked Mrs H for it through me and put is into his collar box to preserve it till he got home.

We had a great dinner on Saturday, and the young men had a great time. The particulars I will tell you here after. On Sunday, they got two carriages and went to the Shaker village to witness their novel service. I let Ollie Hazard go with them. I staid at home and went to Church with Mrs Lansing to hear her new minister at the South Church. I liked him very well, though I fancied from his doctrine that you would not be so well pleased. I came back and accepted Mr Lansing's invitation to dine with him upon what he called his simple Sunday fare. I had a very pleasant time, smoked a cigar with him after dinner and conversed with the old gentleman & lady on various topics. He declares the ladies always do have their own way and made the grave assertion that Mrs Howard was fast getting the rule in my family. I laughed of course & told him that I liked such government first rate. You will not take advantage of this confession will you - 'twouldn't be fair you know as I am writing in confidence.

I called to see Mrs Wool to day. She came in to visit you the day you left. She seems so kind and affectionate, so much like Mrs Vaughan, William Otis Grandmother, that I can but like her. She says I wish you & Mrs Howard would not be so formal with me, coming in only five or ten minutes in the morning. I want you & her to come in the afternoon, just when you feel like taking a walk.

Mr Cogswell left Sunday night & McPherson yesterday morning. The latter has been engaged recently in surveying, sounding & cleaning out bars in the Hudson River that were so situated as to impede navigation.

Ollie seems happy here; will return next week. I hope father can be induced to let mother accompany you as far as Boston. The birdies get on finely. They were exceedingly shy when I got back, but now like me first rate. I gave them a rose bud from out of doors this morning, and let them play about the room. Ellen says tell Mrs Howard about the birds.

The plant always comes in at night. There are two new blossoms on it to day. They are beautiful & sweet. Only a few afour flower seeds prove good. I water the beds frequently. Somehow I want everything to look pretty & inviting when my Lizzie comes back.

Is my darling healthy because she is determined? The value of a gem seems enhanced when it is lost, but the value of a wife, who can tell when it is most?

Give my love to your mother & Aunt Sarah. I would like to hear what they have to say to you.  
Give my love to John, Helen & family, Uncle Hicks & all, for haven't I a big heart, with a heap of love in it?

I must write to mother. I intend to do so to night. I did not mean to write you but a few lines when I began, but here we are on the fourth page. I have been at Maj. Symington's only one evening since I came back. Miss Mary & mother inquired affectionately for you. so did Mrs Thornton when I saw her on the door-step yesterday evening as I was passing. All ask how long you are going to stay from us. My marriage does seem almost like a dream, and I believe I would consider it as some waking fancy, were it not for the little reminders I meet with in the shape of birds, flowers, shoes, parasols &c. How goes the new dress. I received the trimmings that you ordered at Albany. If you think best, write immediately and I will send them to you by mail.

Give your mother a kiss for me & tell her she must be well. When the officers that are now at West Point are relieved this June, who knows but Lieut O. O. Howard may be sent. If the place is offered to me shall I take it? Kiss my mother when you see her once for yourself & again for me.

God bless you darling. Good night. I mustn't write more.

Your affectionate husband  
Otis

Nights are the worst sort of times for widowers. I pity widowers, don't you?