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1194 12/1/1860    *From:* O.O. Howard

*To:* My dear Mother [Eliza  
Gilmore]

OOH-1135

West Point N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Point N.Y.  
December 1st 1860

My dear Mother,

I feel slightly tired tonight and will only write you a few lines to tell you that Lizzie presented me with another little boy [James Waite Howard] this afternoon, about ten minutes past one. She labored hard but everything was favorable. Her first pains began a little after four, but were not severe till after eight. She is doing well. The boy weighed 11 3/4 lbs by my scales, pretty large, though he don't look so.

Guy & Grace are delighted. Guy wants to know if he did'nt come in thro the door or thro the window or thro some back door.

Lizzie sent to Newburg for a nurse. She was to come down today, but the baby was born & dressed before she got here. Mrs Simpson, a colored woman, who sells candy & cake to the Cadets acted as nurse. Dr McDougal, an aged Surgeon, was kind patient and attentive. Our Heavenly Father has indeed blessed us. It is thus He accumulates his mercies upon us. May he fit this child for his own service & with him glorify His Holy Name. One of my cherished hopes is that my children may be faithful servants of God.

Give my love to Laura & tell her she is bigger & stouter than Lizzie, also to Uncle & John & his family. My kind regards to the neighbors. Love to father.

Affectionately Your Son  
O.O. Howard

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1195 12/5/1860 *From:* Rowland [B Howard]

*To:* Dear Brother & Sister  
[OO & Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1136

Farmington

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Farmington Dec 5th /60

Dear Brother & Sister

We congratulate you most heartily on this new accession to yr numbers & blessings. Ella says she "is just as glad as if she had got him herself!" And I am sure the letter telling of the arrival of the new comer and of Lizzie's safety made us both very glad & happy.

You were remembered at our family prayers. We have prayers with the family we board with the same that you do, and Ella & I always read & pray together before we retire.

We have been having some intensely interesting Miss. meetings here this week. My heart has been deeply moved for the degraded millions of the Earth and I have resolved, God helping me, to try to do more for them, and our people seem to be aroused also.

Mr Farwell, who is from Greene & was in Augusta & knew you there, made some excellent remarks in the prayer meeting last evening. I spoke of our power & duty & privilege of giving. He said, three years ago he paid ½ a cent a week for the support of the Gospel. He was converted about that time & has increased his donations till now he gives 75 cts per week. He has left of tobacco & thus saves \$35. per year. His little boy 9 years old, his idle, died a year ago last night. He said he had been thinking this week that he would give what it would have taken to feed, clothe & educate his little boy, to the children of Heathen parents.

You know I told you that lately among us "many little children have gone to Heaven to live". A widow who has lost two little girls, her only ones, brought their savings to the missionaries. Parents who had lost a little boy, gave them a \$2 ½ piece that he kept in his little bank. A mother who had lost a sweet little girl, gave her \$5.00 gold piece. Would these things be so unless the Spirit of God were here?

I have been very much refreshed & my back stiffened up by the presence & the brave Christian spirit of these men of God - the missionaries, Rev. D. C. Marsh, for 11 years in Mosul, & Rev. Mr. Lindley, 25 years in So. Africa.

Some one sent us a Nassau paper with Dr McClure's Sermon on the Subject of Frank's & his Sister's death. Charles was invited to Prof. Shepards to Thanksgiving, have not heard from him since, nor from home. Tell Guy the coasting is good here. He must kiss the baby brother for Uncle & Auntie. He & Grace will love him very much. Ask Grace if she will keep all those doll babies now?

With great love to you both, to all the children & Alice.

Yr. Aff. Bro.  
Rowland

Ella says she wants to know what you are going to name the baby?

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1196 12/5/1860 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

*To:* My dear Mother [Eliza  
Gilmore]

OOH-1137

West Point N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Point N.Y.  
Thursday Dec 5th 1860

My dear Mother,

Lizzie & the baby have had no draw-backs. She has a good appetite, looks cheerful & happy. Tuesday we had a light fall of snow. I gave the children a sleigh-ride yesterday - Guy & Grace & Katy Carroll are having a nice time sliding this morning.

Lizzie was very sorry for Laura. How is she now. Give her much love & Sympathy.

The baby's corrected weight was 8 ½ lbs the 3d day.

Much love to Father. We are expecting secession & are anxious for the result.

Aff. Yr. Son  
Otis

The baby is well & sends a lock of his hair to Grandmother - What name?

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1197 12/7/1860     *From:* R.H. Gilmore

*To:* Lt. O.O. Howard

OOH-1138

Holden

West Point N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Holden Dec 7 1860

My dear brother:

Your letter of the 1st inst came to hand last night and I hasten to write you in time. I have a very pleasant school in a pleasant neighborhood. My school is not large being only about 30 in all and the average attendance is not more than 25. Most of them are very obedient, but I have some roguish boys who are continually getting into mischief. As yet I have used no stick or ruler in the way of corporal punishment but I think I shall be under the necessity of doing so ere long. My boarding place is quite pleasant. I have the same that Charles had. Mr. Newcomb is a very queer man and has a great many queer ways and sayings. Mrs Newcomb has recently obtained a "hope" that she is a child of God. She is quite a pleasant woman and trys to do what she can to make my stay here pleasant. Mr Southworth the Congregationalist Clergyman I find to be a very pleasant man. I like him very much. He was in my school this morning in the capacity of visiting Committee. He seemed to be very much pleased with my course of instructing.

I hardly know what to say in regard to the communication of the tidings of the birth of another son. That is the reason why I have not said anything about it before. I suppose I ought to make some observation concerning so important an event, but as I never had occasion to make any remarks in regard to such an affair I believe I will let the matter slide after assuring you that I will do as you requested.

I left home a week ago today. Mother was much better than she had been for weeks before. The cavity on her limb had been decreasing in size for a long time so that it is only about the size of a thimble now. The rest of the folks are nicely. We had a small Thanksgiving i.e. the number at the table was small. I was the only one of mother's children present and Roland Gilmore was the only one of fathers children there besides me. We have been having quite a snow storm in these parts so that we now have good sleighing. Charles sent me a letter yesterday and enclosed in his was one from you. I have received numerous invitations to call at the various houses in my neighborhood. I shall make one to night after I have finished this.

Give my love to Lizzie and a kiss for Guy, Grace & ---- (the little one). Perhaps you would like some advice in regard to the naming of the new comer from the various uncles. My remark is don't name him Rodelphus. "A word to the wise is sufficient." Please write me often and it will give me much pleasure to answer

Your very aff. Bro.  
R.H. Gilmore

Lt. O.O. Howard  
West Point N.Y.

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1198 12/17/1860 *From:* Charles [H Howard]

*To:* My dear brother [OO  
Howard]

OOH-1139

Bangor

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Bangor Dec 17, 1860

My dear brother

It may seem rather late for me to congratulate you & Lizzie on the happiness of having another of those gifts from Heaven which bring joy also to all your friends and we expect will be a blessing to the world. My feelings however have not grown less ardent nor my prayers less frequent in behalf of you all & especially Lizzie, altho' I have delayed writing. I find a great deal to occupy my time as it seems you do as usual. There is something almost every evening - tonight I debated whether it was not my duty to attend the "Society of Inquiry" which meets in the room beneath ours. It is for the promotion of the Missionary Cause - meets once in two weeks, alternating with the Rhetorical Soc. After a half hour in devotional exercises, we have two reports with regard to different quarters of the world by two members appointed for the purpose at a previous meeting. The world is divided into the 5 grand div. & each div. is assigned to an extensive Committee. So certain one of these Committees report at each meeting and have it for their duty to collect all they can of interest with regard to their particular field.

Tues. Eve - our class prayer meeting takes an hour & sometimes the <Corbonette> meets which being for the benefit of the Seminary we are expected to attend when invited.

Wed. comes the regular Church prayer-meeting which I find it advantageous to attend. Thurs. nothing regular but always something. Last week there was a social gathering of the Sabbath School & "opening of the boxes" containing the contributions of each class. I went to get acquainted with my class, most of whom were present. It consists of 7 young ladies 16 or 18 years of age. The boxes contained this year \$275.00

We had a little practice at singing before & during the counting of the money a social season. Then being seated we were furnished with a treat of apples, nuts, raisins &c. The latter in little packages for each scholar & teacher. After one more sing, Prof. Harris offered a few remarks & closed with prayer. This was at a vestry designed on purpose for such occasions.

Friday eve. Immediately after tea, which is at 6, we have a general prayer-meeting of the students, then there is a Sabbath School teachers' 'meeting' at the Vestry which I would by no means miss. We discuss there the lesson for the next Sab. Students take turns in presiding. There are 6 of us in the school - 3 of my class & 3 of the middle. 3 of my Sat. Eves. I have made calls - once upon Mrs Dennet, at Gen. Stephens week ago & at Prof. Shepards last Sat. Gen. S & wife invariably inquire about & express great interest in you. They hope you will spend a year or two here. I let the Gen. read your next the last letter.

When I got your letter we were just beginning Hebrew. Isn't it hard. We have an excellent teacher in Prof Smith & now we are having 2 lessons a day being tutored by Rev. Mr. Perkins in the forenoon. He drills us on the verbs while Prof. S. lectures upon the same occupying about 3/4 hour in thus giving out a lesson for next day & 1/4 in having us pronounce or read (It seems more like spelling out) the Hebrew of the 1st part of the Bible. We shall battle Lat & Greek soon. I couldn't think of translating - seems to me you have got on admirably.

I was gratified to hear Alice as well as Miss Benet & Holabird were in your S. School. All you wrote was of interest but requires no special answer I believe. I fear my letter to Johnny was either too long or too prosy as it brings no return. I feel anxious to know how Lizzie gets on & the little one with the "dark hair" - from Mother via Farmington. Did you mean to give away your painting. Oh I wish you would keep it. It would remind your great grandchildren how their ancestor spent many years at West Point. It won't fade you know.

I would gladly extend this letter another sheet but think I ought to draw it to a close & go into the meeting. Our P.O. is in that room. The students carry the Sem. mail taking turns each week. You perceive how conveniently situated I am. Prayers, Rec. Library & Reading room in same building. Our wood is in the cellar. How much I should enjoy having you here while I am. Last Sabbath while listening to Prof. Harris I longed to have you there. It is like a feast - this preaching - only it is all temperate, nothing unhealthy.

We are all watching the daily news from Washington & the South with intensest interest, but probably no more so than you. Tomorrow or perhaps this beautiful moonlight night, when the stars are shining so clear & bright out of the depth of blue as tho' nothing unusual were transpiring below, South Carolina makes her exit from the Union.

I am disposed as yet to use no phraseology which may imply that our glorious "United States", as a government, is near its end. I hope the Pres. with Gen Scott to back him will vindicate our federal rights. What are the prevailing opinions & feelings at West Point? Any Cadets seceded?

Tell Johnny Weir I have joined the Gymnasium Association of the city & spend about an hour in gymnastics daily. They allow about 50 of us students to attend a year for \$60. The usual price is from 5 to 10 dollars apiece.

Expect Mother will visit Rowland tomorrow on the occasion of stockholders meeting. Some cases of Diptheria in Farmington. Is Mr Grey fully recovered? How much I would enjoy spending a few days with you now & calling to see my friends there - especially Mrs. G. & Miss Jennie & Johnny Weir. Where is Miss Blanche? Tell her I felt the need of her history in my school last Fall. I thought of trying to introduce it. But I must close abruptly at last. Do let me hear soon.

Your Affectionate Bro.  
Charles

P.S. Dellie has taught two weeks. He is tried somewhat like all "school-masters" but I hope will get along successfully.

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1199 12/17/1860 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

*To:* Dear Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-1140

West Pont N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Pont N.Y.

Dec 17th 1860

Dear Mother,

I am getting anxious about you. After such a memorable event as the birth of another grandson, I did expect to get a line from you, but perhaps you have been too busy to write. I hope you & father are well. We have had the good providence of God with us all the time. Lizzie has steadily gained strength & the baby has done well. Lizzie says he is a hearty & strong child.

Grace has had a cold a good while, which gives us some anxiety because it has affected her hearing, so much so that she asks you over again when you say anything to her in the ordinary tone. The Dr says it will soon pass away. Guy is rosy & robust. He delights in sliding. He was 5 yrs old yesterday, when he got five slaps on the back and a present of a case containing five books called Willie books.

We have not named the baby yet. What shall we call him? Does not Father think the political sky is rather squally at this time?

I hope we shall get a letter soon. I have heard from the boys since I wrote last. How is Laura? I hope she is able to "dwell in the secret place of the Most, though abiding under the shadow of the Almighty." I hope my dear Mother, that your own heart is filled with peace. Love to Father & kind remembrances for the neighbors.

Aff. Yr Son

Otis

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1200 12/23/1860 *From:* Eliza Gilmore

*To:* My Dear Son [OO  
Howard]

OOH-1141

Leeds

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Leeds, December 23, 1860

My Dear Son,

With a cheerful heart and I hope a thankful one, I commence writing you this Sabbath evening. The sun is now sinking out of sight, and leaves a golden hue far up before it reaches the red and blue stripes but the whole aspect rather bespeaks a blustering night. We had several inches of light snow fell yesterday, and last night which will probably pile up tonight.

Your last letter was rather a reproof but as I am doing my work alone and cannot at all times command my time. The privilege of writing has been lost some times. My health is good. I believe I can say my limb is healed.

I was very happy to hear, in each one of your letters that Lizzie was so comfortable and hope nothing will befall her, and ere the warm weather comes she will recover her full strength. Baby must have a name, and it belongs to his parents to name him. I always liked your father's name and would perpetuate it in this little son of yours if agreeable to his parents.

I am glad to hear that Guy is so healthy. I thought of him his birth day. It was on the Sabbath, the same as his first birth day. I am sorry to hear that Grace has such a bad cold, so early in the winter. I fear she may not recover from it until warm weather.

Grandmother often finds her thoughts wandering away to West Point, imagining how each individually is employed, still hoping all is well. The disease of the throat, that has cut off so many children in Auburn and Lewiston the month past does not prevail at West Point.

Your letters are very precious to me, more so than ever since I am so much confined and alone. Tell Grace the white kitten is grown to be a cat, and stays in the house with me the most of the time. She is now sitting in the same chair that I do. As I lean forward to write, puss creeps in behind me and there she is now.

Your father is very sore on politics. He says many rash sayings about the President and secessionist. I cannot think that any one of our united states will ever think they can sustain a government alone. There are so many connecting ties to be rent on sunder it seems to me that every Christian in these United States must pray earnestly to God to guide all things in his righteous way. I cannot think that the people of these United States will ever spill each others blood. I recollect your Grandfather Howard once said to me, some think the curse of slavery will be the means of destroying the United States. I may live to see the saying verified, but I cannot but have a cheering hope that all will yet be amicably settled. I hope there will as powerful a peacemaker arise as I think Henry Clay was, in Mr Calhoun's time.

I have received a News paper from Nassau containing a portion of the sermon preached on the death of Mr F Sargent and his Sister, a beautiful sermon for the occasion.

Our neighbors and friends are in good health at this time. I saw Laura's babe. It was a beautiful babe. I went there not knowing anything about it. I felt as though Laura was an object of sympathy with us all. The babe had been there two days. It was a daughter. The marks of death were on the head that showed what saved the mothers life, 30 hours of agony previous to taking the life of the child, and L.'s life was at stake. Her strength was fast leaving her. I have not been there since, but I saw L. at church last sabbath. She staid one half the day.

We had a shock of an earthquake in the midst of the service. It was the most distinct I ever heard and made a solemn impression on me for one. Mr Chapin had exchanged with Mr Smith from Wayne. He stoped entirely in his sermon and when he resumed his speaking he refered very solemnly to it as from God.



Since my long silence I have thought of many things that I wished to say to you but do not now think what they were. Ella is gone to Bath to stay till after New Years.

I have filled my sheet. Give much love to Lizzie and all the rest.  
Eliza Gilmore

O.O.Howard

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1201 12/25/1860 *From:* M.H. Wright

*To:* Lt. O. O. Howard

OOH-1142

Saint Louis Arsenal

U.S.A.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Saint Louis Arsenal  
Dec 25, 1860

My very Dear Friend:

Being prevented from leaving my Room to-day, owing to a very severe cold & sore-throat, I thought I could not better occupy a few moments of my time, than in writing to you - acknowledging the recpt of your kind favor, which came to hand in due time.

I have been suffering since Saturday with my throat, & I must say, I find it very trying to have to stay in doors for now these few days. I am getting better now, & hope soon to be all right.

Well my letter, most certainly, would fail to be an "exponent" of the present state of my feelings, were I to neglect speaking of the crisis, which now occupies the thoughts, not only of Politicians & partizan leaders, but of the entire people, & unfortunately has intruded to a dangerous extent, upon the pious thoughts of our Clergy, & the Church. Not that they are freed from all care concerning our government, but that the excitement has led to so sad a pervasion of the rights of the sacred desk. Politics, are preached from the pulpit of the most degrading nature. The basest passions seem to have gained the upper hand, & instead of conciliatory, forgiving, friendly & <cadid> measures being urged, we hear only bitter invectives on the adverse political organization. No brotherly love is preached, but bitter hatred & "war to the knife". To gain popularity with the states, seems to be the ruling passion in some sects. When we see religious bodies passing resolutions for Secession &c, to what other conclusion can we come. But we, of course, are not prepared to judge.

It is needless for me to speak to you, of the suffering among the poor, in our city. Persons familiar with such things, can fully appreciate what must be the extremity to which all are driven.

What think the "Knowing Ones" in your past, of the signs of the times. All in these regions have abandoned their claims to prophetic knowledge, & say "cant tell", "cant tell". Truly are we being severely scourged, & brought low, on account of our iniquities. The Great Ruler of all things, knoweth what is best for us, & indeed, His ways are unknown to us.

I am gratified to know that the 4th January will be very generally observed in this City, as a day of fasting & prayer. Let the inconsiderate sneer & laugh as they may, well may we humble ourselves before an offended God, & implore His blessings & protection. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked".

Should our worst fears not be realized & should all things work together harmoniously, I assure you, that nothing would please me so well, as to have you & your Good Lady come to St. Louis. Room in abundance. Mr & Mrs. Benet, can tell you that, & if they tell you what a set of quarters they occupied here, you can form some idea of my loneliness, when I tell you that I live in them alone. We are very busy in the shops now - repairing & altering some 5000 Muskets & Rifles for Ky.

Give my love to Mrs. Howard & to the children. Merry Christmas & happy New Year to all. Rembr me to my friends.

Yr dear friend  
M.H. Wright

Lt. O. O. Howard  
U.S.A.

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1202 12/27/1860 *From:* W.H. Merrick

*To:* My dear Otis [OO  
Howard]

OOH-1143

Hallowell

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Hallowell Dec 27 / 60

My dear Otis

I do not know whether you have been aware that Fanny [Francis Vaughan Otis b. Sep. 25, 1845] has for the past two weeks been so sick that her life has been despaired of. She has been troubled with a cough since August last but about two weeks ago she began to fail very rapidly. Mrs Otis [Ellen Grant Otis, Congressman John Otis' second wife] informed Maria how sick she was and I brought her on to H. on Saturday. Yesterday at a quarter after three her soul took its flight as quietly & gently as a little child falling asleep. Her mind has been at rest as to her future since she was made aware of her true condition. Mr Brooks the Episcopal Clergyman has been very kind and attentive to her, coming to see her every day. He says he has never known such entire peacefulness in the hour of death in anyone - she did not seem to have a single doubt and talked of her approaching end as quietly as you or I would talk of any ordinary subject. Hers was the "peace of God which passeth understanding". Her funeral is to be on Saturday.

Maria & all the others are well. We left [Benjamin] Vaughan Otis & Anna Goodwin to keep house for us in W.P.

Yrs very truly  
W.H. Merrick

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1203 12/31/1860 *From:* O.O. Howard

*To:* My dear Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-1144

West Point N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Point N.Y.  
Dec 31st 1860

My dear Mother,

The old year is just closing and I don't know that I can do better than spend a few moments in writing you. The past year I have had a good many thoughts, said a good many words & done many acts. They are all pastorall. Some I have passed over as if little moment may have been most weighty & some I have thought important may be without significance before God. We have not a very just appreciation of what is useful & what is not, but this much is true that the past rests with God - it cannot be mended. Tonight I would confess my shortcomings and my other sins & renew my covenant with God to renounce Sin & strengthen my purpose to do His will.

The State of the country is alarming in the extreme. It is arming arming everywhere. Passion & prejudice has gone so far, that I expect civil war before any settlement is had. Cass resigned, South Carolina Seceded. The president timid. Cobb upsetting the Treasury. Baily & Russell robbing the Government. The Sec. Of War - (sending heavy guns from Pittsburg south to Forts whose foundations are hardly laid, then getting angry because Maj Anderson neither acted as a fool nor a coward) has tendered his resignation. South Carolina exhibits a hostile front, takes Fort Moultrie & Castle Pinkney & the Charleston Arsenal, & also a United States vessel &c. How rapidly events succeed each other.

A civil war is by far the most horrible for the officers of the Army. Associated together by education & so many social ties, they will either shrink away into some other profession or have to meet each other in deadly affray. Very few Cadets have yet left except those who were worthless. Two very fine young men left a day or two ago, Alabamians I believe.

The causes of our troubles cannot be easily traced. Slavery is not the sole cause. Good men have shrunk from offices of public trust. Infidelity, licentiousness & all sorts of wickedness have prevailed amongst our public men, & this of itself shews somewhat of the Character of our people. Some portions have been grossly wicked, and other portions have allowed business & private interests to absorb them, & been sadly negligent of the public weal.

Who has not sinned against God. How much then it becomes every soul at the close of this year to humble himself before Almighty God & implore his forgiveness & his direction. I hope the national fast, will not be in vain. If all would pause for the little space of one day & turn their thoughts to God, the result may be happy, for He is able & willing to bless.

Guy found his pants filled with presents Christmas morning & so did Grace. They went to a Christmas tree Christmas eve at the Chapel where I have my S. School. The next night Mr Carroll had a tree below & on the next night, I took the Children to Professor Bartlett's to another tree. Grace is still a little deaf. The baby [James Waite Howard, b Dec 1 1860] is well & grows & Lizzie has been about the house for quite a long time. We kept the nurse three weeks. Lizzie has great reason for thankfulness & not less so have we all at the great mercy of the Lord. Poor Laura I am sorry for her - hope she will soon be well. Give my love to Father & kind regards to the neighbors. I had a letter from Rowland today. A merry Christmas & a happy new year to you & Father.

Affectionately Your Son  
O.O. Howard