
1657 5/1/1862

From: Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1609

Source: Bowdoin

Head Quarters
Howard's
Brigade Camp Winfield
Scott near
Yorktown Va.

[116]

Head Quarters Howard's
Brigade Camp Winfield Scott near
Yorktown Va. May 1st 1862

Dearest,

We have finished April and are still here. Day before yesterday, I visited the trenches with Capt Hazzard. You would be astounded at the amount of work that has been done. The first parallel with a large number of batteries, complete & guns in position. The parallel is about 12 feet wide & three feet deep, the dirt thrown towards the enemy, and distant from his outwork about 1500 yards: thus: [Diagram of the enemy's outworks and the Union parallel showing the battery placements and the location of the York river.]

Capt Hazzard, Sewall, Charles & myself went together first to the extreme right on the York river and to the one hundred & two hundred pds. Battery. There we had a good look at the Gunboats below, Gloucester & Yorktown above. On the way thither, I met Gordon, now Captain in the cavalry, a classmate at West Point. He was the son of Old Commodore Gordon of the Navy (now deceased). He said his (step) mother arranged for him to go south, and Jefferson Davis ordered him to report at Montgomery Ala. at a certain time but he concluded not to do so. At the house near the battery I met Davis, of whom I have spoken before, a captain also in Cavalry & a classmate at West Point. He is from Mississippi and a staunch Union man. The position of some of these young men is very trying; but they will have their reward. I learned from Gordon that "Jim Deshler" of Ala. was killed at Fort Pickens. He said he never would be in but one battle. Villepigue is a Brig. Genl in the south. He lost an arm somewhere, probably at Big Bethel or Bull run. I met Hight of our Maine Cavalry. He was "overslaughed" & resigned & is now with his own cavalry company.

We returned from the battery & proceeded to see the 1st parallel on the way, met Lieut Ames, who inquired for you. He was looking well, entirely recovered from his wound at Bull Run. We left our horses with John & walked into the parallel & inspected the works on foot. After a while Capt S. & Charlie got tired & started for home. Capt H & I went to get a better view of the enemy's works. Once in a while a shell was tossed over & beyond our workmen in the trenches. We met H.L. Abbot still 1st Lieut Topo. Eng'eers laying out & superintending work in the trenches.

After we had tired ourselves sufficiently we returned via Genl Berry's Head Qrs. Missed Capt Thompson's battery. Genl Berry was Col 4th Maine. He makes a very good Genl officer. Capt Thompson, little Fanny's father. Mrs Thompson has gone back to Newport, R.I.

Yesterday I had to muster my command. Capt Sewall took the 64th in Camp here. I went to the 5th New Hampshire, making Gabions 2 miles away. Chas accompanied me. Mr Scott the 81st Penn. some 3 miles off making roads. Mr Miles the 61st N.Y. also 2 or 3 miles away making roads. It was not a very hard day's work for I knew I could not muster the whole though it was ordered, so I did it by proxy for all but one regiment. Sometimes however an aid is considered a part of oneself. So I will consider it & claim a literal fulfillment of the order.

How is Guy this beautiful May morning. I trust he is a cheerful good boy who loves his Mamma, his sister & his little brother. Almost before he knows it he will grow up to be a man. And what kind of a man will Guy be? Papa hopes an upright man, one who fears God & obeys him (I mean fears to do wrong, for that is the fear of God.) That fear is consistent with the warmest love & a part of it. How is Gracie my little daughter. Papa would indeed love to see her. Papa is greatly in hopes the secessionists will let him go home before long. And she must tell Jamie about papa all she can remember. Perhaps Jamie would like to hear about Maj Dr. Hammond's doll.

I will enclose to you a hundred dollars in bills. You must tell me if you get them safely as soon as received.

I found Dexter Howard quite sick the other day at the 3d Maine. Dexter is Uncle Warren's son, Uncle Barna's [Barnabas Howard] Grandson you will remember. He has a fever & finds his bed quite hard. I felt for him, have written his mother. Charles goes up to see him frequently & does what he can. He took him some oranges the other day. We are in a very safe position as I told you (I did not forget & leave out the word not) beyond the range of shot & shells. I have been up to service my duties & all I can do about the enemy but do not think I have suddenly exposed myself.

Charlie is now quite well – eats enormously – sends love. If you see mother tell her this is the safest place in the world. The climate & soil cannot be trusted, but the Dr says I am tough & I think Charles is acclimated at any rate & not a small thing is it. We are under the protection of God.

Much love & many kisses for you “in reserve”. Papa's love to all.

Aff. Yr husband
Otis

1658 5/1/1862

From: Otis [OO Howard]

To: My dear Brother [RB Howard]

OOH-1610

Source: Bowdoin

Head Qrs. Howard's
Brg'de
Camp "Win. Scott"
Near Yorktown Va

[117]

Head Qrs. Howard's Brg'de
Camp "Win. Scott" Near Yorktown Va
May 1st 1862

My dear Brother

Charles & Mr Scott have taken a ride to Big Bethel today; before Chas. left he said you had better write Rowland.

The siege of Yorktown continues. We hear occasional guns & mortars. We make no reply but a steady preparation goes on. We do not know the hour when the bombardment commences. I have our regiment making Gabions, another making corduroy roads & another repairing roads & the fourth only in Camp. We have good news from New Orleans.

Dellie wrote Charles a long letter and I gathered from reading an impression that Dellie thinks you are rather cold towards him. He seems to feel very badly & confesses his faults. I am sure you have only his best interest at heart. Give him credit, Rowland, for more sensitiveness and treat him affectionately & as an equal, for fear that through a desire to benefit him you might lose a good influence over him, or rather estrange his affection. Dellie may write you himself & make a clean breast of it. Charlie advised him to do so.

How is my great little nephew & my gentle sister.

I went into the trenches day before yesterday and found the first parallel quite complete & many batteries established with guns in position. The mortar batteries are nearly ready. The impression is that the cost of taking the enemy's works in this the strongest position that art & nature ever combined to make would have cost us dearly as tho if not procured an absolute defeat. If McClellan succeeds & saves 5000 men and some of our dear friends amongst the number, we ought to be satisfied and those anxious for us should be especially so. It is strange that the public clamor & suspicion & military & political rivalry, have not driven him into some hasty movements to our great disadvantage. I hope he has not forgotten his God & that He will bless & succor him.

Give much love to Ella, many kisses to the baby. I want to make his acquaintance. Your news about the conversions of Cousin Laura & others at W was refreshing. You must not overwork. Remember what you have said to me in times gone by.

I am having quite a relaxation now. I only transmit orders for details & work. I presume my time will come for the trenches. Oh, that this work was done, that the Rebels would give up their rebellion & allow peace to return to our borders. Much love to Sarah. I saw Perry well, a day or two ago. Dexter Howard is ill. Love to mother when you see her.

Write me when you can. My trust is firm & in God - not in man.
Affectionately yr Br.
Otis

1659 5/4/1862

From: Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1611

Source: Bowdoin

Head Quarters
Howard's
Brigade
(Camp "Win. Scott"
near Yorktown Va)

[120]

Head Quarters Howard's
Brigade May 4th 1862
(Camp "Win. Scott" near Yorktown Va)

Dearest,

It is now Sunday morning about 7 o'clock and we at these Head Qrs. are all well. I thought I felt grateful to God this morning for all his favors & blessings. Just before breakfast, Capt Sewall, Lt. Bullock, Charles, John & myself with little "Bony" as the German boy Charlie is often called, retired into my tent. I read that Chapter of Daniel that speaks of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego passing through the fiery furnace and Mr Bulloch led in prayer. God is able to keep us unscathed if we will obey & trust him.

I don't think I have ever said much of Mr Bulloch in my letters to you. He is rather rough in his personal appearance & manners, but a true hearted Christian and a man thoroughly conversant with his duties. He has never failed to supply the Brigade with provisions & in season, though at times he has had to work with all his might to do it, night & day. He is taller than I bent in the shoulders, light hair, eyes, & mustache - of scottish extraction, about forty years of age.

Capt Barker, the Quartermaster, is from Portland. You may have seen him. He used to keep a Livery Stable I think in Portland. At one time was called Col Barker, has a wife & one daughter. He is a pleasant, good hearted man and thus pained to conduct his department well. Thomas Edwards of Portland is his clerk. Col Cone, who was examined by the military board last winter has recently been...

Yorktown is abandoned & our troops are marching in. I am now under marching orders - 1/4 before 8 a.m.

Thank Him who doeth all things well.

Affectionately, love to the children.

Otis

1660 5/4/1862

From: Susan [Key]

To: My dear Guy [Howard]

OOH-1612

Source: Bowdoin

Care of W.T. Carroll
esqr
Clerk of Supreme Court
Washington D.C.

[119]

Washington May 4th [1862]

My dear Guy

I trust you will pardon me for not answering your kind and very welcome note before now. I hope you are all well and that you will continue so for the time to come. I suppose your Mamma has been perfectly worn out on account of you all being sick so much.

Tell me when you write next if you hear often from your Papa and uncle Charley. I saw them only once since I wrote to you last and then they looked very well. Your Papa then showed me the picture of your Mamma and Grace. I did not think Grace resembled it much either that or she has changed a great deal since I saw her.

Guy I hope you will not disappoint me this time by not sending me your picture with Grace's and Jamey's too. I wish very much to have them and have been expecting them this long time.

You wanted to know where Katey Carroll is now. She is in a place called Cumberland and her Papa is some where near there dont exactly know where as he is moved very often.

I heard once about your Papa since he went down near Yorktown and then he was very well.

Guy I dont like Washington very well. I dont think I will remain here more than one month longer. When you write again tell me if Grace ever speaks of me now and also tell all about Jamey. I suppose he is a great big boy now able to speak. I wish I could see him. I think of you all Guy very often and wonder if you ever think of me. I shall never forget you, no never.

Katey's Grandmother sends a great deal of love to your Mamma and all of you she says she would like very much to be able to give you a sweet kiss and so would I Guy I should like it too. I wonder if I ever can kiss you again. When I get your pictures I shall kiss them very often. What a great boy you must be now. I wonder how much bigger than Dooley Wear are you and how much bigger that Carry Wear is Grace. Dear little Grace how much I would wish to see her. She would not know me now I suppose. I pray do you think you would know me if you saw me.

Give my love to Mamma and Grandmother and dont forget to write soon to

Susan [Key]

Address

Care of W.T. Carroll esqr
Clerk of Supreme Court
Washington D.C.

1662 5/5/1862

From: Lizzie [Howard]

To: Dearest [OO Howard]

OOH-1613

Auburn

Source: Bowdoin

[121]

Auburn May 5th 1862

Dearest

I fear I have let too many days pass since writing to you. I often intend to write but I cannot do so during the day and when evening comes I find a torn dress, pants or jacket that must be mended for the morrow, and then talking a little, reading a little, the evening is gone.

I heard the news of the rebels evacuating Yorktown not 'till noon to-day, but it was in the morning papers. Cousin Adams told me at tea time our Army had over taken them at Williamsburg. If your troops were under Gen. Franklin you must have gone up the York river with him. I write to you with the same calm feeling, I think that I have formerly. I have not usual amount of anxiety. You are in the hands of our loving God. I opened my bible to-day and it was at the tenth chapter of Joshua, and it seemed as if our nation's troubles were written there. It gave me great comfort that if the Lord is with us what matters if the whole world is against us. The Lord can take care of his own.

I would like to tell you about the revival of religion here but I feel unable to speak of it. I have seen what I never saw before, souls turning to Jesus finding him and trusting him during a morning meeting during the children's meeting of which I wrote about to take place. Many, I know not the number, gave their hearts to Jesus. One young man who had before this received his appointment as Cadet is among the recent converts. I am to meet him at a friends house some evening. His name is Webster, son of an Universalist minister of Conn. He spoke beautifully, told his young friends, one day a christian was worth more than all his life before. I have talked with Fanny and walked home from one of the meetings with Adams when I told him of Jesus, how I wished he was a Christian. Mr Adams has talked with him & other friends have talked with them both.

The first words I heard Mr Hammond utter was a hymn, as I was entering the Church

I'm glad salvation free
Salvation's free for you and me,
I'm glad salvation's free.

Dellie made me a visit and went to hear him one evening. Tomorrow morning we have another children's meeting. Mr Hammond will be there. He has not been on this side of the river, only at the children's first meeting. I should'nt be surprised at any thing the lord is able to save with the uttermost - from the youngest to the oldest. I dont think our dear little Guy or Grace too young to come to him. If Grace continues in the same gentle course she has lately, and careful about troubling me I shall have to believe she is already in the fold of Jesus. They both go to school now. Guy said "I thought the other school was the best school but now I think this is". Grace is very happy these days, but that little rogue Jamie, is just about as much as I can manage. Aunt Sarah says he is getting the upper hand in the kitchen.

I do not close my letters at night now because I get letters in the morning sometimes, two hours before I have to mail a letter to you. I have been thinking of Mrs Sewall a great deal to-day. I may see her this week, shall if I go to Portland.

I am not in Mr Dingley's class now. Mr Cobb wants me to take a class of little boys. I did'nt want to, but as he wished it, and I thought what a hard time you had to get teachers, then I took it. Their ages from nine to twelve. I will not write more but finish in the morning as it is very late and I shall have to be up early to get the children and myself ready for Church at quarter before eight. We will have to go long before or we will not be able to get into the Church.

Morning.

I have not time, Dearest, to tell you all about the meeting this morning but Eva will trust Jesus. (I wish you would write this <to Guy>).

I spoke to Mr Hammond as we came out. I had Guy and Grace with me by the hands past him. I said Mr Howard of Farmington is their uncle after a few words I had said before, then he knew all about us, and spoke so fatherly so kindly to the children Guy and Grace, "I know all about your pa-pa, read letters how he found Jesus. You must love Jesus."

Now I am going to the office. I have walked to school with the children before I took my letter to finish. I have surely thought of you this morning but you will not wonder when you know of the interest manifested here.

Your own Lizzie

1663 5/7/1862

From: Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1614

Source: Bowdoin

Head Quarters
Howard's
Brigade
Yorktown Va.

[122]

Head Quarters Howard's
Brigade May 7th 1862
Yorktown Va.

Dearest,

We marched from our old Camp to the vicinity of Yorktown Monday, and encamped as a reserve along side of Genl Sedgwick's Division. Just before sunset we got orders to march on towards Williamsburg. It had been raining all day & continued to do so. We started (following) my brigade in rear of Genl French's. We had to pass through a narrow roadway at the Yorktown works, the mud eight or ten inches deep. Horses, wagons, mules & footmen were going both ways, & meeting here. It was dark before I got my brigade past Yorktown. We continued the march till eleven o'clock at night. The mud was deep & slippery so that it was almost impossible for the men to stand up. I walked a great deal to rest my horse and to help on a sick man & I found I had to depend on the halter or bridle of my horse to keep on my feet. Men fell out dreadfully from different regiments of the Division, but the next day, yesterday, they came up. We bivouacked in a ploughed field till daylight, & then moved on. We were halted a little beyond "the half-way-house" to Williamsburg and again went into Camp.

The battle had been fought at Williamsburg & won & the enemy had retreated towards Richmond. I let Mr Miles & John go forward on Monday & they were present during part of the action. Charlie & the Dr spent a good part of tuesday in visiting the battle field & the wounded on both sides.

I went up so as to get on to the field just as the sun set. All the dead were not yet buried. I saw poor fellows "caring brethren" they doubtless had been lying in their last sleep crowned with mud. I stopped, dismounted and looked at them in the face. I could not help feeling the same towards friend & foe there. I saw the grave of a Union soldier with his name marked on a wooden cross at his head & still unburied lay a poor enemy by his side. I felt sorry that the hands that had buried the one had not buried the other. I would have done so. Another was covered with a blanket. John uncovered his face, & he looked as peaceful & pleasant as a sleeping child. These scenes are not pleasant but they are the part of war that we should not neglect to observe. That battle was hotly contested.

This morning we marched back to this place (Yorktown) prepared to embark for West Point (Va.) 80 miles above. Genl Sedgwick & Genl Porter go before us. I feel it necessary to repress every eagerness to press forward. If by the Providence of God we are brought into battle, my duties will be discharged then. If it is not His will to bring me into the battle, I will try & not tempt Him to destroy me. Such is my Christian philosophy & I feel content. I have worked very hard during this campaign to make my troops do well. Night & day I feel that I have felt the pressure of responsibility. Now, I love to be commended, darling, but is it not better to go home with whole limbs & without dishonor, than to get great glory at the expense of them. I will accept the safe & well side & with gratitude to God if He has seen fit to bring about the great result with other instrumentalities.

Lizzie, you ask me a little about McClellan. I believe myself & have that it would have been better for the country to have attacked the Yorktown works, the next day after arriving & I am sorry that the enemy could be executing a retreat from Wednesday till Sunday & Genl McClellan not know it. But I do not believe he lacks genius for his profession, but I think he inclines too much to engineering. You perceive it is easy to criticize & to say "I told you so." The method of Genl McClellan has thus far been a safe one & it may be it will prove effective - "Nous verrons." ["We will see."] Here is one who will not begrudge him complete success.

I met Capt Blunt the other day. He asked if you & Mrs B had not been corresponding. Lt Col Sampson - 3d Me came to our tent this evening. Sick with severe neuralgia; on his way to Fortress Monroe - has telegraphed to Mrs Samson to meet him there. He looks poorly & discouraged. It will do him good to see his wife & so it would

some other husbands & papa's.

How is the little flock tonight. What word can papa say to each one of them. Guy & Grace going to school? I wonder if Guy will see there all the boys he knows, and if he will get what lessons he does get well. Many kisses to them & much love from a loving father.

Charlie is well & so is Capt Sewall. We are all glad to think of your visit to Bath. And it will make us quite happy to run across another letter, perhaps tomorrow. Our opportunities of sending the mail are not always good nowadays. Direct for the present Via Fortress Monroe.

Much love, & many blessings for our Common Father & blessed Saviour.

Affectionately

Otis

1665 5/11/1862 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1615

Head Qrs. Just beyond
Yorktown

Source: Bowdoin

[125]

Head Qrs. Just beyond
Yorktown May 11 1862
(Sunday)

Dearest,

We are ordered to embark today, will go on board for West Point Va. as soon as possible. I hope you are well & having a happy Sunday. I am delighted to find you so much engaged in your precious Saviour's cause.

God bless you all & bring me to you in his own good time.

Kiss the children for papa. Congratulate Eva on finding a Redeemer. Love to all.

Affectionately
Otis

1666 5/12/1862 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1616

Hd. Qrs. Near Eltham 5
miles
above West Point Va

Source: Bowdoin

[126]

Hd. Qrs. Near Eltham 5 miles
above West Point Va
May 12 1862

Dearest,

We arrived here yesterday, that is the whole brigade did so. The Vanderbilt got up day before yesterday with myself, staff & two Regiments just at dark. We all spent the night on board & spent the most of the day in disembarking. The Pamunkey & the Matapony unite to form the York River - we are on the shore of the former. I say on the shore; we are in a large clearing about a half mile from the river to the left as you go up. My Head Quarters are in the edge of a wood. I had a little place cleared for us. The wagons came up with our tents last night.

All are well. Charlie had a letter from mother last night. Letters are our refreshment here, though the constant work & change of scene keeps us from being so homesick as we might otherwise be. Mrs Sewall is wondering about you & your coming, & very eager to see you. Capt Sewall read me a portion of his sisters letter which said I was mentioned in the N.Y. Independent with McClellan, Anderson & Foote as a Christian officer. It is one thing to be reported a Christian & quite another to be one. I hope God will preserve me from falling into temptation. My danger is what appertains very much to my life as an officer. The doing everything to be sure of me.

How blessed it is to find you so engaged & so happy in Christ. You will have to help me by prayer & by example. The children are well & happy?

Gen. Sumner who commanded at the battle of Williamsburg has been much complained of & Genl McClellan has received all the praise. For a while it seemed as if Sumner was to be thrown out of his command, but he is now here in command of his Army Corps. Gen. Franklin has a Corps, his Divn & Smiths. Gen F.J. Porter one, his own & the regulars & Durgen Zouaves. Keyes his own corps less Smiths Divn Heintzelman his own less Porters Divn The main body of the Army advances today still nearer Richmond. Our advance force is now about 20 miles from that city.

Col Jackson 5th Maine, was here last night. His regiment was spoken highly of in the skirmish the other day here in the woods near Brickhouse Point. Lt. Col Heath came with him, formerly one of my Captains in the 3d Maine. The Maine troops are now highly spoken of by Genl McClellan & Hancock.

I am glad for you that you have found friends & duties that interest you. I hope Lewiston & Auburn will become a little garden of the Lord.

With much love & many kisses. I am your own husband
Otis

We do not go on today

1661 5/4/1862

From: Eliza Gilmore

To: Lizzie A Howard

OOH-1617

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds May 4th 1862

My Dear daughter,

Yours of the 12th, and 18th have been duly received. I am glad to hear God is enlarging his Church on earth and am rejoiced to know that you enjoy it, and Mrs Lothrop and Mary J Lane, I think have long been reasonably convinced that a work of grace on the heart was necessary, and I hope "now is the time" for them to receive the love of Christ fully into their hearts.

We received two letters from Charles this week one at the time he sent the money now in your possession, the other at Williamsburg, after their arrival, May the 6th that came in last evenings mail. Probably you have one ere this from Otis. O, Lizzie all we can do for them is to Pray for them.

We are so busy this week, that it is hardly probable we shall come to you. My Husband says you had better deposit the money have as your own in the Auburn Bank. My husband may come down the last of the week and take the trunks and your other articles that you mentioned. If I could get a box to Mr Brewsters, I would send them by Isibella. However we will do the best we can.

I am cleaning house. My help is young and dont proceed very fast. We have got to the dining room, shall probably finish this week. My garden is on hand now, have done a very little in it.

Do not hear much from Rowland, but judging from what I do hear that he is very busy at this time.

I have some butter on hand. If I can, I will send it to your Aunt. I regret that Guy should be sick but last week was so cold, he took cold probably. Give much love to him from Grandmother. Tell Grace much joy to her, in going to school. Jamie must have as many kisses from Grandma as he wants. Give my regards to Mrs Jones and her family.

My husband is at my elbow, hurrying me. In haste yours
Eliza Gilmore

Lizzie A Howard

1667 5/17/1862 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1618

Source: Bowdoin

Head Quarters
Howard's Brigade
near Cumberland
Landing

[108]

Head Quarters Howard's Brigade
near Cumberland Landing
May 17, 1862

Dearest,

We moved thursday as I wrote you towards this place. It rained very hard during the latter part of the march & on our arrival we put up a "fly" which I now carry on my spare horse, because the wagons dont get up till late. We made a nice big fire close by the fly & made ourselves quite comfortable till the tents came up.

Mr Alvord, the Agent of the Tract Society of Boston, has come back with a wagon-load of books & tracts. He has a nice good wagon & I told him to move along with my Head Quarters near the head of the column. He did so & brought us something to cut with him after the brigade had been fairly established in the woods. We cut away a nice little nook for our Head Quarters tents. Soon they came up & before night we had some nice beds made in the tents with posts, poles & bows. Mr Alvord said this was his first experience in marching in a rain storm & encamping. He would not have missed it for anything.

We are again apprized that we shall move up a mile or so, nearer the landing on the Pamunkey.

Our operations are very slow, too slow, darling, to suit me for I want to get through & go home. I long very much for home. When will peace come? I cannot tell. I look above for that blessing. I believe if the rebels persevere in rebellion as in New Orleans even after they have a fair chance to return to their allegiance & it is so evidently their interest to do so. I believe the bone of contention will have to be destroyed. Genl Hunter has begun to arm & train the Negroes under intelligent sergeants & corporals. If every army in the field commences this process & encourages fugitives from "secession" we shall strike a heavy blow. It will create hate but initiate a policy to weaken the enemy while it will encourage & elevate the black men. I have'nt the foresight to enable me to come to a satisfactory presumption even as to what is going to be the [Note 1] end of the war. It may all be brought about in a very short time and it may not. Everything does not go on harmoniously in the Army of the Potomac. In the battle of Williamsburg, officers were engaged with their troops for some hours & suffered great losses & no mention was made of them. Genl McClellan's friend Hancock won all the "sentiment". Genls Heintzelman, Hooker, Kearney, Peck, Berry (my old Col. of 4th Me) & others are greatly chagrined at the injustice done them. Genl Sumner who was the commanding officer on the field is entirely ignored. Such are the feelings involved. You might think the aim of most of them was personal glory. I hope it is not.

Genl McClellan has acted injudiciously without doubt, & probably wants to center some or much of the glory in himself & his particular friends; but I will try to be charitable in judgment.

From no act of Genl McClellan have I ever thought he had a favorable opinion of me, except one cordial shake of the hand when he met me Col. of the third Maine. I dont think he cares for me now, or would mention me in orders unless I did something extraordinary, but still I have nothing to complain of. His is a hard position to maintain. The responsibility is immense, and I hope & trust he has been made equal to it.

I believe his military abilities to be good, but I think Genl VanVliet, Qr Mr, Genl Barry, chief of Arty, Gen Marcy Chief of Staff, Col Hudson & Col Sweitzer, Aids far from being the best selections McClellan could have made. I do not believe he reads men well. "His clique" are his friends & intimates who graduated about the same time at West Point, or who have served with him since. Genl S. Williams Adjutant Genl, Col Kingsbury chief of Ordnance, Col Colburn Aid are good officers & industrious men. The others may be industrious, but Genl Marcy is McClellan's father-in-law & over ambitious – Hudson supercilious & disagreeable, Genl Barry believed to be of too limited capacity, Genl Vanvliet loves his wine, Sweitzer is a hardy soldier, but I have not discovered any particular ability in him. The volunteer staff is numerous, & must be bothersome. Such is some of the

criticism.

But success will make every wheel turn. And in order to a successful issue here, all must cooperate with Genl McClellan & not work against him. And all ought to give up the idea of receiving a reward from him.

I got a little letter from you yesterday morning. The one you wrote acknowledging the receipt of Charles & my packages, & wh. Jaimie was so generously helping you.

Genl Jameson called to see me last night & made quite a long call. He says Mrs Jameson is in Bath. I wonder if you have been to Bath yet. I hope you have been able to go & see Mrs Sewall & will write me about your visit. Capt Sewall is well & longing for the close of this struggle. Charlie feels a little "under the weather today" , but nothing worth telling. I hope little Guy was not croupy long. Grace goes to school alone! Does it tire her to go to school? How long does she stay in the morning & how long in the evening. What does Guy learn! Does he ever read aloud to his Mamma? I fear papa would'nt know Jamie boy if he should meet him in Boston, would he? Tell him Guy, to send his picture with yours.

This page was accidentally skipped. My anticipation is that a severe battle will be fought before many days. The Chickahominy is in a swamp, difficult of approach.

I dont know what my last words would be if I had a premonition that the battle would end my life. I hope I shall be in to see you all again but God only can know whether I shall. You know my faith is in God & I hope, for His sake & through the love of Christ I shall go to Heaven. I want my precious wife to continue in close fellowship with Jesus & my children to be the Lords. We may then surely meet again. I am not as this might seem the least desponding.

Much love to mother if you see her.

Most lovingly your husband
Otis

[Note 1. From this point until the sentence "This page was accidentally skipped" was found glued to OOH-1626 from Rowland to Charles dated 5/29/1862.]

1668 5/18/1862 *From:* Lizzie [Howard]

To: Dearest [OO Howard]

OOH-1619

Auburn

Source: Bowdoin

[127]

Auburn, May 18, 1862

Dearest

I moved yesterday morning from Aunt's to the "Maine Hotel" kept by Mr Davis. You probably know the location, on Water street. I had previously sent for Isabella and she came at noon. I met her and Col. Gilmore also at the Depot and after dining here we went for the children. It being Saturday Mr Hammond held a meeting for Children. Isabella took Guy and Grace till five o'clock and I stayed at home with Jamie (at Aunts) till five o'clock, when we all came here. We are very pleasantly situated, and when I went with the next room (I have two rooms together) this afternoon to take a little rest I felt entirely relieved from the care of the children, and not at all dependent on any one, for they were with Isabella and that is what she is here for.

I have engaged the rooms till the children's school is finished not over eight weeks. I pay for that time twelve dollars per week all found. This is a nice place and nice people. Guy says, "It seems most like home at West Point" It is because my rooms are pleasant, and every thing is regular, and they are treated very kindly.

Aunt has other boarders, two young ladies and two gentlemen. I have'nt been to Portland or to Bath, because I did not see the time when I could leave any of the meetings, and I hear Capt Sewall will come home as soon as he can without discredit and when he can. Between you and I, I think he is not so devoted to his country as you are. It might be on account of his health.

I gave Col. Gilmore Charlie's money. I am to make a deposit of three hundred or more somewhere. I have not been very extravagant during the past winter.

I received your letter of the 11th inst last Friday. I would like to get another to-morrow, but I now depend more on the papers than letters for they are so long coming. I expect Mother and Col. Gilmore will visit us one day next week, coming with their horse and carriage and returning the same day.

Isabella is happy to be here, and we are very happy to have her here. I hope we can all remain well, for health is a great blessing.

Uncle Hicks is a very bright Christian. I know you will be very glad to hear it. Fanny is'nt altogether willing to persevere without Adam's going along with her and I am sorry to say he dont yet see the necessity. I pray he will.

I have been enabled to consecrate myself anew, more fully, to Christ, and I have receive great blessings. I see Him a precious Saviour and my heart is so full of love to God that I love to work for Jesus.

I may have told you that Mr Hammond visited me with Rowland last Thursday morning. He has quite won Guy's heart because he said "he knew all about his papa." And when he called Guy was home as his throat was not entirely well, Mr Hammonds's throat was not inflamed, and when he went to get into the buggy Guy followed him out, and as Mrs Patten, Rowland and I followed to the door, Mr H. and Guy were looking as we first thought at the sun, or trying to, as their heads were up, but they were instead gargling their throats out of Mr H's vial he had just got from Dr. Wiggin and we rather joked then for making so from with the bottle in the street, and I dont think Guy will ever forget it or him, and Guy wanted me to write to Papa "and ask him to guess what Mr Hammond and he did."

I have written this with a pencil for my ink in not here, and a poor pencil at that. Oh, I do hope you are well, both of you. I hope you are not yet having very warm weather. We have had three days as hot as August but it is cooler to-night. It is now about half past nine Sunday evening. Children all asleep.

God bless and keep you all well.

Lizzie

1669 5/21/1862 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1620

Source: Bowdoin

Head Quarters
Howard's
Brigade 14 miles from
Richmond on the
West Point & Richmond
R.R.

[128]

Head Quarters, Howard's
Brigade 14 miles from Richmond on the
West Point & Richmond R.R.
May 21st 1862

Dearest,

We have just arrived in this Camp after a march of 8 or 9 miles. The route was circuitous & from a place called St. Peters Church, & not far from the Landing called the White house. Last Sunday we halted & encamped at Dr Pomfrey's, between Cumberland & "White house".

Monday morning at 5 a.m.

I rode to the White house a distance of four miles in a direct line. I found Genl McClellan, just ready to move on with all the force there - viz Genl Porters Divn & the regulars.

This "White house" is not white but is on the spot where Washington courted his wife and where Col. Now Rebel Genl Lee's son W. F. Lee married & lived. W.F. Lee used to be called "Rhuney" (soubriquet) [Roony]. In fact Mrs. Genl Lee & family have lived here till we came.

I returned & found my Brigade just preparing to march. We started for St. Peter's Church; but coming in contact with Genl Hooker's Divn we came to a halt till near noon. It rained as it often does when we march, but not hard.

We came into camp just beyond the Church, an old brick building with a conical tower in the midst of as fine a grove of old oak trees as you ever saw. The fields are extensive, the ground rolling. My brigade encamped on one Knoll, Genl French's on another, Genl Meagher's another & the batteries still another. The scene was picturesque in the extreme. The Church is where Washington married the lovely widow. It is some three miles from the White house by a round about road.

This morning we left that place a 6 a.m. and were here by one P.M. We came 8 or 9 miles, with the men loaded with 40 rounds of cartridges, 3 days provisions, and a Knapsack & overcoat, a good march. Oh, how hot it is today. This afternoon there is a good breeze, which relieves the heat somewhat. This morning we met your old beau little Kirby Russell. He is now adjutant of L. Island Regiment. <[Missing lines - Torn page]> and chatted pleasantly. He asked after you & the children. We are now not far from Richmond. I will give you a little sketch. [Sketch showing the railroad to Richmond, anticipated battle ground 7 miles from Richmond, Bottoms bridge, New Bridge, Grapevine bridge, Chickahominy and James Rivers, their scouts and pickets, and Howard's brigade.]

I hope the next letter will be from Richmond city, but I expect not. The enemy have fallen back to avoid our Gun boats on the one hand & McDowell on the <[Missing lines - torn page]>.

With the help of God we will succeed, but I think still not without a struggle.
Much love to the children, Guy Grace & Jamie & God bless you all.
Love to mother when you see her.

Affectionately
Otis

1670 5/23/1862 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1621

Source: Bowdoin

Head Quarters
Howard's Brigade
Near Coal Harbor –14
miles from Richmond
via New Bridge

[129]

Head Quarters Howard's Brigade
Near Coal Harbor –14 miles from Richmond
via New Bridge – May 23d 1862

Dearest,

Our friend Mr Alvord is to start for the Boston Anniversaries tomorrow & we think it a good opportunity to start some letters onward. Today we were to march at 9 a.m. But as General Sedgwick's Division was to precede us we had to be governed by his column. At Eleven his wagon train had scarcely gotten out of his camp. However we started at that time. Genl French took the fields & woods on the right & I took the fields & woods on the left. With the pioneers in front the rubbish was cut away & we made good progress. At an early hour we were located here four miles onward but yet just as near Richmond as before.

No news of importance comes to us tonight. Genl Sumner thinks we shall have no battle between the Chicahominy & Richmond. Yesterday I was on a Court Martial till 3 P.M. Then Capt. Sewall & I tried to catch some fish in a mill pond not far from our Camp. The day before Capt Hazzard & myself rode to the Chicahominy & looked at the R.R. Bridge. Only little of it was burnt & part of Genl Couch's Divn was on the other side then. Our difficulty now is that we have to haul rations & provisions nearly 20 miles. When we get to Richmond & get the James River clear we will have less trouble.

Charlie has been again quite unwell, but is also again quite well. He rode today & directed the pioneers. He enjoys going ahead. I have written a protest today against the order of Genl McClellan giving a ration of whiskey to the whole command – my protest extends only to my own part of it. Dr Tripler advised this issue. Men begin already to be drunk. I expect to hear in time of it. Satan maneuvers in every possible way to destroy men.

Give much love to each of my (our!) little children. May God bless them & you my darling wife. We shall soon meet I hope.

Affectionately Your husband
Otis

1671 5/23/1862 *From:* Lizzie [Howard]

To: Dearest [OO Howard]

OOH-1622

Auburn

Source: Bowdoin

[131]

Auburn May 23 1862

Dearest,

I received your precious note dated May 14th yesterday morning but I could not write to you yesterday. I had so much to do for my blessed master. I am glad you are in the reserve, because you are needed there just as much as in the front, and I had to fret over that letter but it did my soul good. You said "I commend you and the little ones into the hands of our blessed saviour." We are in his hands and O, he is very near, very dear, and precious to me.

I love him so much I cannot help telling everybody who will listen to come to him, and when a mother told me this morning that my feeble words were not lost on her was instrumental in leading her to Christ. I rejoiced with tears that I had been enabled to do something for the Glory of God, and her cousin, a young lady, said you looked so good to me that night when you came to talk to us, and said dont reject Jesus. I cannot forget it, and she too loves and has given her heart to Him. This mother has family prayers and her husband says he can stand almost everything but he cant stand against a wifes prayers. Mr Hammond talked with him last night at the inquiry meeting. Mr H. took tea with us and I am to write a letter to Rowland for him to-day.

Rowland has got wood for me at Farmington at last, and when I told Mr H. while here that he had sent for us, he said, he or we cant spare you now, but I cant do anything I felt, but I am willing. I love to cast in my <nite>.

I have much more to write but it is most mail time, and I have a note to write to Mrs Sewall, as I cannot go there at present. We are all well and happy. If you are so near Richmond, you will come back, you must come back, that we can praise God to-gether. But if not I resign yourself to the will of God, a loving saviour. We shall meet again never to part. Take care of yourself, your health, great great love to Charlie. Guy and Grace at school. Jamie and Isabella out walking. God bless and keep you.

Your devoted
Lizzie

The check was enclosed in your last letter for \$100. dollars I have just invested \$500.00 and have two hundred deposited for future use. I gave a contribution for Mr Hammond. I have enough and to spare.

Written in haste, Lizzie

1672 5/26/1862 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1623

Source: Bowdoin

Head Quarters
Howard's
Brigade, Tylers Farm,
near Chickahominy

[130]

Head Quarters Howard's
Brigade, Tylers Farm, near Chickahominy
May 26th (Monday) 1862

Dearest,

The crisis is drawing nigh. Before this reaches you I think the battle in front of Richmond will be over & we will have won or lost, according to the will of God. Jefferson Davis has called his rebellious people to prayer, himself joined the Church & doubtless is invoking the blessing of our Common Father, for the success of his Armies. On both sides there is calling upon God, but oh, the wickedness of ourselves. Yet how foolish it would be to hang success upon the Holiness of our people.

We cannot approximate desert, but if we would repent & acknowledge that God rules & after we have made every exertion he has given us the <power> to make & then look to Him for his blessing. How confident & hopeful we might be. But if I should not write again, what could I say to you, my precious wife, I dont know. How sweetly & beautifully Jesus is preparing you for any event. It may be against prosperity, it may be to meet adversity. I cannot do better than give you to the Lord. You may have many trials but you will always have the aid <[missing line, torn page]>

have just heard of Genl Banks defeat & it fills us with sorrow, but these reverses are to be expected, else we might get proud & unendurable. Fame, Fame, Fame, and the presidency for a reward, is born of our hearts.

I wish my own was free from a desire for distinction & that I was only remarkable for my love to Christ. How small these things, glory, a breath of human praise will seem, when I come into the presence of my judge. Shall I not want all things as nothing if I but win Christ.

I do not have any presentiment, that I shall die in battle, but there is danger of it & of Charlie too. Let my bequest be then "Jehovah Jereh". To Him I commit you & require a cheerful acquiescence in His holy will, for He will provide comfort, consolation & strength.

I have become very tender about little children of late. I read a story yesterday where there was much about them. Guy is a darling boy & loves his papa. He will one day be a man and can he not imitate his papa so far as his papa did right. I do not expect he will always do right, but if he makes Jesus the object of his early love, He will guide him through. Do you suppose he will ever forget that he has so often knelt in prayer with his father? He must be very tender hearted & kind to his Mamma, Gracie. Her picture with Mamma is suspended <[Missing line, torn page]>

will feel sorry. Her little heart is young, life is just opening. Will not Jesus keep that heart pure? Papa dont know what is in store for his little daughter, but he does know that she is safe. While she can, pray "papa's little prayer", with faith. "O, God for Christs sake give me thy Holy Spirit". That spirit will sweeten every cup & disarm every danger. And Jamie. The story I read yesterday told of Jamie, a little boy, who in his life & in his death was a blessing to his parents, a clear eyed, earnest & loving child. The remembrance of my little Jamie is sweet to me. He can know little of papa only as he is told unless "Deo Volente" papa goes home. He will be all Mamma's boy then. How completely must she commit him to God. You are all to struggle through the world. "Let not your heart be troubled, let it not be afraid, in my Fathers house are many mansions &c...".

You mentioned Capt Sewall. He is very patriotic, very kind & Christian & devoted to me. God grant his little family may not have to lose him. He had things drawing him home of which I was not aware till he told me, certain obligations resting on him, as a guardian of some children. He says he would willingly stay a month, that I might have a leave to visit my family. Capt Sewall is a true man, of good mind & unflinching integrity. He

is not strong. Charlie is now quite well. <[Missing line, torn page]>

of myself.

Yesterday morning.

We attended service at the 61st. Rev Dr Vogel & afterward at the 64th Rev Mr Hibbard, both good discourses & having candid, careful listeners. I hope the truth, found its way into many hearts. Capt Hazzard is a constant companion here, & a good man – a plain spoken, open hearted fellow, but I believe right in his instincts & almost persuaded to be a Christian. I dont talk much with him on religion. I used to talk with him in Florida, but I hope I may be the means of blessing him by living an unobtrusive Christian life, if by the blessing of God I may do so here. He says if he falls I must write to his wife, & if I fall he must write to mine.

When you & the children can, you will not forget how sweet & precious are your visits to my good mother as age & loneliness draws on. Her children are all gone from under her roof, but not from her care, love & prayers. My Step-Father, or better “Father is a noble hearted man” - like uncle Hicks afraid to venture to give up himself to Christ. I am rejoiced for uncle Hicks. Tell him to read the Bible carefully. God bless & keep him. Fanny need not tug away at the threshold. God will save her husband, not she. Let her enter “the door” & go in & out. Adams will then begin to think more than now. Eva does not love Christ! Poor child, she may be found by Him & when she beholds Him she will love Him.

Many sweet kisses <[Missing line, torn page]>

[OO Howard]

1673 5/26/1862 *From:* Helen D. Sands

To: Dear Lizzie [Howard]

OOH-1624

Source: Bowdoin

[132]

Monday Morning May 26 [1862]

Dear Lizzie,

I was very glad to receive a letter from you Saturday and still more delighted upon learning that I should see you so soon.

I have very many things to say to you but my limited time will not admit of my writing you many lines.

I am teaching in the High School this term, but can easily arrange to go to Bath with you any Wednesday or Saturday, as there is but one session on those days I can be spared as well as not.

I hope you will bring the children with you and remain with us as long as you can.

Mother sends love and will be very happy to see you.

Alice is in Saco. I shall write her of your anticipated visit and I presume she will come immediately home. Her intention, when we last heard from her was to return this week or next.

Rowland was in town last night. I waited sometime after meeting to speak with him but had no opportunity of doing so.

I must now get ready for school.

Hoping very soon to see you I remain
Your sincere and loving friend
Helen D. Sands

Give much love to the children. I want very much to see them.
H.D.S.

1674 5/27/1862 *From:* Lizzie [Howard]

To: My dearest Otis [OO
Howard]

OOH-1625

Auburn

Source: Bowdoin

[133]

Auburn May 27th 1862

My dearest Otis

When I have written to you of late I have been in great haste and have not said all that I have wanted to. I presume I have said very little about the revival and I dont know as I have ever told you of Uncle Hicks happy conversion. Cousin Fanny has doubts and fears. Adams as yet wont come but very many have turned to the Lord. Our morning and evening prayer meetings continue. Isabella and I take turns in going, but we did not either of us go to-night, could'nt.

Mr Hammond has gone to Brunswick and O! they are so cold down there. There has been no revival there for thirty years and I almost feel that they all (connected with the college) want to be converted over again. Mrs Upham and a few others are all right. An extra train will go to Brunswick next Thursday and return after the evening meeting. I intend to go and I also intend to take a carriage and go to Bath from there and back the same afternoon. I want so much to see Mrs Sewall. I would like to meet Mrs Jameson. I shall enquire for her.

You know I always liked all my people any way, but I am getting bravely over all my likes, and desires to do, or be so and so. I also like to do Gods will & be anything or nothing as he sees best to order. This life seems so short to me that it matters not if I only do whatever duties devolve upon me. Three members of my Sunday School class (I have a class of boys from eight to twelve years old) have professed to love Christ. Three more are very near to him, and I trust he will soon reveal himself to them. I have more than twelve in the class.

I am very much at home here, but I think I must go to Farmington, so I shall, and come back when it seems right to do so. I wish this terrible war would end. I dont believe it will begin to come to an end until the Negroes are all freed. I wish every one of them should come north or wherever <[CHECK ORIGINAL very faint]> are and say they would no longer be cattle but men.

Your letter received today was dated May 17th and it was a good long letter. I do wish there could be no self seeking and right and justice could rule. Everybody ought to pray and then we would prosper.

I have just closed my door for I began to smell smoke from the office. Dont forget we are at the "Maine Hotel". We are very pleasantly situated, and the children feel at home. I think I shall be here about six weeks longer. I hear the clock striking ten and I am getting sleepy.

I dont feel <some [CHECK ORIGINAL very faint]> that Gen. Banks' retreat will do any great harm to the cause, if the rebels have returned toward Richmond or rather down the valley.

Mother came down here last Saturday and had shopping to do, so she sent for us to go to meet her at Uncle Hicks. Isabella, Guy, Grace, Jamie and I, and Uncle Hicks who came for us, locked our rooms and went over just after dinner. She was very well and returned in the afternoon train, hardly two hours and a half here. Rowland preached in Bath and again in Brunswick Sunday evening to help Mr Hammond. I bought a carriage for Jamie to ride in last saturday and he does enjoy being in it very much. I think you would know Jamie if you should see him almost any where.

Warren Woodman has resigned and come home. He would have stayed but the Col. dont know anything. He should I know have been in command.

We are all very well now. Guy lost one week of school. Isabella's brother is under Gen Hartsuf, with McDowell. She had a letter today. Yesterday we were thinking he was still with Gen Banks. I wish to know where you were, and what you are doing just now. I will trust you are well, doing your duty in the sight of God, and not looking for honor and glory form men. It is pleasant to be commended I know.

I wish you could see Jamie now. He has just turned over, or rather thrown himself over, and his head is still on his own pillow but his feet are on mine and there he is with his fat feet naked. He is called a noble boy here. Mr Davis says he is the best boy, and Mr Small says he is the brightest boy of his age he ever saw. He is always ready to go <[[CHECK ORIGINAL-Faint line at bottom of page]> and pray that he will serve the Lord.

I do think Guy and Grace know what it is to serve and love Jesus, as a little boy said at the Sunday School concert, "If you had a dear friend and he should lay down his life for you, you would think it was a great deal. Jesus has done it and I should think you would want to serve him."

I must close now. Much love to Charlie. I don't like to have him get sick. I hope by the next letter to you I have seen Mrs Sewall.

Your loving Lizzie

May God keep you.

1675 5/29/1862 *From:* Rowland [RB
Howard]

To: My Dear Brother [CH
Howard]

OOH-1626

Farmington

Source: Bowdoin

[131]

Farmington May 29/62

My Dear Brother

Your letter by Mr Alvord & the one containing the \$20. came together last night. The latter made me feel grateful to you, & I trust, to God for it seemed to come from Him. I had had no money for a no. of days & had borrowed 18 of Willie to buy some herrings 1.00 of Abby to pay for some butter yesterday & I was owing \$3.00 for some tracts & Quarter day is not till July. I do not spend money as I used to unnecessarily, I do believe, but if God did not interpose occasionally thro my dear Brothers & other kind friends I would have hard work to make the "ends meet" by a good deal, but I thank you my dear Brother for your kindness & pray the Lord to repay you. I fear I never can in the same way.

I do hope that illness will not continue, if it does you must come home, of course, if able. But if you are well, it seems as if Our Country must need you as much as ever. I can hardly approve of Warrens resigning. I hope he will go out again in the new Reg. but Wildes has been appointed Col.! How strange that the Gov can't learn by experience that his most intimate friends do not make the best officers.

The flurry about Banks is pretty much over. Sec Stanton & Gov. Andrew seem to enjoy a Sensation, but it was too bad to leave Banks at the mercy of the enemy so & thus sacrifice all we had gained in that Dept. Jackson will probably escape. But it was glorious to see how the people rushed to arms at the first alarm. At first I thought I must go this time, but I will not till we have suffered a defeat.

Mr Fred Stewart has an appt. of Brig. Quartermaster of Princes Staff & has gone to Washington. Dr Alexander has had a Surgeons place offered him. I don't know as he will go yet. Stewart joined the Church & the Dr. was to do so next Sab. I could not go to Boston on acct. of 24 persons to be received into the Church next Sab. I would have been delighted to have seen Mr. Alvord after his long visit to you.

I sent your letter to Mother this morn. Capt. Patten went home from here yesterday & Mrs P. came last night. Ella's girl left yesterday & she is waiting for one to "turn up". Our meeting last night was not so lively as I could wish. Are all your prayer meetings suspended?

If we can get Davie to sit still long enough we will send you his picture in my next. He had a nice May Basket with a good dollar in it the 1st of May.

Give [See note 1] much love to Otis, & the rest of yr military family
Rowland

Sister is to be married today in Boston.

[Note 1. The word Give was written on page 4 with the rest of the sentence written on the side of page 1. The postscript was written on page 4. An additional page, (numbered #4) written by Otis and doesn't follow onto this page was glued to page 4. This was followed by another 3 pages, also written by Otis, were filed with the above. They were moved to OOH_1618].

1676 5/31/1862 *From:* Otis [OO Howard]

To: Dearest [Lizzie Howard]

OOH-1627

Source: Bowdoin

Head Quarters
Howard's
Brigade Tyler's Farm,
Va.

[136]

Head Quarters Howard's
Brigade Tyler's Farm, Va.
May 31st, 1862

Dearest,

I had a real good letter from you three days ago and am expecting another today.

We have remained in this position ever since my last letter, have built two bridges across the Chickahominy one of them a quarter of a mile long. Yesterday, with Genls Sumner & Sedgwick I went as far as Fair Oaks Station, just seven miles from Richmond City. Here we found Genl Keys & his Corps d'Arm e waiting for orders. Genl Porter went to Hanover C.H. fought a battle & has returned. Now I believe there is some change of policy & we will have to wait here awhile longer for which I feel sorry for, though we are surrounded with a magnificent country, we are in low wet land & in much danger of fevers.

Again I feel anxious to get the work done. I have thought that after Richmond was fairly in our hands, I might get a leave of thirty days & look in upon you. Certainly I may if active operations should cease. Capt Sewall is very anxious to go home as soon as he can do so without detriment to the cause.

It seems wonderful to me to find you so happy in Christ & so much engaged. Do not overwork, darling, nor allow any excitement more than that coming from the influence of God's Holy Spirit to check your progress in holiness & joy. Yours is doubtless a preparation of heart for the duties devolving on you & "God be with you & lead you" is my prayer. It is blessed to find our old friends turning to the Lord, & oh, that I did not see so many turning from Him & scarcely raise a hand to prevent it. Last Sunday's services were solemn & profitable to the Brigade I believe, and I hope tomorrow's may be equally good. But we are always in such danger of marching on Sunday, that we cannot calculate on a good Sabbath.

We are all well at Head Quarters. Genl Sumner seems troubled by the Newspaper attacks. Some of them are virulent. He not only receives no praise for the battle of Williamsburg, but is even called a traitor by one correspondent. You never knew a more patriotic man – over 40 years faithful service, all forgotten & publicly blamed & traduced without the slightest cause. It looks hard & is hard for one who seeks his reward here below. Genl Sumner is not a thoughtless man, but he often profanes the name of God. God has once brought him near his grave, now he touches the very apple of his eye. Would that he might turn away from ungrateful men & seek for strength & comfort from on high. You may say "Point him to Christ." I wish I could do so judiciously, but he is like Col Delafield too strong a man, to become a little child except always by the grace of God.

Much love & many kisses to the little ones from papa.

Aff. yr. Husband
Otis