My Dear Howard

Mulliken did not pay me. Please pay Webb immediately. I had no right to ask him to give me the money as I could just as well have written to you. We have no news here in any way. There are to be several changes in the spring but I don’t know them as yet. I shall leave New York on the 13th of April for Europe. I may run up to the Point before leaving.

Give my regards to Class mates & friends. I hope yourself & wife are having a charming time. Tour season commences now and is unexceptionable until fall.

Very Truly Yours

J.W.T.

[Assume date is 12/31/1857, which is about where the letter was filed.]
Theo. Sem. Bangor Me
Dec. 3. 1857

My dear Sister Lizzie

I owe Otis a letter but somehow I feel like writing you tonight.

God is very kind & merciful to me & gives me grace every day. O that I might so love him as not to love any shadow of him. At our Class Prayer meeting this evening we finished telling our “experiences” - the dealing of God’s Spirit with us. Ten out of twelve of us who are trying to prepare ourselves to be ministers of God, confess to have had our first & strongest impressions of the reality & power of Religion from the prayers, when we were very young, of our Mothers. The majority refer their “hope” directly to a Mothers influence.

Since meeting, as I have been sitting here, thinking of this fact in its various bearings & the lessons which it ought to teach me & lead me to teach, my mind turned involuntarily to your dear little circle. O I can never bless & thank my Heavenly Father sufficiently that the dear Mother of Guy & Gracie has been taught by Him to pray & not to faint.

One said tonight that his Mother told him once that she dedicated him to God, to the Gospel Ministry, before he was born. How blessed the thought. How much consolation it must afford Christian Mother to think amid all her early suffering & later care, that she is Mother of one whom His heavenly Father will own & bless as His child & who may become an honest instrument for the glory & honor of his Maker. Do you recollect that sweet hymn of Mary’s Luke 1.47. We have been studying it. Who can wonder that she should break forth in such rapture at meeting her sister in the lord, Elizabeth. Cannot any Mother sympathize with her when she thinks of what God may see fit to perform through her offspring. A Mother’s prayers! They are not always upon her knees - nor at stated times. They flow out of her heart as she presses the little ones to her heart, as she attends their wants & stills their cries. They are - “Lord help me to bear my care & vexation cheerfully, I put myself in thy hands, take too these little ones - “while they are yet young”, adopt them into Thy family & supply the wants of their undying Souls”. How many such involuntary prayers must go up from the heart that trusts in God, and in answer to such, how many Servants of God have been raised up. What happy Mothers!

Yes, my dear Sister, I trust you give up those “little innocents” daily, hourly into the hands of the blessed Savior. Even as you did, when publicly you dedicated them to God. I remember you all constantly in my prayers, but my prayers I feel to be poor things. Kiss each of the dear little ones for Uncle Rowland.

I continue to feel that as far as outward things are concerned that I am in the right place. Means of knowledge of Grace & of Usefulness are abundant here. I have a S. School which I began last Sunday a little out of the City. I have been calling among the people this week. I commenced with 58 & I expect to have double that number. They “try” me & I need your prayers, that I may be patient & persevering.

Tell Otis we don't study doctrines much this year. We study the Bible. This last week we have had “Butler” too & have been having Lectures on Mental & Moral Philosophy.

I suppose you may of heard of the burning of Leeds Poor House & the deaths thereby of Mary Ann Bridgham [d. Nov 25, 1857] & another girl. I have not heard it from home. Mothers last letter was full of love & charity. I loved it so much that I couldn't keep it, but sent it where I want to all things like that I love most – to Ella. So Ella & Otis have revived their correspondence. I am very glad indeed. The life of a minister's wife is especially one for others, and I want my Ella to become free and accessible to others that she may do more good, & especially do I love to have her on terms of intimacy with you & Otis.

Tell Otis I met Rev Mr Laighton here at a meeting the other evening. Our old Leeds minister, and I must say, for a Christian, I never met with a more disagreeable man. He has been in to see me & I was quite disappointed in the good talk I wanted to have. He has been quite prosperous in a worldly way but he seems, somehow, a little
sour & selfish. I have already made a pleasant round of acquaintances here. Among them, a brother of Rev Mr Fiske of Bath. Our preaching is in the genuine, old puritanic style.

I have no more time tonight, but I will write again before long for I have lots to say.

Your affectionate Brother
Rowland

P.S. Don't you hear from Watervliet?
West Point N.Y.

December 6th 1857.

My dear Mother,

It is some time since I have written you and as I happened to be thinking of you particularly tonight and as there is no church this evening on account of the rain, I will spend an hour or two in conversing with you by pen & paper. You seem to have “gotten me off your hands” now that I am married & boast of a family of my own and do not think it necessary to write me letters of counsel & direction as of old. I believe I need as much advice & direction now as when I was here before. However at this time I realize the privilege of having a counselor & friend that I did not then in a constant & beneficent Saviour and have the sympathy, love & constant companionship of my darling wife. There is nothing I need to complete my external comforts, and my spiritual enjoyment has no cloud excepting those occasioned by my own short-comings.

I trust you are also in good health in body & spirit, at peace from without & from within. Have I not cause for gratitude to the Giver of all things. How well I have been cared for from my earliest boyhood, what privileges for education, what opportunities for moral culture. How happy in my marriage, in having a wife who understands my circumstances of the past & present and is able to adapt herself to any contingency in life, who loves me & with whom there is a congeniality of temperament that makes the common everyday experience pleasant.

Again, in Guy as he begins to develop I find myself especially blessed. He is a hearty, joyous boy, quick to learn & begins to show a tenacity of memory that beats me. He dont seem to have the slightest maliciousness in his disposition, is generally affectionate to me, his mother & sister, and I think he has the elements of a proper boy, which under careful training will lay the ground work of a proper man. Grace is a very good baby, beautiful, her “mother's little treasure” & her father's pet. She begins to exhibit some of her decided points. She laughs, plays, cries, kicks, wakes by day-light, like other babies, but these things you know are very delightful to her parents. Her health is excellent & she is fat as butter.

I am sorry to say Lizzie is not so well off. She is losing flesh & is by no means strong. But her appetite remains good & she has plenty of nourishment for the baby. We now have the Girl we got at Brooklyn for cook & have a young girl to do the chamber work & assist Lizzie in the care of the children.

We breakfast, read in the Bible & have prayers before I start for the Recitation room. I have quite a little walk. You remember Warren's barracks. If you go straight South from them up the hill (if you could do so) till you strike the road that leads to the cemetery, you would come to this cottage.

There are quite a number of young married officers here now. Two are living at the hotel, Lieuts Child & Webb with wives & a baby apiece. Lt Blunt who occupied this house when we were at the hotel married the daughter of Professor Church, and he & his wife live with the professor.

My recitations require a constant exertion of mind for the three hours. The lessons are generally pretty long & mathematical reasoning wants decided attention. It is not proper for an instructor to make mistakes. He must be able to explain any points that are missed. He must keep his temper, do strict justice in marking as well as in the distribution of subjects & questions. It is a harder place than one might imagine at first thought, but it gives me no anxiety, no worrying before or after recitation. When Cadets get vexed I have been able to keep cheerful & I think get on admirably.

I hear Col Hardee's daughters from 12 to one every day except Saturday. They are two <misses> one about 13 & the other a year or more older. I hear them recite in Arithmetic & Grammar for the present. We will add Geography by and by.

On Wednesday evening I lecture to the soldiers & others who meet at a little church not far from Warren's barracks. I am now writing & lecturing on our Lord's prayer. I write a part of the Lecture & fill up the rest
extemporaneously. This meeting is somewhat much like the Sunday service at Leeds. We sing a hymn, read a chapter, pray & then I deliver my lecture, then I call upon one or more for a prayer. This constitutes the generality of my weekly labors, added to which are the things the head of a family must always do – little chores, errands &c, &c.

On this Sunday afternoon I met my Sunday-School. Lt Robert, a young Engineer officer, who has lately joined us, has now a class of five & I had four in my Bible Class. We now have quite a house-full in the school. Miss Blanch Berard deserves the credit of organizing a class in the first instant I believe. She is now one of my best teachers, a really earnest & faithful Christian. I used to think she was homely & not very agreeable, but she is now far ahead of anybody now in this vicinity, a good example of humility & Christian constancy.

I trust my dear Mother you are living up to your Christian privileges, and enjoy the constant presence & blessing of the Saviour, & have much of the fruit of the spirit which is love. I think I shall try to break my afternoons into letter writing & if I can manage to do so, I shall write you more frequently. I feel more like going to sleep just after dinner & find that splitting wood is a good remedy, by & by I will have snow to shovel. We have had one snow storm but the rain is carrying all the snow off. It is raining hard now. You must try to write me if but a few lines. I shall not willingly forego the pleasure of hearing from my mother.

How is father. Give him my love & Dellie if he is at home. Has father settled Lizzie’s business yet? How have the hard times operated with him. I should like to hear from Aunt Martha. I must write Uncle Ensign. I have written Oliver Woodman. I presume he is divorced by this time or will be before long. I noticed he had made application for a divorce. I pity him & his poor fallen wife don’t you? Remember me to the neighbors. I read the acct in brief of the fire at the poor house. God bless you.

Yr affectionate Son
Otis

Lizzie says give my love to them all. I had a letter from Charlie a few days ago & have answered his letter & will write Dellie as soon as possible. Aunt Sarah Jones says the trunks have arrived. She did not mention the Band-box. Lizzie says she would like the band-box to be sent if it is not. She has promised little Eva one of the bonnets. Does Mrs Lothrop hear from Warren?
Dear Sir,

Yours bearing date of the 12th Oct was received in due course of mail and I was much pleased with the religious sentiment that it contained which you are imbued with it was because it emanated from a pure mind filled with piety and christian love if I am not deceived which I think I can't be. I shall consider you a christian until you prove to the contrary and it is an appellation that I admire altho I am a stranger as it to the fruits of christian religion or were the name I am so sceptical that I think there is but a small chance for me to embrace religion as you would turn it, but I admire to see it in others more especially where it is a reality for it makes the possessor contented and happy and virtuous and even when it's fictitious I think it has a tendency to make and keep any one from immoral acts so I go heart and hand for professors whether they are sincere and genuine or otherwise believing that it will do them no harm altho I do not mean to justify hypocrisy or other sinful act and I believe there are many who make a profession of religion who don't possess the least spark of piety which has a bad effect upon the religious community but in my opinion it has a good affect on community at large for it has a tendency to keep them from malicious and evil acts. Therefore it is better for communities to have hypocrits than to have thieves, robbers, and murderers.

I am perfectly satisfied in my own mind that the more professors we have that the less crime we shall have so I go for it. I am told by the most of professors who are limitarians (and I think all of them) that it awaits nothing in the celestial world - though he may be a perfect upright and moral man and abide strictly by the golden rule - unless he makes this open profession and is born again of the spirit he can in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven. Such doctrine I cannot believe it too, to me like injustice. I believe if there is a god he is a just one, and who does rule the whole universe impartially so I understand what I said of the character and attributes of Deity and that his tender mercies are over all of his works but I believe the most of us read and understand to prove and accommodate our own selfish views. I have heard ministers of the gospel (as they called themselves) say that there was a local place denominated hell that was ever burning with fire and brimstone where all the people that are on earth or that ever were or ever will be must go and be tormented forever and ever except the few who have met with this miraculous change or been born again as they call it which cannot comprise one fourth part of the creation. The other three fourths or even more must be eternally miserable because they have not done that which in conscience they could not do because they could not believe any doctrine that appeared so erroneous and they do not wish to be hypocrits. Therefore do not embrace any such religious notions because they don't think there is any reality in it.

Now because a portion of the human race and a very large portion too, cannot understand and believe the <Unitarian> doctrine according to their views they must be eternally miserable and <reched>, and I have heard ministers assert that hell is lined with infants not a long but at the present time this point is given up by most all denominations or at least I have not heard such opinions advanced from the pulpit for many years and hope I never shall again for I cannot feel reconciled to any such inconsistent views but those professed christians say they are perfectly happy and enjoy themselves in their troublesome world altho they are conscious that many of their near relatives and dear friends have gone the downward road to destruction ever to be tormented. How any person possessing any philanthropy can be reconciled knowing that their dear ones are in the <keenest> agony and to remain so for ver and be happy is more than I can comprehend. It makes me feel quite nervous to think that any one does possess such notions for christianity. Perhaps you will say I am a natural man therefore cannot discern things as I should but the spiritual man can see them all in perfect harmony and be reconciled and happy in all things. I think one must have an adamant heart and be an admirer of misanthropy to feel reconciled and enjoy such a belief. You may <think> I <cast> for charity and judge hastily without any investigation on the subject. I seek for truth and I think all who are honest in their pretensions do the same but there is so many modes of worship and such vast difference in the forms of many and all of them claim this is the only true and just mode that it confounds many so that they don't know what to believe.

Several of the people at the Bridge are very zealous in what they call the spiritual manifestations. Ulmer Perley and his family are with them have circles as they call them and perform wonders as they tell me ( I never saw
any thing of the kind myself) they hold public meetings have held several at our meeting house. I attended once & heard the speaker through which was about two hours. His name is Ripley from Canton. He was quite flowery & I thought spoke well. He is not a literary man never speaks in public or but little in private except when he is in a trance as they call it. He and some of his spiritual friends spent an evening with us not long since and he spoke on spiritualism about 45 minutes and we think he spoke very well very fast & very correctly but we are not believers in their creeds & probably never shall be but there is some thing misterious in it but what I cant tell. I wish you would.

Dec 18th. We are all in usual health except my wife. She has been quite sick with for 3 or 4 days past took a severe cold & was confined to her bed for a day or two is now up quite bright again. Her health has improved very much since I wrote you and we think the prospect is good for her to recover her health soon so that she may enjoy life as well you for I think she is a christian too and if you will take the trouble to write us I will promise that you shall something from her pen if she continues to improve in health. So I close this scrawl by wishing yourself & family all the happiness this world affords. I feel as tho I ought to make some apologies but I cant see very well & it is almost nine oclock so I will close by subscribing myself.

Yours truly
Oren Whitman [Uncle to Lizzie Howard]
New Orleans
Decr 10th 1857

My Dear Cousin

I received your letter a few days since. It is extremely gratifying to know that I am thought of & sympathized with by my friends and relations during my great affliction. It is difficult to conceive the pain and anxiety I have suffered. My only consolation is that I am at least <consciencously> having endeavored to perform my duty to my unfortunate wife, who has sinned & suffered so greatly. I must acknowledge that I have not looked or sought to the great & only real source of true happiness.

Having been early thrown on the world to baffle with its cares and troubles, I have not stopped to look to what my judgement and heart prompts me to know is the only true aim of Life.

I have only thought to act justly by all men and to fulfill my duty to myself & man without thinking as I should of my God.

I have to a certain extent prospered in this world affair but have not known what real happiness was. My Maine relations have never been very happy.

I do not believe my wife was ever false to me upon any deliberate design to be so. But she was always very fond of show dress and <momentary> excitement and lived alone for immediate pleasure without having the moral courage either to resist temptation or any fixed <purpos> of moral integrity. She fell and has suffered for her sin as few have done.

There is no doubt but her base <seducer> obtained the money from her as she states though much of it was given voluntarily but much was forced from her as stated. The time and date comports with <> book & the circumstances render the fact morally certain.

I hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you often. I am so little in the habit of writing letters of friends hope that I trust you will excuse <> of this. For your kind sympathy please receive my heartfelt thanks.

Very truly your cousin
O. O. Woodman [Oliver Otis Woodman]
West Point NY Dec 22nd 1857

Sir:

You must pardon me for making bold to write & trouble you with a few questions but a small number of officers can answer.

Has your experience as an army officer shown you any peculiar and unavoidable temptations not met with in all vocations in life?

Will it ever become my duty to resign my appointment in order to live as a professed christian should, at all times?

I consider the duties of an officer & christian compatible: and do not wish to change my calling unless it is plainly my duty so to do.

Some of my friends urge me “not to shut myself up in a profession depriving me of all religious privileges.” I reply that God is as able and willing to hear and assist me when alone with no pious friend near me, as when kneeling in home circles.

I am wholly ignorant of the temptations of army life and you must excuse me for seeking the advice of an entire stranger.

You well know how I am situated as a cadet: and can readily see why I come to you. I want to remain in the army & above all I wish to save my own soul and do my duty to God & my fellow-men.

Any assistance you may render me will be received with many prayers for you and yours.

Thos R. Tannatt. [USMA Class of 1858]

To
Lieut Howard
US Army
Leeds Dec 23rd 1857

Dear Cousin

I have just received your kind letter. It is just what I want at this time, for of late I have felt to murmur at my lot; that I could not bear them much longer, that I seemed to be forsaken by all friends, could neither see any one nor hear from those that were away, Oh I shall prize your letter, for I feel that it is sent by my heavenly Father to comfort me at this time, and if my Saviour will give me his spirit to guide and keep me, what do I want more. It is all in all to me and without him I can do nothing. Oh how it rejoices my heart to hear you speak so much of him. I think I can say I love to steal up to my little chamber to read his holy word and ask his holy spirit to dwell in me and keep me from sinning. But Oh I am so prone to wander from my blessed Saviour that evil seems to be present with me, and before I am aware murmuring thoughts will arise in my mind. Oh if there are things I desire above everything else, it is to feel reconciled to the will of God wether it be joyous or afflictive to say his will be done, reconciled to my <lot> in life. I know his hand is in it and that he doith all things well, but at times this wished heart of mine feels to murmur and say have I got always to live so still as you say. If I have the Saviour for my friend what want I more. It is enough if I could at all times feel his holy presence but sins separate me from my God. I have not faith enough to trust all to my Saviour. Oh pray for me that I may begin anew to serve the Lord, from this hour. Your letter has given new courage. Oh may I receive many more. I now feel as though I had one friend to sympathize with me, one that feels for me, one that has pointed me to that true friend from whence all our comforts flow.

When I received your letter tonight I was all alone with Aunt Martha and feeling very lonely. Uncle Ensign has been gone since Monday. I don't expect him before Saturday. Last week he was gone all the week. I was alone night and day but I told him I could not get along so that I did not know but I should be crazy if I was confined so and had so much care so he got John Leonard to stay nights this week. He has been gone most of the time since Aunt Martha got home. I think I could bear my troubles better if he could be at home to take the care of things. He has just been chosen Director and says that he will have to be away most of the time. Poor man his home has lost its charm.

Aunt Martha is not herself and never will be. She seems to be entirely indifferent to him. I thought when she regained her health her mind would come back but alas it does not. She was quite feeble when she first came home, but has been gaining strength and flesh so that now she looks as well as she did before she was taken sick. Sleeps well, has a good appetite and does some work. Oh it would make your heart ache to hear her call upon God and Jesus to have mercy on her soul that she can't live any longer and keeps taking on from morning till night. At first I thought I could not bear to have her such perfect distress mind. I never saw any one like her. If you can get her attention she seems like herself but she is not inclined to talk any except when you ask her a question, then she answers as regular as ever she did and knows everything as well as ever she did. It is a great mystery to me what it is ails Aunt Martha when any one calls in she will be quite still while they remain and as soon as they are gone she begins to take on, she does not need but little care now. We wrote to her sister to come and stay this winter but her health was so poor she could not come.

I then went to see Aunt <Bridgham> she has gone to Turner and from there to China. I did not like to have a stranger, so I have got along alone. At first I found it hard, but I get along now well except being so lonesome with no one to speak to from week to week. Aunt Martha retires at 7. These long evenings are very lonely. Tonight is Lyceum evening. It is good sleighing. There is quite a number out, so the girls tell me who have called in Abby Hester <> Victoria Turner. I told them I had just got a letter from you. I read it to them. I have not been able to attend any of them. I feel to regret very much that Mr <> could not stop with us for he is just such a man as we need here. I pray the Lord will send one after his own heart, one that will go from house to house.

Oh I feel that we who are christians here should be up and doing something for christ cause in this place. Oh the precious souls who need to be brought to a Saviour, here we are asleep as it were. Oh may not God visit us according to our deserts but attending to his loving kindness. I feel to say it is good for me to affiliate. I think I have enjoyed more of the presence of my Saviour this past summer and fall although for many years before I
had wandered so far from him it would have been just had God cut me loose as a <> But in mercy he spared me and in his strength I have <> spend the few remaining days I have to stay here in his service. Oh I am so glad you are engaged in the master's work, and my prayer is that you may win many souls to christ. What is this world it is all vanity they <> what is this life compared with a never ending eternity. Oh we are only prepared. The prospect is glorious to be forever with the Lord free from all care and sorrows. I should like to <> letter from Ella. I like her, and wish I could have got more acquainted. I feel very grateful for your kind sympathy. I feel now as though I could commit all my sorrows to my Saviour and say his will be done and not mine.

Mary <> is quite sick with lung fever. John Dyer Millet family are most all sick. We had quite an earth quake to day - shook the house. I never heard one before. John has been up and altered his house. They will move back this winter. I sent your letter to Aunt Martha, asked her if it was not a good letter. She supposed it was. All things are alike to her <> are miserable. She don't want to hear the bible read or prayer or go to meeting. Every thing she once loved she now hates. We cant get her to go out and she had rather not see any one. Says I don't cook any thing fit to eat. She knows that nobody else has to eat such victuals. Runs of a notion that we have not got any thing. It has just struck ten. That is late hour for me to be up you know I hope you will write often.

I remain your true Friend
Laura [Howard]
Dear Aunt [Probably Ann (Otis) Lee]

I received your letter to day dated Dec 28th which relieved me of some little anxiety as I began to feel we might have been remiss in duty in not answering the letter we received from you a few weeks since, saying you intended being here by the 15th of Dec to spend the remainder of the winter as you spoke of doing when here in the fall. We have looked for you daily for two weeks, and we are happy to know it was no fault of ours that prevented you from coming, but because you are passing your time so pleasantly with cousin Otis Howard and wife, to whom please give my best regards, assuring them I should be very happy to have a visit from them. We should have answered your letter, and given you a welcome, but we thought you might miss it, as you did not wish us to send any letters directed to Mr Hazards care, which by the way, he has not as yet had the pleasure of receiving; but if he does he will at once forward them to you as directed.

Mr Strickland is here in Boston, but intends leaving to-morrow. He has been here a week. He expected to have seen you here. He looks well and appears very happy and pleasant. I was in the city most of the day Tuesday shopping with him. He spent the Sabbath with us. I had a letter from Martha Jane by him, said she should write you as soon as she ascertained where you were. She with her children were well. I hear from Hallowell by Vaughn often - all well - nothing new. I have not heard from Leeds for a long time.

I hear from Oliver and Ollie often. Ollie writes in good spirits and is I should judge as happy as could be expected considering the great depression of mind his uncle is suffering under a great part of the time in consequence of the difficult time he has so unjustly and publicly been involved in. I do not wish to speak or write about it. I am so wretched when I think of him. I hope he will have fortitude to sustain him. I fear the result. Do thank cousin Otis for me, for writing him, as I have no doubt it was very acceptable and encouraging to him. He is deserving the sympathy of all his friends as he has in every respect acted honourably, and he needs to know he has the sympathy and approval of his friends in the course he has taken, to strengthen and sustain his mind. I have numberless anxious moments about Ollie and his Uncle. They room together, which is better for them both.

Poor Sarah, she must have had a sad voyage, but if it results in the improvement of Mr Sargents health all the past will soon be forgotten in the bright hope of Mr Sargents health being improved and perhaps restored. I am glad to hear she wrote you in good spirits as it will add so much to your happiness.

I hope we shall have the pleasure of forwarding some good news to you from Perry and Silas. I will send to East Cambridge P O to-morrow morning before closing this.

Thursday eve. Roddie did not find any letters from you. We are happy to say we are all well and living very quietly. We shall all be happy to see you. I saw Mrs Trymen to-day. She enquired for you - seemed pleased that you were coming here. Her son (Henry Trymen) has just gone to New Orleans. She feels quite unreconciled to it. Please give my regards to Mrs Grass and Augusta Grass. I should be happy to see them. Mrs Wunt does not go out much this winter. Mr Hazzard and Roddie wish to be affectionately remembered to you. I have just received a letter from Ollie. He sent his love to you (thinking you might be here). Please except my kindest wishes.

Yours affectionate Niece

OBH [Olive B (Woodman) Hazard]