
591 12/9/1855 *From:* Charles H. Howard *To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0542 Vassalborough

Source: Bowdoin

Vassalborough Dec. 9, 1855

Dear Mother

One week has passed since I began my new sphere of action. Now welcome Sunday has come round & I find it a day of rest. I am very much pleased with my school. If I had had my choice in all the schools I ever saw I should have chosen to teach this. Probably you have seen Otis & he has told you how he left me & where. I was not examined at that school house but soon returned home with Mr Chadbourne, (who is a very agreeable man) took supper, then was examined by him. It was not a very close examination. I did not fail to answer any question. The same evening he carried me to Mr James Wiggin's, where I now am. He told me I should have to "board round" which I "did not like pretty well."

I found Mr W's family ready to receive me to stay a fortnight with them. They are a very pleasant family & being so near a relation to Mr Albert Wiggin seem like old friends. There are three children. Edward 20 years old, Mary 19, Lucy 11. They are all three my scholars. After all it is not so bad a circumstance to board round where one can board a fortnight at a place. I have to walk but a few steps to the school house. I find my school consists of about 25 scholars, about half of them older than I am. I have a class of 3, two girls & one boy reading Virgil. Two classes of 3 each in Algebra. Two classes in Arithmetic. 1 in Grammar. Two in Geography. You see my school is pretty well classed.

Everything goes on very pleasantly now. They had been in the habit of whispering, but for the last 4 days there was scarcely any. I have stayed by my boarding place very closely. Only have called out one evening, at Mr Coleman's with whose son and daughter I became acquainted at Kents Hill. The other evenings I have spent in reading till ten o'clock each night. I have read one Vol of Neibuhr's Rome through, which Rowland will remember is a large book. I see no reason why I cannot read the other Vol this week. I think I shall go to Augusta next Friday night to spend the Sabbath with Otis. The cars go down about 7 o'clock in Eve. There is a meeting in my school-house today, but will be none hereabouts next Sabbath.

My thumb was quite painful for 4 or 5 days but is now most well, were it not I could not write. I could not set any copies this week, but shall be able to do so next week. Tell Rowland, Linscott & Stetson have taught this school. The former two winters in succession. Washington Humphrey also taught two Winters. Last Winter a Senior from Waterville, name Bradbury taught here. Two of my old classmates Coleman & Marble teach in neighboring districts.

I hope you will write me before next Friday, and tell me how your health is now & how the family are & where they are. Dellie can write if you do not and I think Rowland will soon. I want to know if his school is as pleasant as it was last Winter. I am now going to meeting. A Methodist man by name of <Rhennie> preaches.

Your Affec. Son
Charles H. Howard

592 12/18/1855 *From:* Otis [O. O. Howard] *To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0543

Kennebec Arsenal N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

Kennebec Arsenal Me
Dec 18th 1855

My dear Mother,

You will have heard of our good fortune before this reaches you, but I cannot refrain from writing you a few words. Lizzie's sickness was rather severe, but the end was so gratifying, that we can but thank kind Heaven for the blessings, that are continually vouchsafed to us. She has been so courageous - and lies there so peaceful & patient - that it makes my heart almost over flow with affection and sympathy for her. We have an excellent nurse, very kind, attentive and obliging. The little boy weighed 8 pounds. The nurse said he would have weighed more if he had not cried during the process of weighing. He nurses well & then sleeps, but knows enough to cry when hungry. Charlie says he has a forehead like mine. But I think him too young for resemblances.

I carried Charlie to his school Monday morning. He likes and seems to be very much liked at Vassalboro. I went into his school after I got up there Friday afternoon and staid till the close. He has about twenty scholars, one class in Latin and another in Algebra. His thumb pained him for several days and finally a sore formed on the end of it & broke or was opened. It was a felon but not so deep as the bone, so said Dr Briggs.

Lizzie would send her love if she knew I was writing. You must hasten & come down to see your first real grand-child. Perhaps you can think up a name for me.

I keep myself busy inside of the arsenal nearly all the time. The enlightened and liberal people of Augusta will not let the soldiers children go to school here in town on any condition whatever, so I am going to have them study in my office for a while.

It is late & I will not write more tonight. My love to all. Ask Uncle Rodelphus if he doesn't feel grand.

Affectionately your Son
Otis

(Wednesday morning [Dec 19, 1855])
Lizzie continues quite well & baby bright.

[Note: Otis and Lizzie's first child, Guy Howard, was born on Dec 16, 1855 at Kennebec Arsenal]

593 12/23/1855 *From:* Chas H. Howard

To: Mrs. E. Gilmore

OOH-0544

Vassalboro

Source: Bowdoin

Vassalboro Dec 23 1855

Dear Mother

Another Sunday has come and nearly gone. A rain storm ushered it in, but with us it cleared off before noon. There is no meeting in these regions. I went up to Mr Wiggin's about ten o'clock. Soon he got the book to sing. We sung several tunes & then I read till Dinner in Hiawatha. After dinner I read awhile, took my clothes returned to Mr Appleton's changed them, read some more, in Upham's Interior Life, now here I am by their West bed-room Window, pen in hand. Mr A's is down the hill East of Mr W's. I have boarded here 1 week, shall be here a day or two longer. They are very pleasant people. Do every thing for my comfort possible. I should like to hear from Lizzie & that little nephew. Otis wanted me to come down next Saturday in the cars. But I think I would not go if Otis in 3 weeks would carry me to Leeds, but I suppose it would hardly pay. If I go I should be pleased to see you or some of our folks & I think Otis expects Rowland to come.

My school is pleasant Mother, & I am not sorry I came here. I received with much pleasure yours & Dellies letter a few days ago. We have a prayer-meeting in my school-house this evening. I think I shall go. They have not had any for several months.

Otis was saying to me he wished mother would come and see him now that he had got settled. Said he did not write you but should write you soon.

I want Dellie to write me more about his school next time he writes. Does he declaim this Winter? My scholars want to declaim. They have a Lyceum in the school-house below in which all members declaim each night. They have a paper also when the schools close. I attended the other night. They had some funny pieces. One spoke an Indian piece & was disguised like an Indian with plumes in his cap & face & bosom red. Tomahawk at his side & dagger in his hand. I think he must have resembled an Indian.

Give my love to Dellie, Father & the others & write me when you can.

Your Affec Son
Chas H. Howard

Mrs. E. Gilmore