
1175 10/21/1860 *From:* Emory Upton

To: Lieut. [OO] Howard

OOH-1117

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Oct. 1860 [Assume 21st]

Lieut. Howard:

I was born in Batavia N.Y. in Aug. 1839. My father is a farmer. With the exception of an attendance of six months at a High School, my education was limited to that of a common district school. My parents have long professed religion, and are both members of the Methodist Protestant Church. This church differs from the Methodist Episcopal simply in discipline. Their greatest solicitude has always been to give us religious instruction. There were originally thirteen children - eleven of whom are still living. Of the thirteen ten have professed religion, the remaining three are remembered in our prayers. Morning and evening prayers are always observed, and at meals a blessing is asked. This religious training has had a beneficial effect. None of the family are profane, or intemperate. I never heard an oath uttered in my fathers presence, by any person, without eliciting his reproof.

I came to West Point in June 1856. The family circle was then complete. About the middle of June of that year, a sister, who had long been in feeble health was taken very ill, and after a weeks sickness death ensued. She had not openly professed religion before her illness, but upon her death-bed she gave every evidence of having found peace with God.

Although I was then a stranger to God, I remember what relief I experienced, when in reading the letter informing me of her death, I came to the passage stating that she had put her trust in Jesus. Her death produced a deep impression upon me for a time: I realized my condition but deferred making my peace with God until a more "convenient season". Having always remained at home, with the exception of the period previously mentioned, I had heard but little profanity before I came here, and on my arrival, I was shocked to hear not only the name of God taken so often in vain, but also to witness the efforts which many made to utter horrid oaths. I had not been in the habit of reading the Bible much; but now I took to reading it instinctively.

This was my condition until furlough. On furlough I was enabled to resist the temptations, which were thrown in my way. My moral character was strengthened, but as yet I had not sought God. Another affliction was necessary. My youngest brother, who when I left was apparently in perfect health, was taken sick in Dec. 1858. It was soon evident that his disease must prove fatal, and again was God's goodness manifested unto us by his repentance and forgiveness. He lingered until March 11th when he died, glorifying God. He took great interest in religion, and after he had told my mother that his hands were cold, and that he was dying, he would not relinquish the hand of a neighbor (who had been sent for to go after a sister) until he had promised to meet him in Heaven. His charge to me was that I should delay no longer my preparation for eternity. I was permitted to return home, and attend his funeral. Again I realized the necessity of preparing to meet God, but made no effort until after my return. I read the Bible more attentively and then resorted to prayer. I continued my efforts until I experienced relief. About this time I commenced attending the Prayer Meeting.

As to subsequent experience: at certain times I feel much nearer to God than at others. These seasons occur after the performance of any service or duty, which tends to draw off my mind from worldly things. Particularly on Sunday evenings, and also after attendance at the Prayer Meeting; I feel a closer communion with God. Then I enjoy prayer. I feel then the presence of God's Holy Spirit, & that there is a reality in religion. During these moments I resolve to look back upon them; when I find myself wandering away from God, and their recurrence always increases my faith. I look forward to the time when I can show forth my faith more in works. In whatever capacity I may serve I hope to do good, and to advance the cause of Christ.

I have endeavored to give an accurate statement of my experience. Sometimes I am in doubt. Sometimes I am discouraged, but these happy moments with God illumine my path, and dispel my doubt. I believe in God, I believe in Christ, and I pray for the time when I shall know no doubt, and when I shall have a steadfast faith in all of God's promises.

I ask your prayers that I may continue faithful unto the end, and that I may ever remain a true and humble follower of Christ.

Emory Upton [USMA Class of 1861]

1163 10/4/1860 *From:* J.R. Bacon

To: My dear [OO] Howard

OOH-1105

Tarrytown

Source: Bowdoin

Tarrytown Oct 4 /60 P.M.

My dear Howard

The Karnak arrived to day with letters for me containing sad news. Thinking you might not have recd any letter by her, I deem it my sad duty to communicate the mournful intelligence of the death of my very dear friend, Frank Sargent. I need not say how shocked & grieved I am at this but I have learned to bow to Gods will, convinced that what He does is "well". Poor Sarah is struck down with the blow, for her husbands death was unexpected & sudden, and she was tenderly attached to him. Poor heart, how terrible the affliction, and yet, God has promised to be with her to sustain and comfort her.

Hetty Johnson [Henrietta Louisa (Sargent) Johnson died 29 September 1860, was Frank's sister] was just breathing her last, as the str sailed - brother & sister so soon to be reunited in that other & better land. Frank died Friday 21st at 5 a.m. Hettie was even thought to be passing away on the 28th when the str sailed.

Darling writes that he stopped on his way home, on landing from the str on Thursday PM and saw Frank for a few moments, but never saw him alive again. The immediate cause of death was the sudden breaking of an abscess on the left lung, producing strangulation. He was thought out of danger & doing very well, up to a half hour of his death. Oh God, prepare us for all the eventful changes of this life not only, but for a happy eternity beyond. Death has been busy in my family and among friends; who shall be called next? This is a serious question, and to be answered by no man, but, if we heed the admonition "be ye also ready," we shall not fear the summons, but, aside from the sad sundering of earthly ties, we shall be glad to be with our Saviour, "which is far better."

The battle of life is a wearisome struggle, the toils, the trials, the temptations, and most of all the doing, and the leaving undone, saddens and wearies me, and yet it must be fought out. Gird on, the Armor which Christ has prepared for us, and "quit ye like men," is what we must do. "The battle you shall win" is a "true saying," and I pray God for strength to do all my duty to His honor & glory.

Mrs Bacon desires her love to Mrs Howard, and with my kindest regards to you both,

I am faithfully yr friend,
J.R. Bacon

Darling writes that Sarah will remain with them this winter, and come home in the spring.

1164 10/7/1860

From: Thomasine M.
Kearny

To: Lieut. O.O. Howard

OOH-1106

No. 11 Tompkins Place
[Brooklyn]

Source: Bowdoin

No. 11 Tompkins Place [Brooklyn]
Sabbath Afternoon, Oct 7th /60

Lieut. O.O. Howard
Dear Sir,

We received the sad news of Mr. Sargent's death by the "Karnack" on Friday. I thought very possibly you might not have heard of it, (as the death has not been published in any of the papers), and that I would write and give you the few particulars, we have received.

He died on the 20th of September. An abscess had formed on the lungs, which burst, occasioning speedy death. Mr Darling, (who had been in the United States during the two months previously) arrived at home, an hour before he died. Mr. Sargent's sister, Mrs Johnson was dying when the Steamer left. Her disease was also consumption.

Capt Lee was not there. He had sailed some time before, and is now on his way home from Matanzas. He is making a long passage, this being his twenty-fourth day. This is sad news to meet him.

We cannot sorrow for Mr. Sargent - we feel confident "our loss is his gain" - but poor Mrs. Sargent, my sympathy for her is too deep for expression. Her entire dependance upon him, in all things, makes him an almost irreparable loss. She certainly has been severely afflicted, by the death of her dear Mother, and at this time, but may God grant that she may be enabled to see His Hand in these afflictions, and to say "it is all right."

Yesterday I went board the "Alabama" to see Nelie, and Mr. Sackett, once more and to say "good bye". Oh! Mr. Howard, I can part with her now with different, lighter feelings than when last I wrote you, for I have reason to believe she loves, and trusts our God, as a Father and a Friend.

With kind regards to Mrs Howard, and yourself, I am very respectfully,

Yours &c
Thomasine M. Kearny

1165 10/8/1860 *From:* Rowland [RB
Howard]

To: Dear Otis [OO Howard]

OOH-1107

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds Oct. 8, 1860

Dear Otis

I'm going to keep writing you letters till your conscience compels you to answer! Mother is still improving, tho she does not go out yet & walks quite lame. Ella says her girl is "an old poke" & I fear that it is so, but she is better than none.

Edw. Gore of Bath came from Nassau last Friday & bro't the sad news of Franks death, two weeks before. He was sick but three weeks - one of his old attacks. I suppose Sarah may have written you. Frank had an Insurance of \$5000, on his life. Sarah was very much cast down. She hoped till half an hour before he died that he would recover, but an abscess broke, & proved fatal. After it was certain that he would die, he was unable to converse. I heard of no "words" that he left. I hope Perry will hurry back to Sarah as she will need him greatly.

Mr Gore is a good Christian fellow & watched with Frank during one of his last nights. He goes to N.Y. next week to return with Perry, & you may hear of him, if you are down from Bacon. He would like to see you & may be up to the Point some day.

We go to Farmington tomorrow & my Ordination is to take place Thursday. I will send you a paper containing an acct. of it. I wish that you could be there. Mother wishes very much to go but will not be able. Laura & Aunt Aurelia will go.

Ella is nicely - is mending my pants! Sends a great deal of love to you all.

I saw Dellie Sab. He is well, but has no school secured yet. Chas has not written since the letter I sent you. I spent last week in Bath "getting ready" - have two Sermons to prepare before next Sab. Father very kind & thoughtful for our comfort, & we had quite a talk this morn in regard to 13th Of March. I preached all day for Mr Chapin yesterday, had rather a thin house, but enjoyed the day pretty well. I paid a minister \$12 to go to Farmington for me yesterday.

All our friends are well. Oscar was in last night & mentioned having a letter from you. We are in the "North Room", where Lizzie has been so much. It always reminds me of her. Tell Grace we are very glad to hear that she is so good. Hope Guy won't ride too much! Ella & Mother both send a great deal of love to you & Lizzie, with many kisses to the dear children.

Rowland

P.S. N.B.!? There is a rumor that Laura [torn page]

1166 10/9/1860 *From:* E. Waite

To: Lieut O O Howard

OOH-1108

Portland

Source: Bowdoin

Portland Oct 9 1860

Lieut O O Howard

Dear Sir

I have been looking for a letter from you for some time - have been anxious to know how you all do. We regret that you and Lizzie did not make us a call while in Maine. We are not always overrunning full of Company as at the time yourself called for a moment & could not be entertained for a night. We are not often put to such straits. Do not fail to come and see.

Give much love to your good wife & dear children. Tell Lizzie her dividends are due and I will collect and forward the same if she wishes.

Your Affectionate Uncle

E. Waite

1167 10/10/1860 *From:* S.P. Lee

To: Dear Cousin Otis [OO
Howard]

OOH-1109

New York

Source: Bowdoin

New York Oct 10th 1860

Dear Cousin Otis

I arrived her Monday and found letters from Sarah giving me the particulars of Franks death. What a shock to poor Sarah it is. Poor Frank when I left Nassau 6 weeks ago was quite well but a few days after had an attack of Hemorrhages which confined him to the house for some time. When on the morning of the 21st ult as the morning gun fired at 5 o'clock he started out of his sleep & an abscess broke, which suffocated him in half an hour. He never spoke after, but went quietly to his God whose child he was in every respect. I have lost a dear dear Brother and poor Sarah an affectionate and kind good husband and adviser. She was <thoroughly> dependent on him for every thing. How I do want to be with her now in her sorrows, but I fear I can never be so great a comforter as I ought.

Sarah will probably remain in Nassau this winter and come on here next spring.

I have not heard from any of our Eastern friends for a long time. Please write me how is your mother and Roland and Charles and how is Vaughan Otis. Do let me hear from you. I go to Guilford tomorrow and shall return here Monday or Tuesday morning and if I can, I will spend one night with you before I sail which will be the last of next week. I go to Nassau again.

Give much love to Lizzie and the children and with much for yourself.

I remain your affectionate cousin,
S.P. Lee

P.S. If you see Jennie Grey, tell her I have got her shell wreath and will send it to her tomorrow if I have time before I go East. Excuse this as I am writing it with a miserable pen at the Hotell.

Perry

1168 10/11/1860 *From:* E Waite

To: Lieut OO Howard

OOH-1110

Portland

Source: Bowdoin

Portland Oct 11 1860

Lieut OO Howard

Dear Sir

Your letter of 8th is recvd with the enclosed coupons, all right, which together with the Bank dividends will more than pay for two Shares of Bank Stock. Our Bank Stock here is much sought after. None now offering in the market.

I have made enquiry and have got the promise of two Shares for Lizzie at \$104 per share. Think I can collect of International without Order.

The Cashier says there is no need to send the Certificate. It is perfectly good.

Your affectionate Uncle
E Waite

all well, with much love. Are looking for a great rush here next week to see the Prince and the British fleet.

1169 10/15/1860 *From:* E Waite

To: Lieut OO Howard

OOH-1111

Portland

Source: Bowdoin

Portland Oct 15 1860

Lieut OO Howard

Dear Sir

I enclose certificate for two Shares Bank Stock <[torn page]> \$208 - also Cash \$28 - amt 236.00

Recvd for dividend on Bonds 150

do " Canal Bank 28

do " Casco Bank 44

International Bank 14

---- 236.00

The International divide 3 ½ per cent.

Please acknowledge Recpt and Oblige.

Your Affectionate Uncle

E Waite

P.S. The British Fleet have just arrived.

1170 10/16/1860 *From:* O.O. Howard

To: My dear Mother [Eliza
Gilmore]

OOH-1112

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. 16th Oct 1860

My dear Mother

The prince has now gone and I can write you a letter. Saturday evening I went to call on Bishop [Charles Pettit] McIlvaine, the Chaplain of West Point 33 years ago, found him a genial, warmhearted, aged Christian. On Sunday he preached for Mr French to the Cadets & referred to his early experience in a very touching manner. The Post was given over to infidelity, not one Christian man any where & only three Christian ladies. He spoke of the revival that took place then. In the evening he went into our Cadet prayer meeting & told there also much of his early experience. I am in hopes his visit will be greatly blessed to us, though I fear the subsequent visit of the Prince of Wales has absorbed all the attention of the young men.

The prince came yesterday about 2 P.M. in the str Harriet Lane with his Suite of 8 or 10 gentlemen. We had a large crowd of people, but all were very orderly except some who crossed into places where they were not invited. The prince is a good looking young man of 19 rather small of stature, modest & gentlemanly in his bearing. He seemed to take much interest in everything here. He visited nearly all our buildings - received military honors on the plain - partook of a collation at Col. Delafield's - visited Fort Putnam on horseback & then went to Cozzens Hotel to spend the night. This morning he visited the recitation rooms. He staid in mine long enough to hear one recitation from Cadet Burnham. All his suite of gentlemen were with him. He don't seem anymore of a Prince than Francis Orman Turner. He looks & appears very much like him.

I hope you are now quite well. I am anxious to get a letter from you. I received one from Rowland while he was at home. I had written to him directing to Bath and presume you got my letter announcing the death of Frank the next day after Rowland wrote. I have heard from Perry & some expect him up tonight.

The Children & Lizzie are pretty well. Guy has a cold. Gracie says: send my love & my kiss. Love from all.

Affectionately, your son
O.O. Howard

Lizzie Howard, Uncle Wards daughter & Miss Arvilla Phillips spent last night with us. L is on a visit at Newburg

1171 10/18/1860 *From:* Rowland [RB
Howard]

To: Dear Otis [OO Howard]

OOH-1113

Farmington

Source: Bowdoin

Farmington Oct. 18th 1860

Dear Otis

I received your letter in regard to Franks death just after I had written you. I wrote Sarah yesterday. You will receive a "Chronicle" giving some little acct. of my Ordination. It was a solemn & interesting day to me. I only preached half of last Sab. Mr Whitten being with me & occupying the Afternoon. Our boarding place is all we could ask or desire, except I feel the want of a more retired study. I would give money for your room in the Barracks.

Ella is well, happy & contented. We have no vestry and our Wednesday Evening prayer meetings are held at private house. We had a very small but good meeting last night. Today I have been very idle intellectually. Ella & I went into the woods & upon Powder House Hill this morning & this afternoon. One of the most beautiful of Indian Summer days. Mr Goodenow sent us his horse & carriage & we rode down to "the falls" & called on Bro. Rogers who is now preaching there. Ella is now calling at Mrs Burnhams. She enjoys being a "ministers wife" so far very much, but it has all been Sunny Side as yet.

Mother did not come to Ordination. Mrs Patten, Uncle Ensign & Laura were here. I wish you & Lizzie could come & see us, & O how I long to see dear little Guy & Grace. Tell Guy, Miss Abbott, with whom we board has a little black dog not half as big as Diamond. He is black as a shiny boot. His ears are short & his tail (!) is very slender & pointed & he is very playful and his name is Garibaldi, but we call him "Garry" for short! Before Aunt Ella was up this morn he had some fun with me on the hearth rug (we have an old fashioned fire frame) & went to kiss me & kissed so hard as to jam my lip between his teeth & mine & hurt me & I set out to bite him!

We had quite a shock of an earthquake yesterday morn at 6 ½ o'clock. The whole house shook & trembled like a steamboat on the waves & the crockery rattled.

We are having a no. of cases of Diptheria & I have a proposition to submit to you on that acct. As Mr Gray has been so successful in the treatment of it will not please to ask him to write out what he considers the proper symptoms & treatment of the disease that you may send it to me. Ella has so much confidence in his treatment, & I too, that we would like to have his opinion, for our own private resource if either of us, or the family we are with should be attacked. This is asking a good deal of Mr. G., but I know you have placed him under some obligation & I feel less delicacy on that acct. Give Ellas & my love to Mrs. G. & Jeanie if you see them.

I suppose Charles has written you of the religious interest in his School. Two or three conversions & a general & pervading Seriousness & inquiring spirit is what he speaks of to me. May the Lord continue his work, uphold, strengthen & direct our dear Brother & give him many souls.

I brought away the first vol. of your Stevens Hist. of Methodism. Lizzie will say "it is just like him"!

But I am very sorry. I will read it & you shall have it next Summer. I found the <sleeve> buttons. I miss my "Pastors Hand book", wh. Tells how to marry & bury people. Have you seen it?

Mrs Patten gave us a nice Lounge covered with Enameled leather & a Spring Study chair - ditto - & a nice hair mattress. These with our pictures make us feel that we are at home. Ella says "tell Lizzie, we have got the machine up but have not tried it yet, as I have had so many little jobs to do". Give my congratulations to Lt Carroll. Katie must rejoice in her little Brother. Grace, have you ever seen the baby?

We have our fares on the A.R.R. charged to Father!

In great haste
Your aff; Bro.
Rowland

P.S.

Ella sends love to Brother Otis, Sister Lizzie, Guy & Grace. Tell Guy we want to know all about the Prince. We see the N.Y. Times. I take the Boston Daily Journal. Did you see the Prince?

Please always mention the prayer meeting when you write. I often think of it & try to pray for it.

1172 10/20/1860 *From:* C.H. Howard

To: My dear brother [OO
Howard]

OOH-1114

Holden

Source: Bowdoin

Holden Oct 20, 1860

My dear brother

Your turn has at length come for a letter. I need not say I was very glad to get yours above a week ago. It bro't the 1st news of Mr. Sargent's death. Rowland has since mentioned it. It seems that Sarah will be comfortably off in this world's goods. Have you seen or heard anything of Perry since your return? I remember with great pleasure my Cadet friends. Am sorry I was not more efficient as a Christian and rejoice that you still have the heart to labor for our divine Master & that he gives you opportunity to do some thing for him. There you are in the house with Mr. Carrol. May the Lord give you faith to pray & to labor for his Salvation as your heart seems to be prompted now.

You will be glad to know that the Lord hath been pleased to show us something of His salvation here where I am situated. Mrs. Newcombe, the lady where I board, after some struggles & some unhappy days, has found peace in believing & has consecrated her life to the service of Christ. Three of my scholars have, one after another, found the Christian's hope. Another who has gone away to teach & for whom God I humbly hope gave me Grace to pray hath found joy in the Holy Ghost. And still another who came into our family for a few days upon a visit & decided here that she would seek the Lord, has written me of the happiness she found in the love of her Savior.

These great blessings, have I hope greatly humbled me, bro't me to view my own unworthiness & the glory of Christ more nearly in their true light. And, Otis, the Lord seems so gracious & good to me & to all that sometimes my heart is very full. I have felt like spending some time in trying to praise & humbly thank Him.

To have others inquire of me what they ought to do to be saved, makes me realize to the fullest extent my dependence upon the Lord, as I cast myself upon his mercy & look to Him for help. He is pleased to let me know something of faith. I begin to perceive more fully its meaning as read so frequently in Scripture.

It is a great favor to let me know something of my own weakness & sinfulness, & something of the depth of His goodness.

I wish that Johnny Weir - yes I wish that Guy who have not - might be present when the Lord is carrying on a work - a special work of Grace. Yet one place is as good as another & the Lord will bless the use of His means in His own good time.

We have had no unusual meetings & even our prayer-meetings have not until the very last begun to be enlivened. The church is cold but some members are alive. Only 3 weeks more. Many scholars still out of the way of Life.

You do not escape my memory in prayer & I trust your supplications have had something to do with the wonderful results in this Community. Pray that I put no dependence in self - all in Christ - & that His name may still be glorified, & mine & the failings of Christians over-ruled. Mrs. N. is praying for her husband now. Would that I might do my whole duty while I stay.

My regards to Johnny Weir. I have not heard from him. My kind regards to Mrs & Miss Jeanie Grey. I wish I could see these three & your own dear family today. Wish I could bow at the family altar with you again. It seems to me now that my heart would be in more complete sympathy with yours. West Point (physically) seems like a Paradise in my memory. The Lord grant it may be so spiritually to you & others,

Affectionately
C.H. Howard

My love to Guy. Will his father kiss him & little darling Grace for me? Tell Grace I heard she was going to forget

me. Does she believe she will? Guy must help her to remember me. What does he say to that?

Remember me to Miss Blanche & others who may inquire.

1173 10/20/1860 *From:* B. D. Critchlow

To: Lieutenant [OO] Howard

OOH-1115

West Point

Source: Bowdoin

West Point Oct 20th [1860]

Lieutenant Howard
Esteemed & Respected Friend

In accordance with your desire expressed to me to know something about the early history of my place of residence, the religious influences by which I was surrounded and my subsequent connection with the church of God, I now with pleasure take this opportunity to comply with your desire.

My birth place was in the town of New Brighton a small but beautiful place of about twenty two hundred inhabitants surrounded on all sides by the most attractive scenery, in the western part of Pennsylvania. It is the favorite resort of a great many city people during the hot summer months. During the early history of the state a block house was established there and it was there also that Brady performed some of his most daring adventures. Half a mile from my fathers house the spot is still pointed where Brady made that celebrated leap when pursued by the Indians. Scattered around among the woods are still to be seen graves of the Indians and arrowheads are still picked up in the woods and on the hills round the town. The Block house was still standing until about a year or eighteen months ago, when it was torn down.

The first church was organized some twenty five or thirty years ago. The first pastor was Dr. Aaron Williams a cousin of my father's who preached for seven or eight years when he received a call from a congregation in New York. When my father who was then through his Theological studies at the Seminary took charge of the congregation at their request and has been its pastor ever since.

My father is an Old School Presbyterian and has been preaching now twenty three years. He is now in his fifty third year. My mother is also a member of the same church. I was early taught to go to church and Sabbath school and every Sabbath afternoon my mother gathered us all about her and had us recite the catechism repeat hymns and verses from the Bible. She would also talk to us about God and heaven and the importance of loving him and giving our hearts to him. She never allowed an opportunity to go unimproved. A death or accident was always improved to draw our attention the necessity of preparing for death and judgment. She was a truly pious woman and to her prayers under Gods providence I owe my conversion. She was very intelligent and pleasant, and the confidant of all her children who went to her with all their troubles and difficulties.

My ancestors were all respectable industrious and intelligent people, and the line can be traced back to the blood of kings. I do not say this in a boasting spirit however. Far from it, but only to give you a correct idea of my family.

As we grew older my father would question us on the sermon to see how much we remembered of it. This was always the custom except when there was company. For sometime before I thought of coming here, and before I left home it was our habit to have all my brothers and sisters meet and sing while my oldest sister would accompany them on the melodeon. I often think of those Sabbath afternoon meetings as the pleasantest of my life. I often find myself wishing I was at home with them again and Sabbath day is the day I feel most homesick and lonely. It was my delight to attend the Sabbath school and I never missed a Sabbath unless prevented by sickness or some other cause equally as good. I have not attended Sabbath school since I left home nor do I know whether it will be my privilege to do so again until I return.

As far back as I can remember I do not know of my ever using an oath or ever being concerned in anything that was disreputable or that would cause my father pain. When my brother and I went out in the evening we always were required to let our parents know where we were going and to get their consent to our going. In this way a love of home was raised in our hearts which would not have been the case had we been allowed to wander around the streets as we pleased. I have six sisters and one brother. We are twins. Three of my sisters are members of the church. My brother is not a member of any church, but it is my earnest prayer, as well as the earnest prayer of as good a father and mother as ever lived, that he will soon come out on the Lords side.

It was during the great revival of '58 that I was first seriously impressed. I had often thought I would like to be a good man and always said that I would be one some day but I still put it off until at last it came to the point that I must become a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ then or be lost entirely. I resolved to seek the Lord. There was a young minister by the name of Findley preaching for my father, and it was under his preaching that I first received my religious impressions. My father talked and prayed with me and the minister of whom I spoke did the same. I also talked with my oldest sister in whom I placed great confidence and for a long time I did not know what to do but at last I found as I hope "peace in believing".

During this revival great interest was manifested in all the surrounding country and in the different families. Men that were never known to call upon the name of the Lord except in blasphemy were found seeking for pardon at the foot of the cross. There was no noise of any kind but all was still and the Spirit of God silently worked at the hearts of all people. There was nothing thought of for a long time except the revival. It was the sole subject of conversation. There was meeting every night and after it was over an invitation was given to those who were seeking the Saviour to remain for conversation and prayer, and every evening there was about ten or a dozen stayed. At one communion thirty two stood up before the congregation and professed their faith in the Saviour and their determination to renounce the "world with its affections and lusts". It was on this occasion that I joined the church. The next communion season there were fifteen or twenty more joined the church. And every communion one or two more would come forward. This happened for a long time until at last all the interest died, or seemed to die, away. Never had there been for years before such an outpouring of the Spirit and the principal part of the converts were the young people of the town.

I was nearly fifteen years of age when I joined the church and I am now nearly seventeen, which will be next February. I have never since regretted the step I then took and it is my earnest prayer to God that I never shall. I thank God that he gave me the parents that he did. Words can not express the love I bear them and also to my brother and sisters. To them next to God I owe all the comforts and privileges which I have enjoyed, and my prayer is that God will shower down his richest blessings upon them and that I may continue to feel towards them the love that I now feel.

I have endeavored to give you a distinct account of all you desire & but whether it is what you wished I will leave you to determine. You can look this over and see if it is what you wished if it is not I will be most happy to give you all this <> in my power. Wishing you the Richest blessings of God's grace.

I have the pleasure to remain your friend.

B. D. Critchlow [Benjamin D Critchlow, USMA Class of 1865]

1174 10/21/1860 *From:* E. Kirby

To: Mr [OO] Howard

OOH-1116

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y.
Oct 21st 1860

My Dear Mr Howard,

Since you requested of me an account of the circumstances connected with my profession of religion, I take pleasure in giving them to you.

While I was very young (about eight years old) I had the reputation of being one of the worst boys in my native town. If there was any mischief or anything unusual happened, I was sure to be pointed out as having something to do with it, and the respect that the townspeople had for my parents only prevented exposure. I continued this kind of life until I was about twelve years old. I had always been obliged from childhood to attend Sunday school and although without any apparent effect yet when I was about twelve years old I commenced to think seriously about my course of life. The influence of my home having a tendency in this direction - my sisters, I had six at the time five of whom were Christians, exerted a great influence over me.

At this time I was in that state which all of us must experience. I was on the brink of high precipice and a single push would have sent me to judgement, but the hand a kind friend sent it would almost seem by Divine Providence came to my aid and I was saved. A gentleman settled near my home about this time. He was a most devout Christian, and strange as it may seem took a strong fancy to me, and his was the hand that guided me from the precipice - to life. If a person of different character had formed an attachment for me who can tell what would have been the result.

My first step towards leading a new life was to take a pledge with my friend to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks. This was the commencement of my new life. In August 1854 I was confirmed. I was at that time fourteen years of age. I joined the Episcopal Church and have remained of that faith ever since.

These are the principal events connected with my early life. I owe it to Divine Providence who sent a guiding hand at the critical moment of life together with the influence of a mother who is as near a Christian as any person I have ever known. I pray God that I may continue to lead a Christian life, and improve in godly ways.

I am ever your sincere friend.

E. Kirby [Edmund Kirby, USMA Class of 1861]

1176 10/23/1860 *From:* O.O. Howard

To: dear Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-1118

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Oct. 23. 1860

My dear Mother,

I received a letter from Rowland yesterday & a paper. He said you were not present at his ordination. I am sorry, if the reason of your not being there was that you had not sufficiently recovered from your attack.

Everything moves on with regularity & considerable monotony here. Our most marked events during the term from examination to examination are the changes that frequently occur in the officers of the Post. Col. [Wm. J.] Hardee our Commandant of Cadets left last Monday, & his family follows him tomorrow. I feel quite an interest in this family. I had the two eldest daughters for pupils for some time. Their aunt, who has the care of them (for they have no mother) has been for some time past a teacher in our Sunday school, and the two younger children Bettie & Millie, scholars in the same. The Col has been uniformly kind to me and I wish he was as good a Christian as he knows he ought to be." Colonel [John F.] Reynolds replaces Col Hardee. We like him much. I think he is a good man. The Superintendent Col [Richard] Delafield still remains, though he has already served out his period of four years. Lizzie & I went to bid good-bye to the Col Hardees family this evening. This afternoon I started to visit the parents of my Sunday school scholars & the children themselves. You should have seen the crowd of children following me at the Band barracks. Their faces were not all clean, but they looked happy. I found one of my scholars sick with the Dyptheria -, the poor little boy was suffering a great deal & had been for some time - and I heard of another scholar, very sick, though away on a visit.

Almost all the people I visited today are Germans. Last night I held a prayer meeting with the Cadets. I proposed to many of them to give me an account of their religious life in the form of a letter. I have received already several very interesting letters & am hoping that much good will grow out of the exercise.

The Children are sound asleep & Lizzie has gone to her room if not to bed. Guy has quite a cold & Lizzie soaked his feet tonight in hot water. He is in a good perspiration & I hope his cough will be looser tomorrow. Grace seems perfectly well & is generally very sweet tempered & happy. I find I set a good store by my children. I am praying that God will make of them instruments of blessing to us & to the world. Guy has a "prince of Wales hat" - a drab, round topped felt hat, with a button on the top, long drab pants coming down to his shoes & his usual socks, over which he puts his coat on cold days & damp weather. Grace has a <rumning> sack, that she puts on to go out, gathered a little at the waist. Lizzie made it out of something of Guys. She has made me a dressing gown too which I could not describe to you - red predominates.

I must retire for I have to begin to study early in the morning. I hope father is well.

With much love to him, kind regards to my friends & my earnest prayers for you all, I am

your affectionate son
O.O. Howard

I am glad to hear such good news from Charles, then Rowland.

1177 10/29/1860 *From:* Helen B. Chapman

To: Lieut. O.O. Howard

OOH-1119

Westfield Mass

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

Lieut. O.O. Howard
West Point N.Y.

Westfield Mass, Oct 29 60

My dear Sir,

Your very kind letter of Oct 22 was duly received and would have been answered at once, but I was then, and am still suffering from the influence of this New England climate.

You discharged a painful duty with delicacy and kindness, and I believe it will give you pleasure to know that the task was really a less painful one, than you had imagined. I have long been prepared for such a result, and my last interview with my son in August, fully impressed me with the idea, that it could not be long delayed.

I did not consider it advisable in me however to check any voluntary effort to succeed, and from my knowledge of his peculiarities of temperament and character, I felt the necessity of leaving his fate entirely in his own hands. He is well aware that he has no severity of censure to dread on my part - in the contrary I am sensible of too strong a tendency to regard him as unfortunate rather than blamable.

By the kindness of a Providence that has mingled many mercies with much trial, he does not leave West Point either friendless or destitute, and (mortifying and humiliating as these two years must seem to those in whom the pride of life is yet unsubdued), I feel certain they have exercised a most beneficial influence in his character and habits. This cannot seem a strange idea to one with whom all things are subordinate to a Christian life, and you will not be surprised that I can feel, even that this very humiliation so torturing to such morbid sensitiveness, may be a lesson that will impress his memory forever.

For all your care my dear Sir, in striving to lead him, and all his companions, to the only true source of strength and refuge from temptation, I am deeply grateful, and I trust your earnest labor, will not seem wholly in vain. They cannot be fruitless, the seed thus sown will spring up and be as abundant harvest, but you may never know in this life the good you have accomplished. Is it not something to have the grateful wishes and fervent prayers of so many anxious and sorrowing mothers.

I may never see you or have occasion to address you again, and at a moment when from my own sorrow I can now keenly appreciate the trials of others, I cannot refrain from a suggestion with regard to Kirby Russel. In his success his widowed mother has every thing at stake; and I fervently trust you may never have occasion to address such a letter to her. You of all others need not be told how to write on such an occasion, but I have known Mrs. Russel since her son was a very little child. I know her to be a noble-hearted woman chastened and purified by suffering, but she belongs to a proud ambitious family, and Edmund's failure would be attended by many trials that only her very intimate friends can realise.

If, as I have heard it said, he really wants natural ability to go through such a severe course of study, I would suggest, in the spirit of doing unto others as I would be done by, that you clearly enlighten his mother on this point. No agony seems to me unendurable but that of self reproach: and I would be grateful to any one who at the risk of humiliating my pride, would save me from the far greater sorrow of unjust severity to an unfortunate child. I understand he is doing well and I fervently trust he will continue to improve, but if such a painful necessity should occur, I know that Edmund will receive from you all the consolation it is in your power to give.

With my best wishes for your health, and long continued usefulness I remain,

very truly and respectfully yours
Helen B. Chapman