at the Dest office when I returned - "had already nead The most of the latter at home . The are travery beautiful weather & have had since that long storm. That met me on by arrival & rendered my first Campy quand andy In very agreedle. Mr hundell says that he draws 65 dollars permonthe; and he is in the infanting: so rations & all the may put hogether - for the second centerseent in the infactory amount to-65 dollars per monthe - Lele Juther if he looks in the Moroher place if the Arme Register, he can bur the pay the amount Jortions & the total amount for an officer of any rank. We now have to go to drawing every day & draw two hours from 2 tile 4 o'clock, and of any duty is time some stris is especially to the young man who has after experience dislovered his want of affer talent for the fire ants. I are now enciving a cottage scene y feel quite interested in my work . I hope I shall get a letter & a paper to day A noon; for as I am as get a little homesick, These things are more Than ever agreeable. If you saw Figie at Commencement till me about they how the lowked & seemed - I what she thad to say . She managed to keep pretty cheerful before I left and I was glad . Again noncuber me to all the family - to Annt Lucrecia's family, one & all & to all my friends at Leeds; Especially to the one with whom you seen to like to sing Sunday seenings. Agk mother to write me as soon as the can find time - Good byc. from

and was glad andered to hear from you though I had notbeen long from home. you are right; That week after I left. home du pass mugh expectedly the first partof it; I came back to thest- Point rather reluctantly but now I am back . I am glad of it; for every week that ha shes brings me on to the close of my term. I care les about Nonk than I used to; but time I have been away & Seen a little of brief & of men abound, I geel more than ever a desire to increase my stock of knowledge. I have been dring pretty well this week - Strick does not come hard. Though wow & then At thonghts of those I have left - behind - a sontof longing to have again the same respect - attention - & Windows, Nestowed whom me, that I train for the hast few weeks - will make my she book become dive stefore me; and you need not be surprised that the times do evenetimes start to my syes when I think of the change -"ht it is all well - I am well situated confuned with what & night " be . lef course every men has his hardships & his trials, and he is a man mathematically chesting, in the direct proportion , that he nerves himself in to an effort sufficient to overcome them . My lothas sometimes been hand, but now it is easy. To tell you the truthe my standing at the head of my class is of very little consequence : it serves to Statter my vanily & to please my priends, but to graduate 1st subserves hardly any other hur pose of my object is to be a civil

Mar Prother. I secenced your letter Mursday.

Engineer, Supposing I had an equal amount of knowledge to graduate lower; to stand 4st would do me little good. If & wither to remain in the army - promotion is so show in the Engineers, that it - would he better that I should be in the articlery - And again an officer is The contactiony, can get a port at trest Read as Instruction or assistant professor as readily & Then more so that an officer of the Engineen . Do you See I have a little common sense to console me if I fail to stand as high as I have wished. It is best to be prepared with a little Sound philosophy in your head to counteract at all times theman effect of these lattle failures & disappointments. Mother Spoke in the few lines that she write of my afflictions, which I term lob's afflictions , Thele I with notent intent toket those two that were making their appearance when I Started from home; for I dre not want the plague of the things while tracelling but last tresday a new one began to come, to a new place, and I have been quite lane with it asil was on my leg. I have however been the gainer to a degree, to compensate for all The hair that I have sufficed for I have been exensed from . dreles drep. provades - marching - & biding the today when it broke : and it being Saturday I do not have to go to drills. My health has otherwise been excellent . I prescribed for my self Sulphur & Crean of Turtar - but I believe they have sent me clear Sulphur. I have to take it is water, in which it does not dissolve when well - So that in makes queer medicine. General Statt was here yesterday; and our class fired a Salute of botteen guins - He did not get any more than his rank entitles him to; Though he he a candidate for the presidency: I did not see him for I was not at the firing of the balate. Thave not seen traven to speak with him since my return; for Capt Alden has keep me in confinement - ever since - you know

I pressure , that all we mean by confinement is that one under this punishment must beech his room except when on duty. A breach of confinement is & or to demenit & a very grave offence So all I have to do is to keep my room. This does not trouble me much, for I can find as much to interest me here as else -Where. East Alden he really no right to keep me in confinements; for no official where has been taken of my offence: but I keep pretty still in hopes that he will by N'y let me off without giving we any dement. I might complain of him is Colonel De - but d reckon it would not be good policy. Colonal Vie the father of my Class mate is now the Superintender P. as I believe I told you is mothing letter. I have not heard from Charlie yet. you have already theen to forma ence ment I shall expect a good long account of the proceedings - a descorption of the generous Rierce one of my Alumnie bretheren. How does nother do since I left I give Ther my love ... If she could make it so as to come & visit me next. summer, nothing would give me more pleasure; but I thought that considering the many calls upon her for money that 1. wight we asking too much . Signie says the will come, and perhaps her mother I wants to know if you will not go tow. I found a good long letter here from her when I arrived which news very acceptible I assume you, Give my love to all - Tele me what you intend to do, if you have given the going to tent' thice. I felt had about leaving you without bidding you good be but perhaps it was the easiest way of getting of - Take good care not to cutch cold. I do really take an interest in these appraching State Electrons. My Advertises has not come this meek. I found lots of documents & all my old advertisens

RBH-050

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Sept 4th, 1852.

Dear Brother,

I received your letter Thursday and was glad indeed to hear from you, though I had not been long from home. You are right, that week after I left home did pass rapidly enough, especially the first part of it. I came back to West Point rather reluctantly, but now I am back, I'm glad of it, for every week that passes brings me on to the close of my term. I care less about rank than I used to, but since I have been away & seen a little of society & of men abroad, I feel more than ever a desire to increase my stock of knowledge.

I have been doing pretty well this week - study does not come hard, though now & then thoughts of those I have left behind, a sort of longing to have again the same respect, attention & kindness bestowed upon me that I have had for the past few weeks, will make my open book become dim before me, and you need not be surprised that the tears do sometimes start to my eyes when I think of the change. Yet it is all well. I am well situated compared with what I might be. Of course every man has his hardships & his trials, and he is a man, mathematically speaking, in the direct proportion that he nerves himself up to an effort sufficient to overcome them. My lot has sometimes been hard, but now it is easy.

To tell you the truth my standing at the head of my class is of very little consequence, it serves to flatter my vanity & to please my friends, but to graduate 1st subserves hardly any other purpose. If my object is to be a Civil Engineer, supposing I had an equal amount of knowledge to graduate lower, to stand 1st would do me little good. If I wished to remain in the Army, promotion is so slow in the Engineers, that it would be better that I should be in the Artillery. And again an officer in the Artillery can get a post at West Point as instructor or assistant professor as readily & often more so than an officer of the Engineers. So you see I have a little common sense to console me if I fail to stand as high as I have wished. It is best to be prepared with a little sound philosophy in your head to counteract at all times the effect of these little failures & disappointments.

Mother spoke in the few lines that she wrote of my afflictions, which I term Job's afflictions. Well, I, with violent intent, stopt those two that were making their appearance when I started from home, for I did not want the plague of the things while traveling but last Tuesday a new one began to come, in a new place, and I have been quite lame with it as it was on my leg. I have however been the gainer to a degree, to compensate for all the pain that I have suffered, for I've been excused from drills, dress parades, marching, & writing till today when it broke, and it being Saturday I do not have to go to drills. My health has otherwise been excellent. I prescribed for myself Sulfur & Cream of Tartar, but I believe they have sent me clear Sulfur. I have to take it in water, in which it does not dissolve very well, so that it makes queer medicine.

Gen. Scott was here yesterday, and our class fired a salute of 15 guns. He did not get any more than his rank entitles him to, though he be a candidate for the Presidency. I did not see him for I was not at the firing of the salute.

I have not seen Warren to speak with him since my return for Capt. Alden has keep me in confinement ever since. You know I presume that all we mean by confinement is that one under this punishment must keep his room except when on duty. A breach of confinement is 8 or 10 demerit & a very grave offense. So all I have to do is to keep my room. This does not trouble me much, for I can find as much to interest me here as elsewhere. Capt. Alden has really no right to keep me in confinement, for no official notice has been taken of my offense, but I keep pretty still in hopes that he will by & by let me off without giving me any demerit. I might complain of him to Col. Lee, but I reckon it would not be good policy. Col. Lee the father of my class-mate is now the superintendent, as I believe I told you in mother's letter.

I have not heard from Charlie yet. You have already been to Commencement I shall expect a good long account of the proceedings, a description of the Generous Pierce, one of my Alumni brethren. How does mother do since I left? Give her my love. If she could make it so as to come & visit me next summer, nothing would give me more pleasure, but I thought that considering the many calls upon her for money that it might be

asking too much. Lizzie says she will come, and perhaps her mother & wants to know if you will not go too.

I found a good long letter here from her when I arrived which was very acceptable I assure you. Give my love to all. Tell me what you intend to do, if you have given up going to Kents Hill. I felt bad about leaving you without bidding you goodbye, but perhaps it was the easiest way of getting off. Take good care not to catch cold. I do really take an interest in these approaching state elections. My Advertiser has not come this week. I found lots of documents & all my old Advertisers at the Post Office when I returned. I had already read the most of the latter at home. We are having beautiful weather & have had since that long storm, that met me on my arrival & rendered my first Camp tour of Guard duty so very agreeable.

Mr. Rundell says that he draws 65 dollars per month, and he is in the infantry, so rations & all the pay put together for the second Lieutenant in the infantry amount to sixty five dollars per month. Tell father if he looks in the proper place of the Army Register, he can find the pay, the amount of rations & the total amount for an officer of any rank.

We now have to go to drawing everyday & draw two hours, from 2 till 4 o'clock, and if my duty is tiresome this is especially to the young man who has after experience discovered his want of talent for the fine arts. I am now drawing a cottage scene & feel quite interested in my work. I hope I shall get a letter & a paper today at noon, for I am as yet a little homesick, these things are more than ever agreeable.

If you saw Lizzie at Commencement tell me about her, how she looked & seemed & what she had to say. She managed to keep pretty cheerful before I left and I was glad. Again remember me to all the family, to Aunt Lucretia's family, one & all & to all my friends at Leeds. Especially to the one with whom you seem to like to sing Sunday evenings. Ask mother to write me as soon as she can find time. Goodbye from

Your affectionate brother O. O. Howard

M. Madau S. Hardel stance not survively schied the mender and my surpliced to All. Then the destand in proting the she fing she gooded in Caller all bein the child have a later to a feel and me and a little part for flater is and marked attack guild and nearly at the dark on first on a straight straight , freeness in gon any as a gear light to pay an apple for and -I some source & have the star want for any former for any ended as in sold one with some maline of the proting margin it was gover, I do not all any finge , das I shape

with young down I want it want to make good with any and the

find and ingeneral is directed the fast and light and

inet. dast back April 25 no minding & a shine and a streng alle they . That some the dist way I did hell I have son that within through after to give the balling of the to the parties, you my being to thethin hetered and ship one " The

Dear Brother Received your Triple letter the latter part of last week, and was exceedingly glad to find that Charlie was able to write This letter should be written to him ; but Lique wrote me that he was expected in Portand about this time. so that if he happen to be There it would be better to write him the next one that he may have it presher when he gets home. Swee you are such a politician. I presume you me meaning Bather a bury base. Whigh one sutter baily defected at this presidential Election, worse than could possibly has been expected by any fore views to treat. Ind you ever know of such a fall as we have had before this? My both day generally comes on a colder day than it did this year. I can hardly realize that There passed the age of twenty one porcer. yer such is the fact; and though I have passed the the age of boyhood & youth and have reached the period where one is expreted to be a man, I helive trapely just as much Ja buy as & was dig years ago. you too are getting on in years sughteen & over . What yourd farmers we able bodied young men could now make, had you been less laggy & I less ano bitions. Ivant your wish me were settled down - hiring quiety I happily, as prosperous young formers: enough to early Climite & mean; Seepectus by our neighbors for any cintures Vour industry, and particularly Eligible to the ancles of the blooming, managable fair ones: Sapposing you wanted to get married

you dould find some show to fait your and i for all "Hes Point A. G. Clor 10 # 1852.

you would have some where to put your wife. you Gruld as have to live on your heighbors arrors & questo. like the langer, or like the literary man taxing your four brain instead of your night and for breed. But after all everything considered, we are well of as we are . It is a difficient matter to curb a restless spirit, With an Education, Though me may not contribute much to our own persenal comfort, Though the sum totum your happing many not be increased. yet we are better enabled to do good; that is if me put our Education to a proper use, if we let knowledge have it's legetimate effect, the circle of an influence will be much willeved, and this we may have a heller Sportutity of earrying out an nobler purposes. than if our Ophere faction was norrow. What are you doing non aclays? Reading perhaps: & of so what? I do not read much. I do not get time to do so. I wich to read more, but my lessons must come first, and military duties are not to be got over any way. After & gradaute & go to my station provided it he in a civilized region as it probably will be I will endeavor To read & make a husiness of it. My health is now very good and I am getting an very well in every thing. My Standing for last month says - 2° in mechanics - 5th in Chemistry of Mit in drawing. Mr Ruger was 12 in excelances. At was Owing to my getting one or two had marks. Mr Lee was I Mr Ruger is going to gove me a hard try & will perhaps he put ahear of me is Mechanices, since I seem to have the ile buck to do hadly when Brog. Burtlett comes into The section room. He will as about once a week gasually on monday. Dam not aft to have my lesson well monday

morning sive I never thidy sunday, I I believe my instruc tons are beginning to discover the fact. Wark before last & got 2, % monda ya maximum every other day for the muck. Last much I got 2, 410 on monday & a max. every other day. Last monday my birth day, I did better than on mondage in general, & probably get a max. (3.). But these details are of small mement, Though of such little things is our life at thest four made up. These little marks, have a direct hearing whow our general standing I it becomes is to get the hest manks possible every day. you will perceive that I did not get any demerch last week, nonth. I got one, but since I did not get any more according to the regulations it came off. I hope you will be as fortunate everytime you get Sun away with, as you were the last time. Mesometimes See some pretty good runs here, but they do no damage Since no carriage is behind the horse. Ewe my love to all. Thank Sellie for writing me to long yos good a letter. He must try hard. I fame Churlie is in Portland, if not ale him the shall have a letter is a few days . Worde- soon; while you are all as how , you can get me up a letter pretty often. Is not make then quele so nearry as the last, or fut on a double stamps, hearse as you say it is a dead logs to pay an extra five cents. I am much bliged for the money you send me, for it enabled me to settle my debts, have one dollar left & pul quite independent once. Do not tile any, body - but I keep

That civilear hourdes up - in gold, in the bottom of my watch pocket. The my love to mother & challe write her som - Mattheward

87 11/10/1852 *From:* Otis [O O Howard]

West Point N.Y.

RBH-051

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N. Y. Nov 10, 1852

Dear Brother

To: Mr. Rowland B. Howard

South Leeds Maine

I received your triple letter the latter part of last week, and was exceedingly glad to find that Charlie was able to write. This letter should be written to him, but Lizzie wrote me that he was expected in Portland about this time, so that if he happened to be there it would be better to write him the next one that he may have it fresher when he gets home. Since you are such a politician I presume you are wearing rather a long face. Whigs are rather badly defeated at this Presidential election, worse than could possibly have been expected by any previous to trial. Did you ever know of such a fall as we have had before this?

My birth-day generally comes on a colder day than it did this year. I can hardly realize that I have passed the age of 21 forever. Yet such is the fact, and though I have passed the age of boyhood & youth and have reached the period where one is expected to be a man, I believe myself just as much of a boy as I was six years ago. You too are getting on in years, 18 & over. What grand farmers we able bodied young men could now make, had you been less lazy & I less ambitious.

Don't you wish we were settled down, living quietly & happily, as prosperous young farmers, enough to eat & drink & where, respected by our neighbors for our virtues & our industry, and particularly eligible to the smiles of the blooming, marriageable fair ones. Supposing you wanted to get married you would have somewhere to put your wife. You wouldn't have to live on your neighbors errors & quarrels, like the lawyer, or like the literary man taxing your poor brain instead of your right arm for bread. But after all, everything considered, we are well off as we are. It is a difficult matter to curb a restless spirit. With an education, though we may not contribute much to our own personal comfort, though the sum totum of our happiness may not be increased, yet we are better enabled to do good; that is if we put our education to a proper use, if we let knowledge have its legitimate effect, the circle of our influence will be much widened and thus we may have a better opportunity of carrying out our nobler purposes, then if our sphere of action was narrow.

What are you doing nowadays? Reading perhaps, & if so what? I do not read much. I do not get time to do so. I wish to read more, but my lessons must come first, and military duties are not to be got over anyway. After I graduate & go to my station, provided it be in a civilized region as it probably will be, I will endeavor to read & make a business of it. My health is now very good and I am getting on very well in everything. My standing for last month says 2d in Mechanics, 5th in Chemistry & 11th in Drawing. Mr. Ruger was 1st in mechanics. It was owing to my getting one or two bad marks. Mr. Lee was third. Mr. Ruger is going to give me a hard try & will perhaps be put ahead of me in mechanics, since I seem to have the ill-luck to do badly when Prof. Bartlett comes into the section room. He visits us about once a week & usually on Monday. I am not apt to have my lesson well Monday morning since I never study Sunday, & I believe my instructors are beginning to discover the fact. Week before last I got 2,6/10 Monday & the maximum every other day for the week. Last week I got 2, 4/10 on Monday & a max every other day. Last Monday, my birth day, I did better than on Mondays in general, & probably got a max (three). But these details are of small moment, though of such little things is our life at West Point made up. These little marks have a direct bearing upon our general standing & it becomes us to get the best marks possible every day. You will perceive that I did not get any demerit last month. I got one, but since I did not get any more according to the regulations it came off.

I hope you will be as fortunate every time you get run away with as you were the last time. We sometimes see some pretty good runs here. But they do no damage since no carriage is behind the horse.

Give my love to all. Thank Dellie for writing me so long & so good a letter. He must try hard. I fancy Charlie is in Portland, if not tell him he shall have a letter in a few days.

Write soon. While you are all at home, you can get me up a letter pretty often. Do not make them quite so heavy as the last, or put on a double stamp, because as you say it is a dear loss to pay an extra five cents. I am much obliged for the money you sent me, for it enabled me to settle my debts, have one dollar left & feel quite independent once more. Do not tell anybody, but I keep that dollar hoarded up, in gold, in the bottom of my

watch pocket. Give my love to mother. I shall write her soon.

Yr affectionate brother O. O. Howard

[Envelope] Mr. Rowland B. Howard South Leeds Maine [Postmark] [too faint]

The god of Nature getter his with mong talents, here is may be the will have much to answer for his responsibility who great. In the minute letters & Journal, of John Guinery Adams. may be found much to attest the truth of the Christian "religion - and he was no mean statesman. The purity of his Arrivate life, two, gives and exception to your general rule. Rur as you day it is a lamentable fact that I intellectual men -Those who eve an inent in the departments of State, literature thants or Sciences for great power of mind are too offer either take warm Christions, or those who sidicule all things sacred. These doubts that you expressed more very natural, but & would not all mit then, because my common sense would not let me admit Them. I know there are christians in the world - I know the Kible is true. I know burther more that I may become a christian, -It would be a beautiful beature in car that lives - to become Amistions - Is it possible to secrifice mile to become fully conscious of quiltines, to su clearly the purity of the Savier we would apply to? Inggers any subject, you please, talk freely to me with me you these sever find vidicule, or the devision smile that chokes all Confidence. You may always he open with me, and if my pailings To you in the rehearsal, you may know them. The letter you directed is the last that I have need from houser. There many things that Swould say, but my time is very limited. Buty here, is you know not left to over awn distriction. Remember me affectionately to Addans. He & men always the heart of friends. He can tell you Thus very much me were together. Does Lizzie write you a good letter? If she does not she does not use you so well as she does me. Mon more a five place of Mrs Groats. B would like to live with you this winter. I have to study a little two closely here. The examination is near. I continue to a little two closely here. The examination is near offectionate its pretty piele in my studies from your offectionate

left fill is is the out defe grand. I than it times find Mar Moins A.M. Dec. 17th 1852 My dear Brother. I received your very good letter yesterday, and this is the first opportunity that I have found of answering N: Bacy very good letter because I like the spirit of brothery confidence in which you wrote. At may seem to you that I have sather neglectic you of late. I perhaps with reacon you may say is; When you were as have I gave you your him with thartin I mother I have not your convenient sapality of writing rapidly though you can bear me withep that I do not take very much pains will. The mechanical part of my letter. The truth is that I am a steady but slow thinker. While you an away from home I will they to be a more faith ful our respondent, because as you day buch things as letters are very acceptable to togs like us when away from our father's fire side; it's I said I am glad to have you expersely your thoughts. your secret thoughte to me; and if I seturn The furon, and correspondence will tene to decide reflection and perchance that deaine as fuling which you say is lacking, which presents you from being a practical as mele as a the overtical believer in those great, Elernal with of which you speak. I am and always have been a cost of intellectual Christian, that is my intellect asserts to divine Truth, but my heart is not engaged, my affections do not affing themselves to that Saviv, whose mediation, Christians & the

Bible till us is our only safe gaard. I have at times put in practice the marians methods proposed by divines for awakening an interest in my boson encerning things , that common sense tells us, and of the first consequence I of proping an gency. I read my Bible, I attempt to may the my god & my Savior befor I go the sleep rach night. I try to do night to eachen will thoughtsto porgive inpuries but its no use - les is is of use, I am a more therful, more contenter being. for exertions to do & to think and hi ful right must have a beneficial in fluence, but I mean Bleem just as for from the goal I would reach as when I set out. Where then is the remedy for this perfect indifference in a making betat interest? The cause is here my heart is preengaged -. I love those things which are at variance with the principles that I would response. I am ambitions of distinction. I love praise - Bur repliction titles are that my worst fnemy is builty which you know accompanies selfish mp or is the result of it. I am selfish when I book to Heaven for a bleping - and this same been & selfish Spirit hindurs that simple genaine feeling of trust which these shand have who suck their Surier to good parfsose. In trief their I believe I never will be a Christian, till & and prepared to devolu my whole soul to the service of my Father above. for while I mingle in common pursuits. I have an autition, which is common to no ale, and this ambition generates an inordinals love for the fruits, which you are led to believe are the four weeks certain remards of the combilion of them who there become great. How Easy it is to understand this Scripture : Seek first the King dow of god I his right coursneps and all things Else shall be added unto you " And yer you of I my brother are how very much disposed to suck everything Else first. How once & sand & wrote

sermons sometimes for letters, and I fear this may progranale one. It is no use for me to try to work my self up into a blind enther-- Diastie Afirit State, and wildy talk & wildy act. & believe evenous sense aider & directer by serifature Truthes, that is, conscientions Common sense, should direct a man in suking religion as in all Things else; So soon then as his faith has become strong - So soon as The has with decision I candor denotes this heart & life to the service of his God. a retragoad is little to be feared. String excitement the terror of an imagenation, set on fire, by the depiction of the however of future punistiment, is attended with little love . hence when is entrices, we are surprese to find those who were ardent christians no better than condelves. How & I my brother, may be of undoubtably are similarly circumstances to those who have acquired chistinction in State, in literature or in Science - over fulings . & the influences at work upon as are what theirs were at our age. Inpeposing me yield to these influences - supposing me let the love of Eminence, and hence very naturally the love of self- prep us on you. To gain anotitious ends, at the expense perhaps of unweried exertion . incepant toil . Would is the wonderful if our douls because absorbed in our occupation - if we gave little thought, & consequently wrote I spoke very much lep upon Keligion ? Would it he wonderful if me yielded to doutto & Deepticisus. Since herry practicul Attricts it totald become no to continu surselves of the palaity theoretical religion ? And slancel Webster was not such a man. Whatever may have been this conduct, as a practical christian. Mever in all this writings . mener in any of his speeches have I found one centiment that would reflect any dishour upon the religiou of our country -He always seemed to me to have a firm thelief in an over

suling Providence I in the truth of revelation. He was a Great man

88 12/17/1852 From: Otis [O O Howard]

To: Dear Brother [RB Howard]

RBH-053

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N. Y. Dec 17, 1852

My dear brother,

I received your very good letter yesterday, and this is the first opportunity that I have found of answering it. I say very good letter because I like the spirit of brotherly confidence in which you wrote. It may seem to you that I have rather neglected you of late & perhaps with reason you may say it. When you were at home I gave you your turn with Charlie & mother. I have not your convenient capacity of writing rapidly though you can bear me witness that I do not take very much pains with the mechanical part of my letter. The truth is that I am a steady but slow thinker. While you are away from home I will try to be a more faithful correspondent, because as you say such things as letters are very acceptable to boys like us when away from our father's fireside.

As I said I'm glad to have you express your thoughts, your secret thoughts to me, and if I return the favor, our correspondence will tend to develop a reflection and perchance that desire or feeling which you say is lacking, which prevents you from being a practical as well as a theoretical believer in those great, eternal truths of which you speak. I am and always have been a sort of intellectual Christian, that is my intellect asserts to divine truth, but my heart is not engaged, my affections do not affix themselves to that Savior, whose mediation, Christians & the Bible tell us is our only safeguard. I have at times put in practice the various methods proposed by divines for awakening an interest in my bosom concerning things that common sense tells us are of the first consequence & of pressing urgency.

I read my Bible. I attempt to pray to my God & my Savior before I go to sleep each night. I try to do right, to eschew evil thoughts, to forgive injuries but it's no use. Yes it is of use, I am a more cheerful, more contented being, for exertions to do & to think and to feel right, must have a beneficial influence, but I mean I seem just as far from the goal I would reach as when I set out. Where then is the remedy for this perfect indifference in a matter of vital interest? The cause is here my heart is pre-engaged. I love those things which are at variance with the principles that I would espouse.

I am ambitious of distinction. I love praise. But reflection tells me that my worst enemy is vanity which you know accompanies selfishness or is the result of it. I am selfish when I look to Heaven for a blessing, and this same vain & selfish spirit hinders that simple, genuine feeling of trust, which those should have who seek their Savior to good purpose. In brief then I believe I never will be a Christian, till I am prepared to devote my whole soul to the Service of my Father above, for while I mingle in common pursuits I have an ambition which is common to us all, and this ambition generates an inordinate love for the fruits, which you are led to believe are the certain rewards of the ambition of those who have become great.

How easy it is to understand this Scripture: "seek first the kingdom of God & his righteousness and all things else shall be added unto you." And yet you & I my brother are now very much disposed to seek everything else first. You once said I wrote sermons sometimes for letters, and I fear this may proximate one. It is no use for me to try to work myself up into a blind enthusiastic state, and wildly talk & wildly act. I believe common sense aided & directed by Scripture truths, that is, conscientious common sense, should direct a man in seeking religion as in all things else; so soon then as his faith has become strong, so soon as he has with decision & candor devoted his heart & life to the service of his God, a retrograde is little to be feared. Strong excitement the terror of an imagination, set on fire, by the depiction of the horrors of future punishment, is attended with little love, hence when it subsides, we are surprised to find those who were ardent Christians know better than ourselves.

You & I, my brother, may be & undoubtedly are similarly circumstanced to those, who have acquired distinction in state, in literature or in Science, our feelings & the influences at work upon us are what theirs were at our age. Supposing we yield to these influences, supposing we let the love of eminence, and hence very naturally the love of self, press us on & on, to gain ambitious ends, at the expense perhaps of unwearied exertion, incessant toil. Would it be wonderful if our souls became absorbed in our occupation, if we gave little thought, & consequently wrote & spoke very much less upon Religion? Would it be wonderful if we yielded to doubts & skepticisms, since being practical Atheists it would become us to convince ourselves of the falsity of theoretical

religion?

But Daniel Webster was not such a man. Whatever may have been his conduct as a practical Christian, never in all his writings, never in any of his speeches, have I found one sentiment that would reflect any dishonor upon the religion of our country. He always seemed to me to have a firm belief in an overruling Providence & in the truth of revelation. He was a great man. The God of Nature gifted him with many talents, hence it may be he will have much to answer for, for his responsibility was great. In the private letters & journals of John Quincy Adams may be found much to attest the truth of the Christian religion and he was no mean statesman. The purity of his private life too gives one exception to your general rule. But as you say it is a lamentable fact that intellectual men, those who are eminent in the departments of State, literature, the arts or Sciences for great power of mind are too often either lukewarm Christians, or those who ridicule all things sacred.

Those doubts that you expressed were very natural, but I would not admit them because my common sense would not let me admit them. I know there are Christians in the world. I know the Bible is true. I know furthermore that I may become a Christian. It would be a beautiful feature in our lives to become Christians. Is it possible to sacrifice pride, to become fully conscious of guiltiness to see clearly the purity of the Savior we would apply to?

Suggest any subject you please, talk freely to me, with me you will never find ridicule, or the derisive smile that chokes all confidence. You may always be open with me, and if my failings, my trials, my hopes & strong desires may be of service or interest to you in the rehearsal, you may know them. The letter you directed is the last that I have rec'd from home. There are many things that I would say, but my time is very limited. Duty here, is you know not left to one's own discretion. Remember me affectionately to Adams. He & I were always the best of friends. He can tell you how very much we were together. Does Lizzie write you a good letter? If she does not she does not use you so well as she does me. You have a fine place at Mrs. Frosts. I would like to live with you this winter. I have to study a little too closely here. The examination is near. I continue to do pretty well in my studies.

From your affectionate brother Otis

which the you of Mature has given you. Uner I feared that a partial succep in getting the attention of others directed to your early primise", might tend to render you superficial then I feared The very reaction, which seems to be going on in your mind now the discovery of a want of Syster gregalority is your The various materials that you have gathered into your head. I never thought you would be voin or concerted, but that you would become averse to all that cost exertion wrongly thinking that permanent success could be gained withour its. - I am at times pilles with doutts - & prebodings -I have susee mongh in the world to corry me to Washington & back .- I do not know whether to remain in the army or not after graduating if I attempt to fathow the puture, it is dank . I know nothing of the world - leaved nor Very a suit of clothes without getting chected, I do not Renow how to kup or make money - I have pleased dry , useless abstractions in my head. Here I might goon till you might laugh heartily over my simplicity; since you thank me a man because for south & speek volde & full of hope + hsually concerning the present & Julive. Now & just say when I get to reflecting this - here young man what are you about " take cure of the present y let the future take care of itself. Viggie realds because you do not write her - The goes to school - Baan Expecting you to visit me next Summer of Providence will permit it. Remember me to Allows - He is an example of a man who takes the world ress. ask him if he is not going to get married before me. telethin he must hovery for I had a letter from home a short time since all will. Ma affectionale brother

many frages in the Walnu Care the other I found I must see the defeat the I as a construct "Hest Points A.G. Jan. 14." 1853. My dear brother you may the wonder ing why I have not answered your letter before this or ruthere why I have let so long a time intervene between this and my last letter. You would have to be here at West Point during one your long & tections Examinations, to know how all absorbing they are to those who are to pass the ordeal. Tam now entirely through; finished to day. In mechanics my buck was not very good. Each individual has to be called up Twice in any thely of the mathematical kind. On my demonstration at the board I this well, but on questions' after missing one I got into a State of excitement as is my wont, spoilt my restation, and as a course grence fell from the need. I came out Second. In Cremistry I did first rate to day. The instructor gives you a subject this : take The subject of Specific hear for instance; you must take up the subject and discups it in full till he tells you to take Some other. We have to take metals & gastes - till their constituents the compounds from which they are derived. the Substances which precipitate them. all their properties y cises and their tests on the floor without assistance - I single gus would affer que you little trouble - you might remander all this in detail, but when you come to take a book full of Them it becomes no sarry matter to prepare yourself thus, & would

about as hef commit as many pages in the Vatur Vericon. But when I found I must get the subject this I set about it with a good will. But I have had to study harder of more hours than I ever have an anything else since & have been in the mostatution. It may seen strange to you but they sum to have a peculiar propensity here of making things say to be understood hard. But I am glad of is, for I know Chemistry can be of little practical benefit to a man unless he has it in his head. See 9. had it Thus by heart when we began - and ever has made most beautiful recitations. He is now alread in Mechanics - I wice The in Chemistry - I will probably be among the first five -In drawing. I have ricer from thirty five to fourtien, that is where my mark puts me. Cour pieces have not as yet her inspected by the Examining board. you see by this that there is little chance of my being ahead again - barr you may know, that this standing ahead is rather a game of chance - It is well known here that thate is celdow much more than a shadow of difference between the first four or fine men is a class. Now in Mechanics There were over six hundred pages. and has I happened to have been questioned anywhere lesse than where I was I would now be first instead of second in that branch. But enough of myself. you speak of violating The rules of Spistolary writing. Idi not know there were any such to be observed - or if there are any - it would be stiff to observe them between brother y brother. You say you ensider yourself & doubter your friends ensider you a bundle of inconsistences. This is a wrong of polish fancy but are into which I fell during the first part of my falleye course. It arises in part

from attempting to estimate your own abilities before your tatents are properly developed. you say very truly that is is easy to advise you can tile another what source to pursue how to spend his time ye. It is easier certainly to advise Than to act, but it is possible to act. I can tell you how to remedy every defect you mention. not by preaching and giving moral lectures, which one day you wind besolve to had I the next forget. Cay aside as your brother has close all this pondering over the elements of your composition. This constant estimate of your natural abilities of defects. These putile attempts to ascertain what you are fit for and what you are made for. Choose from the Employments of men a vocation, which you would like Supposing yourself as capable as anybody - With this end constantly in view without wavering labor for it. you will say to yourself this is possible for a mind constituted like yours but it does not apply to me . I do not believe it .with a mile you young men fail to mould their characters to ship their purposes. Now is the time for you to store who Know'idge I you are doing it . Never mind the heterogeneous mass it will some day come straight. I would not dissuade self examination by any means . but this studying ones capacity and measuring is by comparison with other men. It and wakes a young men unhappy. Jearful of making a failure. fearful of setting of from the shore , with arread of being weeked if you he is are once in the open sea. I am comparitively contented & happy when I strive to do right and perform with a good will my present duty. I dislike to advise you I would rather nor but I have after had bears that you would not do justice to the mind

To: Dear Brother [RB Howard]

RBH-054

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Jan. 14, 1853.

My dear brother

You may be wondering why I have not answered your letter before this, or rather why I have let so long a time intervene between this and my last letter. You would have to be here at West Point during one of our long & tedious examinations, to know how all absorbing they are to those who are to pass the ordeal. I am now entirely through, finished today.

In Mechanics my luck was not very good. Each individual has to be called up twice in any study of the Mathematical kind. On my demonstration at the board I did well, but on "Questions" after missing one I got into a state of excitement as is my want, spoilt my recitation and as a consequence fell from the head. I came out second. In Chemistry I did first rate today. The instructor gives you a subject thus: "take the subject of "Specific heat" for instance." You must take up the subject and discuss it in full till he tells you to take some other. We have to take metals & gases, tell their constituents, the compounds from which they are derived, the substances which precipitate them, all their properties & uses and their tests on the floor without assistance. A single gas would give you little trouble. You might remember all this in detail, but when you come to take a book full of them it becomes no easy matter to prepare yourself thus.

I would about as lief commit as many pages in the Latin Lexicon. But when I found I must get the subject thus I set about it with a good will. But I have had to study harder & more hours than I ever have on any thing else since I have been in the institution. It may seem strange to you, but they seem to have a peculiar propensity here of making things easy to be understood hard. But I am glad of it, for I know Chemistry can be of little practical benefit to a man, unless he has it in his head. Lil G had it thus by heart when we began, and never has made most beautiful recitations. He is now ahead in Mechanics, & will be in Chemistry. I will probably be among the first five.

In Drawing I have risen from thirty-five to fourteen, that is where my mark puts me. Our pieces have not as yet been inspected by the Examining board. You see by this that there is little chance of my being ahead again, but you may know, that this standing ahead is rather a game of chance. It is well known here that there is seldom much more than a shadow of difference between the first four or five men in a class. Now in Mechanics there were over six hundred pages, and had I happened to have been questioned anywhere else than where I was I would now be first instead of second in that branch. But enough of myself.

You speak of violating the rules of epistolary writing. I did not know there were any such to be observed, or if there are any, it would be stiff to observe them between brother & brother. You say you consider yourself & doubtless your friends consider you a bundle of inconsistencies. This is a wrong & foolish fancy, but one into which I fell during the first part of my College course. It arises in part from attempting to estimate your own abilities before your talents are properly developed. You say very truly that it is easy to advise. You can tell another what course to pursue, how to spend his time, &c. It is easier certainly to advise than to act, but it is possible to act.

I can tell you how to remedy every defect you mention, not by preaching and giving moral lectures, which one day you would resolve to heed & the next forget. Lay aside as your brother has done all this pondering over the elements of your composition, this constant estimate of your natural abilities & defects, these futile attempts to ascertain what you are fit for and what you are made for. Choose from the employments of men, a vocation which you would like supposing yourself as capable as anybody. With this end constantly in view without wavering labor for it.

You will say to yourself "this is possible for a mind constituted like yours but it does not apply to me." I do not believe it:-with a will, few young men failed to mould their characters to suit their purposes. Now is the time for you to store up knowledge & you are doing it. Never mind the heterogeneous mass, it will some day come straight. I would not dissuade self examination by any means, but this studying one's capacity and measuring it

by comparison with other men. It only makes a young man unhappy, fearful of making a failure, fearful of setting off from the shore, & filling him with dread of being wrecked if he is once in the open sea. I am comparatively contented & happy when I strive to do right, and perform with a good will my present duty. I dislike to advise you. I would rather not, but I have often had fears that you would not do justice to the mind which the God of Nature has given you.

Once I feared that a partial success in getting the attention of others directed to your "early promise", might tend to render you superficial. Then I feared the very reaction which seems to be going on in your mind now. The discovery of a want of system & regularity in the various materials that you have gathered into your head. I never thought you would be vain or conceited, but that you would become averse to all, that cost exertion, wrongly thinking that permanent success could be gained without it. I am at times filled with doubts & forebodings. I have scarce money enough in the world to carry me to Washington & back. I do not know whether to remain in the Army or not after graduating. If I attempt to fathom the future, it is dark. I know nothing of the world. I could not buy a suit of clothes without getting cheated. I do not know how to keep or make money. I have plenty of dry, useless abstractions in my head. Here I might go on till you might laugh heartily over my simplicity; since you think me a man, because forsooth I speak boldly & full of hope, usually concerning the present & future. Now I just say when I get to reflecting thus "here young man what are you about." "Take care of the present & let the future take care of itself."

Lizzie scolds because you do not write her. She goes to school. I am expecting you to visit me next summer if Providence will permit it. Remember me to Adams. He is an example of a man who"takes the world easy". Ask him if he is not going to get married before me. Tell him he must hurry for before the close of 1856 I hope to be a married man.

I had a letter from home a short time since. All well.

Yr affectionate brother O.O. Howard

and take is for me. I never have yet been able to find our why he dis not. If you will ask the President. after presenting my complements, if the reason was because I this not perform my part as Commencements or because & did not hand in the one I had written, I Think he will tell you. I hoped the College Government would write for me to come & take my second degree next summer, it being as the end of three years, and I suppose that I might ger a leave for a couple of areaks or ten days to go to Commencement. But of course a mon earnot take this second deque before The takes his first. Remember me to Adams, ask him if georgianna is married I see if he closs not laugh. Ask him what he thinks of his old room mates course of proceedure. Mother wrote me that george fores that Startes for California. She thought he would take a vide upto see me but I have not seen him - Me lost three men out of our class this barmany - one from New Hampshine. He did not think of being in dange Thing found deficient, but he did very bally on the examination and had to leave - Three were sens from the first class , one from the third of 14 from the fourth. This is the first your anyour has ever been sent awary from the first class. Eudets generally think themselves safe when they nam reacher the first class of they inght tobe - I think you batto a wide course, not to go into those cold rooms this spring - but you do not learn one half so much as you would by listering to others recting every day, but it does not watter you can make it up by & by

for I leave this flaces , Backupe I am avery to upe for Mest Point Feb. 7th 1853. Dear brother I received your lotter of the 29th welt in good season, but well have to beg your paraon for a want of promptrup in answering it. I had been when I receive yours, owing one to Perley for some time, and so by odd jobs' I managed to make him onra full letter last week. I presume you laugh in your decou at all my poor apologies and day "I know where your discure time goes to " I have a particulu Time for writing those especial letters and I allow notice To encreach upon it. You will being a sensible young war, readily asknowledge. The necepity & profinity of such a private arrangement with myself. Nothing made we feel worse than the hint that you might not sisit me next summer, for I had conneted repower strongly & low it by as a certainty. I do not think I can let you of. Certamly , I will not take you from your studies . but you will have theations, littler of which you can spend by coming to see me. It is expensive it is true , but it may not be made much so, and if you are moderately larefal you will or may same more than enough the defray your expenses between this & then, over and above what you might atherwise Spend & Mink nothing of it. How quickly I would let you have enough for that, if it was possible. It is difficult to conjecture, where in the wide world you well the able to find me

after I leave this place. Perhaps I am wrong to arge you to do what you would do with the greatest pleasure if it becomes possible. Mes, my playmate Melin Howard has left as forever - time & believe with you that he is in a happier of better world than this . Methinges you had guile a mee time with Mess Patter. a via to Batte and a Aleigh ride to Boudow than billage! I have consulted with Gizzie about the propriety of telling Annilla. Les I would have liked a sleigh ride too. with a pretty give -I would wour my frick however. How see I never no such a common everydag thing as to step mite a sleegh it is unmilitary. We have some fun nowadays ar riding "entting heads" Methour some explanation you might magio that we enquired annelves in the sportive proceps of cutting If each others heads, or perstance, that we king answer up by the legs on crop-piles. I slipped of entiry our heads on sharp stones. Oh. no : we do not often enjoy that fun Very selder do me indulge in the pleasure even of throwing himblers at seek others frates. It is something that occurs in the regular line of durty this cutting heads. Imagin This sanks of horsemen mounted & drawn why in battle array Each nank facing the atter is a large rectangular drile hall. You so sig men with soft heads made on purpose to he ent off arranged at equal intervals round the hall. Two men start from Each auter flank with Sahers drown. papeachother on the right - frost they walk, then that Then queles , go round once the the hones get agoing ar Jule speed - then they such thegin to ear off the heads of The stationary men Each on his ann selles. He cuts the head

and the third by a pierce which operation is called a tierce point . I have out of every head yet and sent them rolling on the ground, Now you must not imagin there is any blood spilt for there is not. The bodies of them Station any men are made of wood, and the heads I recken are bags of sand. Non you perceive these are the wind of heads to preserve on, and Heaven preserve me from cutting off any others. I did not understand what you meant by tincle Kenny's lass strake, unless you means his charging father with telling of his offer of a Monsand or two thousand dollars when in Mith he ought not to have had a red cent. Is there anything else remarkable that he has done ? Sexpected he would be in Now york or Shiladelphia before this getting rich very fast & moving in the first circles of the Docial world. I do hear from home accasionally, but nor So often as when you were there. Sam tire of studying Thed of drawing every day. Oh. you can searcely imagin what a bore it is for a man with my artistic skile To bone away over that drawing & painting day after day I week after week. Before January however I rose from 85 the to 16 the this encouraged one a little, but I an very tires of the operation. You wished for a register No registers are ever issued in lancorg-more are published excepting in June. Then five are given to the first Joine in Each class. The rest have one Each. Do you ever su The Bresidens to talk with him? I wish you would ask this why I did not receive my Diploma. Me besley was to pay for it

of the first by a front ent. the second by a right ent

90 2/7/1853 *From:* O.O. Howard

To: Dear Brother [RB Howard]

RBH-070

West Point

Source: Bowdoin

West Point Feb. 7, 1853.

Dear brother

I received your letter of the 29th ult. In good season, but will have to beg your pardon for a want of promptness in answering it. I had been when I received yours, only one to Perley for some time, and so by "odd jobs" I managed to make him out a full letter last week. I presume you laugh in your sleeve at all my poor apologies and say "I know where your leisure time goes to" I have a particular time for writing those especial letters and I allow nobody to encroach upon it. You will, being a sensible young man, readily acknowledge the necessity & propriety of such a private arrangement with myself.

Nothing made me feel worse than the hint that you might not visit me next summer, for I had counted upon it strongly & laid it by as a certainty. I do not think I can let you off. Certainly I will not take you from your studies, but you will have vacations. Either of which you can spend by coming to see me. It is expensive it is true, but it may not be made much so, and if you are moderately careful you will or may save more than enough to defray your expenses between this & then, over and above what you might otherwise spend & think nothing of it. How quickly I would let you have enough for that, if it was possible. It is difficult to conjecture, where In the wide world you will be able to find me after I leave this place. Perhaps I am wrong to urge you to do what you would do with the greatest pleasure if it becomes possible.

Yes, my playmate Melvin Howard has left us forever, and I believe with you that he is in a happier & better world than this.

Methinks you had quite a nice time with Miss Patten, a ride to Bath and a sleigh-ride to Bowdoinham Village. I have consulted with Lizzie about the propriety of telling Aurilla. Yes I would have liked a sleigh ride too, with a pretty girl. I would want my pick, however. You see I never do such a common everyday thing as to step into a sleigh - it is unmilitary.

We have some fun nowadays at riding "cutting heads." Without some explanation you might imagine that we diverted ourselves in the sportive process of cutting off each other's heads, or perchance, that we hung ourselves up by the legs on cross-polls, & slipped off cutting our heads on sharp stones. Oh, no! We do not often enjoy that fun. Very seldom do we indulge in the pleasure even of throwing tumblers at each other's plates. It is something that occurs in the regular line of duty, this cutting heads. Imagine two ranks of horsemen mounted & drawn-up in battle array. Each rank facing the other in a large rectangular drill hall. You see six men with soft heads made on purpose to be cut off, arranged at equal intervals round the hall. Two men start from each outer flank with Sabers drawn, pass each other on the right, first a walk, then trot, then gallop. Go round once till the horses get agoing at full speed. Then they each begin to cut off the heads of the stationary men each on his own side. He cuts the head of the first by a front cut, the second by a right cut and the third by a pierce which operation is called a tierce point. I have cut off every head yet and sent them rolling on the ground. Now you must not imagine there is any blood spilt for there is not. The bodies of these stationary men are made of wood, and the heads I reckon are bags of sand. Now you perceive these are the kind of heads to practice on, and heaven preserve me from cutting off any others.

I did not understand what you meant by uncle Henry's last stroke, unless you meant his charging father with telling of his offer of a thousand or two thousand dollars when in truth he ought not to have had a red cent. Is there anything else remarkable that he has done? I expected he would be in New York or Philadelphia before this getting rich very fast & moving in the first circles of the Social world. I do hear from home occasionally, but not so often as when you were there.

I am tired of studying, tired of drawing everyday. Oh, you can scarcely imagine what a bore it is for a man with my artistic skill to bone away over that drawing & painting day after day & week after week. Before January however, I rose from 35th to 16th. This encouraged me a little, but I am very tired of the operation.

You wished for a register. No registers are ever issued in January - none are published excepting in June. Then five a piece are given to the first five in each class. The rest have one each.

Do you ever see the President to talk with him? I wish you would ask him why I did not receive my Diploma. Mr. Perley was to pay for it and take it for me. I never have yet been able to find out why he did not. If you will ask the President, after presenting my compliments, if the reason was because I did not perform my part at Commencement or because I did not hand in the one I had written. I think he will tell you. I hoped the College Government would write for me to come & take my second degree next summer, it being at the end of three years, and I supposed that I might get a leave for a couple of weeks or ten days to go to Commencement. But of course a man cannot take his second degree before he takes his first.

Remember me to Adams, ask him if Georgianna is married & see if he does not laugh. Ask him what he thinks of his old room-mates course of procedure.

Mother wrote me that George Jones had started for California. She thought he would take a ride up to see me but I have not seen him.

We lost three men out of our class this January - one from New Hampshire. He did not think of being in danger of being found deficient, but he did very badly on the examination and had to leave. Three were sent from the first-class, one from the third & 14 from the fourth. This is the first Jan. anyone has ever been sent away from the first-class. Cadets generally think themselves safe when they have reached the first class & they ought to be.

I think you take a wise course not to go into those cold rooms this spring, but you do not learn one half as much as you would by listening to others reciting every day but it does not matter. You can make it up by & by.

From yr affectionate brother O.O. Howard