
586 9/9/1855

From: Lizzie [Howard]

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0537

Watervliet Arsenal N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

Watervliet Arsenal N.Y.

Sept 9, 1855

Dear Mother

We received your letter yesterday and very happy indeed were we to get a long letter written by yourself. I do not wonder that you do not write as often as you intend, having so many duties around you that require your attention, and surely I would not over task you with writing, if it is a source of great pleasure to us to receive your letters. I regret much to learn your health has not been good, but do hope with the cool weather it will improve, and that for the future, we shall hear you are very well. We usually hear of you when we get a letter from Maine, and that is much better than not hearing at all.

I know I have been very delinquent in writing to you, ever since I could address you by the dear name of Mother, and have no reasonable excuse to offer as an apology.

Otis and I, at present, have enough to think about. We are arranging for house-keeping. We shall very soon sit at our own table, but I fear things will suffer under my direction. Otis does not seem to have so great fears, and with his encouragement, and by experience I hope to do better and better. We are to have one of the servants from the "Mess" for cook, and she is a very good, honest, faithful girl, that we can trust with anything. When we get settled I must give you a description of all our rooms, if I should make the attempt now I would not know where to begin or where to end, and you would think I did not keep a very neat or orderly house. Have bought a dining set of white French china, and Otis sent home a good supply of groceries yesterday. There was an auction here last Thursday, and everything belonging to the ' Mess' was sold, with the exception of things we "bid in". Mr Boggs is left alone as Mr Shunk has been sent to West Point. Otis bought the Cow, and as it will cost nothing to keep her, I think it will be a great saving. We shall not purchase so many things or have things so comfortable, as if we were permanently settled, and I find that is the way they do throughout the army.

Otis and I have passed through the village of Waterford several times and have noticed the "Mansion House". It is quite a pleasant village about four miles north of us, and should we go there again, we should take more particular notice of the place, for it now is full of interest to us, since we have learned it was the place at which Otis' father stayed.

Rowland and Charlie must find it very pleasant living together. We have not heard from them since they went to Brunswick but hope they will soon write. It is indeed sad to hear that John Harrison is spitting blood. I presume it is not well for him to be confined to his office. Laura I have not written to, since I returned, but I think of her and all often. Mother I suppose will be with us this fall. I know not how soon, or that Otis will go to Maine. I cannot hardly realize that it is as late as Sept. I do not know where the summer months have flown to. It has seemed the shortest summer I ever passed. Otis has been writing to Mother, but has finished his letter and now has gone to inspect the guard. Could you look in upon us you would say we looked very comfortable and happy. I hear the clock striking ten and will not write more this time.

Please accept much love from your children and believe me affectionately your daughter,
Lizzie

587 9/25/1855 *From:* O. O. Howard

To: Brother [C.H. Howard]

OOH-0538

Watervliet Arsenal N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

Watervliet Arsenal N.Y.

Sept 25 1855

My dear Brother

I did not hear of your illness till Rowland wrote me you were getting better and that mother was with you & would take you to Leeds the next day. I am very anxious to hear from you again and if possible that you are quite well. How did you stand the journey home and how are you now? I am glad you are with mother. You will not now fail of receiving proper care and she has had more than ordinary experience in treating the dysentery.

My little family is in perfect health and prosperous. I have a horse and carriage. The horse is not yet paid for. I bought him of Maj Symington. He will give me six months to pay for him in. His name is Mallech and a splendid horse he is. The Major brought him up from a colt of Arabian breed. He has always been used for a saddle horse - perfectly kind and gentle and yet very spirited. I bought a nice covered carriage for one horse (second hand) for seventy five dollars. Lizzie and I have a ride nearly every second day. My horse is purely white and carries a very high head. Lizzie can pet him & feed him and is not the least afraid to ride after him. I now go marketing, shopping & visiting with my own horse and since he can live on the forage I draw for him, I think he will more than pay me the interest of his price.

Perry Lee ran up to see us last Friday, stopped to dinner with us and went about the Post to visit the different buildings. He had to hasten back to N. York to see to unloading his vessel. Perry looks better than he did; is in good health & spirits - master of a vessel & receiving very high pay. Silas was here on Sunday, when Lizzie & I returned from Church, we found Silas waiting in the parlor. He had changed so much in personal appearance that I hardly knew him. His face was almost completely covered by whiskers & mustaches and his manners were changed. He was very quiet & seemed more unassuming than ever before. There is quite a contrast between the two brothers. Perry has a freshness & vivacity of spirit that never has abated since he was a child, whereas Silas appears like a man more advanced in life & more affected by the manners of those with whom he has been thrown. They both appear like perfect gentlemen, but Perry seems to carry his heart in his face, whilst Silas has acquired more of the social polish. Here I am married & keeping house & two boys & playmates came to visit me as grown men. We have gone forth to occupy different posts & fill different spheres in the multiplicity of human duties & human destinies. It is pleasant to meet, pleasant to talk over the days of boyhood, the incidents that have transpired since we parted, and chat about the variegated prospects for each in the future.

Aunt Ann will accompany Perry in his vessel to Calais & perhaps thence to the West Indias. Silas was on his way to visit her before she left. He is in a large publishing house in Buffalo. A man of his acquaintance Capt. McKim of Boston has recently established himself in Buffalo & invited Silas to join him & be his book-keeper. His father is engaged in the meat trade for the N. York Houses in some of the Western states.

I recently heard from Perley. He has returned to Henry Illinois. He sent us a paper, said he was well. He did not call to see us on his return from Maine. Lizzie is busy in the kitchen making some peach preserves. I wish father & mother could visit us & see how pleasantly we are getting on. If I am sent on inspecting duty this winter I shall visit you if I can get time. Then the government would pay my way to & from Boston.

I trust all our friends are well. Maj Symington is now at West Point on a "court of Inquiry". I am right glad now I did not go to West Point. I like this keeping house. Lizzie is hard to beat. She don't think so but you know she has a low estimate of her own abilities. My love to Father, Mother, Dellie, Roland & wife &c. Lucia. Remember me to all my friends. Hurry up & get well. Write me immediately if you are able.

Your affectionate brother
O. O. Howard