My dear Brother,

Jam wondering Why you have not written me for so long. I hope it die not result from anything I wish you: Herhaps what I told you coused you Surprise & disappointments. Ince that letter was written I have interchange letters with Herley. It do not agree with my decision of all I saw such a thing some of should never be . That after our past he never would or world consent to take my place in the manner & proposed. Then came an affectional Celler from Sierie which two the marker of great surrow of contrition for the past, Celling one why she die nor dare tell no the suspected truther if I may so speak-I write a letter in reply, asking that the Just might herried in oblivion as far as related to our differences of disagreements. I am glad of a neconciliation. I would not expose Lezzie to the cole mersies of this world for a fuel whi the Ahr commetted in weakings. It henches my mide in a know point, to ful that I am bound to there tizzies affective with

to engage in the Pleasant recreation of teaching labout_ I have not jurgotten the time when I wandered up of down that by hile I treasted the evid North Mind - Those two still are connected in my mind with unfolessent remeasures - Would you not like he have me for your might of give me a few sold Amestings in conferration for past favors. It now that your physical capacity has overbalanced mine? I would he must happy to enter your school Some time this winter of trace among the grown up scholong the littrepes that a few years ago belonged to Phildren. How many bright eyes would sparkle in recognition of their old schoolwol y teacher - I shall clind as my farwelye a specific account of some of my Jonner frafils -There - Ido wish Hould go thome of shew this Coming white frech negoties, but I cannot ents my wishes short. Ageod twee is comming boys though for me the good true will be a brief one I sew Marren myts before last. He came to See me I talked with me about matters I though for half or how. He is well I in his result good Spirits. If you get this before you go home I should hefeful to go to Pertland Keep dank - May you bless of Junter you my brother you affectionally O.O. Howard

unother, let that other be who he may - yet I hape I com not governed by pride entirely. I will trust to the impluence of my presence I cuantimenter alluctiment hi late back what once was men but which has Then by various evenmentances alienated. There been happier line Tirrisletter than before, I have Clum better in my Studies Mongh we have had for how weeks past the pardest mouch of study that This metitulian law prinish, my mallines. It lossests mainly in applying all our previous Mathemetical & philosophical knowledge to The action of forces when Machines. WE have to prom positively why such I such forme of machinery are preferable to others - Why Such forms are given to the teeth of wheels . as What forms shall he given to denelof the least amount of friction. ME are much to discuss water wheels de - In this branch Calculus as applied freely but wherever he for Calculus fivinciples involved the entyper is abrevieted & smufilefied. My instruction have for our a week treated me admostly & I have shown then that, as long as they exite to use me paint, I have a measure of good sense ther they had not previously given me endet for. I have how some porty . Mand trues this year - In fact when have I not had such! What do they commoned to after all! Itis

an excellent maxin to town all things to good account. Every true that I have superienced Thus for has in the end redonnaced to my advantage and so I kup out good courage. Mother expresses the conviction that all my defficulties are m a manner Invidential, their tendency being to preserve a proper degree of huwilly in my heart and hopes that ale this is gradually preparing me for some work that Shall be for the glory of my Evry master. A mother's hopes run high Striving to keep pase with her affections. Bus I confifs that little humility has been the nexult of my differties at West Doint. Annilit- will result from a Morangh conviction of a suful & grossy wicked heart. A more cold admission of the fact is for from being sufficient to produce any puling of abusement of contretion. Though I concede this as a general principle that you in his infinite wisdon turns the actions of his creatures to meet his own wile Ends. Thee I low but feel that the part of asse to play must of necessity- from insignificant. well perchance that part receives efficiency of power from that directing Naced which lander . The foolish though of this world to confound the trise. I fear you will have left Brunewick before this letter reaches there, Since you are going

101 12/4/1853 *From:* O. O. Howard *To:* Dear Brother [RB Howard]

RBH-065 West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Dec. 4 '53

My dear Brother,

I am wondering why you have not written me for so long. I hope it did not result from anything I wrote you. Perhaps what I told you caused you surprise & disappointment. Since that letter was written I have interchanged letters with Perley. He did not agree with my decision at all & said such a thing could & should never be, that after our past he never could or would consent to take my place in the manner I proposed. Then came an affectionate letter from Lizzie which bore the marks of great sorrow & contrition for the past, telling me why she did not dare tell me the suspected truth, if I may so speak. I wrote a letter in reply, asking that the past might buried in oblivion as far as related to our differences & disagreements.

I am glad of a reconciliation. I would not expose Lizzie to the cold mercies of this world for a trivial fault which she committed in weakness. It touches my pride in a tender point, to feel that I am bound to share Lizzie's affection with another, let that other be who he may, yet I hope I am not governed by pride entirely. I will trust to the influence of my presence & disinterested attachment to call back what once was mine but which has been by various circumstances alienated. I have been happier since Lizzie's letter than before.

I have done better in my studies though we have had for two weeks past the hardest branch of study that this institution can furnish, viz. Machines. It consists mainly in applying all our previous mathematical & philosophical knowledge to the action of forces upon machines. We have to prove positively why each & such forms of machinery are preferable to others. Why such forms are given to the teeth of wheels, or what forms shall be given to develop the least amount of friction. We are made to discuss water wheels &c. In this branch calculus is applied freely, but wherever we find calculus' principles involved the subject is abbreviated & simplified. My instructors have for over a week treated me admirably & I have shown them that, as long as they continue to use me fairly, I have a measure of good sense that they had not previously given me credit for.

I have had some pretty hard times this year. In fact when have I not had such! What do they amount to after all? It is an excellent maxim to turn all things to good account. Every trial that I have experienced thus far has in the end rebounded to my advantage and so I keep up good courage. Mother expresses the conviction that all my difficulties are in a manner providential, their tendency being to preserve a proper degree of humility in my heart and hopes that all this is gradually preparing me for some work that shall be for the glory of my Lord & Master. A mother's hopes run high striving to keep pace with her affections.

But I confess that little humility has been the result of my difficulties at West Point. Humility will result from a thorough conviction of the possession of a sinful & grossly wicked heart. A mere cold admission of the fact is far from being sufficient to produce any feelings of abasement & contrition. Though I concede this as a general principle that God in his infinite wisdom turns the actions of his creatures to meet his own wise ends. Still I can but feel that the part I am to play must of necessity prove insignificant, unless perchance that part receives efficiency & power from that directing Hand which causes the foolish things of this world to confound the wise.

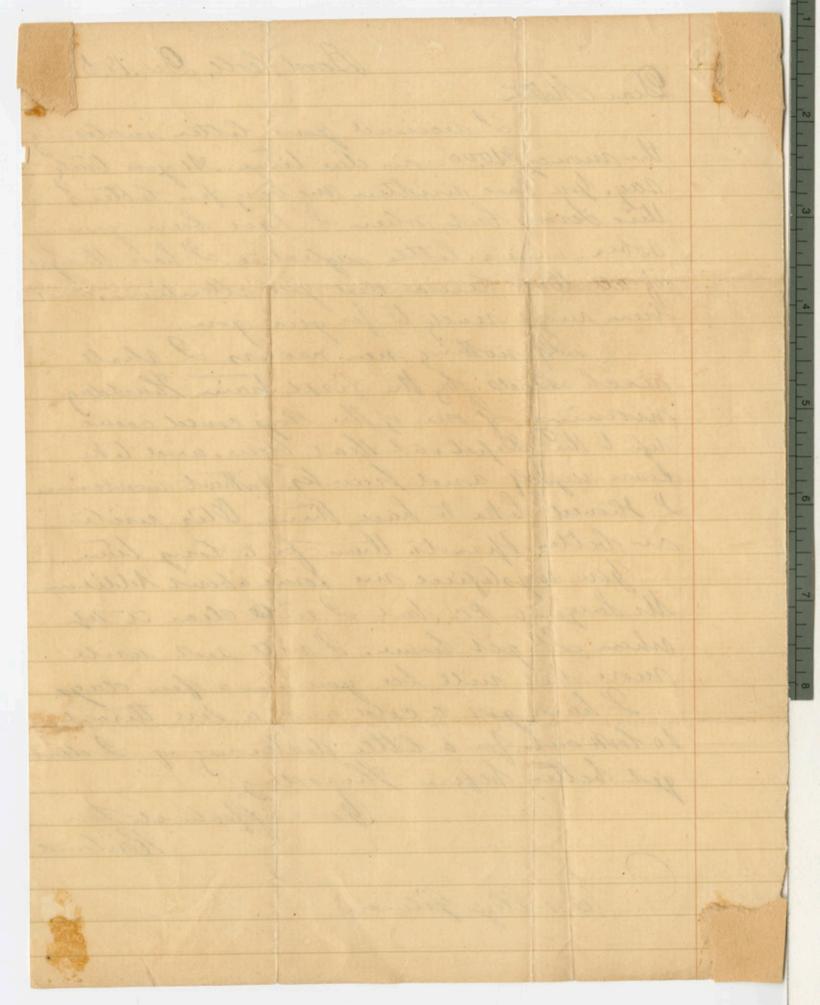
I fear you will have left Brunswick before this letter reaches there, since you are going to engage in the pleasant recreation of teaching school. I have not forgotten the time when I wandered up & down that big hill & breasted the cold North Wind. Those times still are connected in my mind with unpleasant reminiscences. Would you not like to have me for your pupil & give me a few solid thrashings in compensation for past favors, now that your physical capacity has overbalanced mine? I would be most happy to enter your school some time this winter & trace among the grown-up scholars the likenesses that a few years ago belonged to Children. How many bright eyes would sparkle in recognition of their old schoolmate & teacher. I shall claim as my privilege a specific account of some of my former pupils.

There, I do wish I could go home & spend this coming winter "forecul regaties", but I cannot cut my wishes short. "A good time is coming boys" - though for me the good time will be a brief one. I saw Warren night before last. He came to see me & talked with me about matters & things for half an hour. He is well & in his usual good

Spirits. If you get this before you go home & should happen to go to Portland keep dark. May God bless and protect you my brother.

Yrs affectionately O.O. Howard

Bowd level, Dec. 18. 53. Dear Mother I received your letter inclosing the money \$10,00. in due line. At you truly May, you have written me bery few letters this Ferm. but when I have been growing rober and a little neglectede . I have thought of all that demanded you attention, and been mort reach to fergine you. If nothing new accurs. I shall reach assels. by the first hair Hursdag morning. of our of the Bogs could come Up to the Depet, at that line, and take down myself and from les, sithert inconvenience I showed like to have them. Olis writes in better thiniti them for a long line. you mystefice me love about Addien Me Longent &c. but I will clear it up When I get home. I will not write There got a cold and a here threat. to look out for a little no get better before Thursday. Gon affectionale Lon Ronland Mors Eliza Gilmon



102 12/18/1853 *From:* Rowland [RB *To:* Mrs. Eliza Gilmore

Howard] Bowd. Coll.

Source: Bowdoin

RBH-066

Bowd. Coll. Dec. 18, 53

Dear Mother

I received your letter inclosing the money \$10.00 in due time. As you truly say, you have written me very few letters this Term, but when I have been growing sober and a little neglected, I have thought of all that demanded your attention, and been most ready to forgive you.

If nothing new occurs I shall reach Leeds by the first train Thursday morning. If one of the boys could come up to the Depot, at that time, and take down myself and trunks, without inconvenience I should like to have them.

Otis writes in better spirits than for a long time.

You mystified me some about Addison, Mr. Sargent &c., but I will clear it up when I get home. I will not write more, but will see you in a few days.

I have got a cold and a sore throat, so look out for a little doctoring if I don't get better before Thursday.

Your affectionate son Rowland

Mrs. Eliza Gilmore

bun broad cost who will pretend to estimate the resulting mercan of Sectional hostitity! What power is so efficient That it can arrest it & reestablish national quier-When once the passions of men have been arrend? The providence of god it may be. Some other great I poliet disturbance may meet the tornent of like a returning thate, and thank it ansets. We know now . we hope . While me cannot but hear. This ominous State of things in the old world may be the news Thing to him our thoughts of our passions he a new Channel - and the wing responsibility of waterfulness which The enneurus of this war in the Old world will devolve an enymit may allay bittimbe of sectional difficulties of while them her members for our common mobilion. but this is enough. I am not prepared to dabble in polities or laleulate probable events. In I might talk at pandon will an aminent suprefluit of gassions seanainse, and I will stop. You may think I have wandered from my question. No. it is by Considerations of this nature that a young war Should from his conclusions with regard to the mode of the Career that he would choose, then token in Connection with a fling of mupurhal esternate of his own latents. Probable sneep is our main meenting to action. We must enrepully take our hearings of distinctsproblem of the advantagements four position. Many a wese hear has made a mistake even after a careful Consideration of all the prois of low of a proposed course of proceedian. The brews which determine me to a

These Soins N. G. Mar Mit 1854

My clear brother, I have just received of rend your last letter, and since you shave touched you as once. I intended to write you as soon as I was approsed of your return to College. Some way I could not make our precisely whether you had returned or nor. First I will speak of some business before I garges is. I wish you would call an Carrole Everitt. present him my complements of pay him how dollary unless he says it is too late Mat is, if you have the amount of to spane. It will till you what it is for If conver you will place the same to my account with the ather Kindnesses of the Kind that you have down men. The greation, whether I shall remain in the army permanents ar not has nor hun finally kettled yet. Capt Bayation says if he would make as elear of elegant a speech as o'delivered a week upor lass Saherday night, he would have the down at ance of Stridy a profession, and very much more was added to This high sumpliment. Now this plattering sucles has not hirned my head or altired the estimation in which I hold my tolants. But I verily believe if there is any thing show than another to which I would give my whole heart y energy it would be to anatory. Is ut there is so werele changing & so much time that must be spent before en

like me ence come into notice, if the mappy the ear dis come, that I shown from the risk of the trial. I am now about the justing of your vemantes. but I do not see very plaint the bright apining for the American Suldier. Our army is extremely unpropular with the mass of the american citizens, and her hower under the present argungation of our government will never be for a long time ree the ascendent. Demagagues & time Stationen with unite in surping the army as small and inefficient or nother as promerless as may be. It is only interested as a nucleus - a gethering hours in ease of Extreme danger. The suropean excitiment will not be likely to generali any such necessity. Mongh the people may ful the contagions spirit of excitement of the papers he filled with landitury or depretating artheles which like murders. I stram took explosions will be divonand with eagerness. And yet we know not what is our custing as a people. There may be enelong events big with Interes buneping in our midel which may turn the attention of the world whom no. There may be erelong a shatting of this provising a fubric of government and a consequent spining for all the Every of oraring which such revolutions give birth to. Man are a young protetition of lunnut have quiled to opdience the gradual changes in the dentement of our people whom the great of momentous question of Slavery, particularly in the moth. Abolitionism much various names I evert phases granually midenes of dispens, who there is seaverly a public man. That thouthern men are willing

Is at knowledge as a fair exponent of their principles who is not triged with these opinions. Car present Administration of mostlern representatives are by no means a proper illustration of our prevailing dentiments of principles. And I regard the prompt of ready dissent from their public acts took and the unanimous wire of hashlity & warning which they excite, as Curvincing evoluce that a breach will sounner on later he malle between the different sections of our Country. It is the the consequence of evail stripe will be auful - wealculable, and wise men will bong adhere to a government that has showever So many blessings whom them but Threat sury Mat a house divided against itself count stand. I welcian. This pubraska hill which has laused to much excitiment of contention in congrep of concern the attention of the people, will be few from companing in its lendessey. At the first glance one might think is a Arrimph of the Slave interest. Hur how is it? Nebraska by the acknowledgement of Southern men stands bur a provehance of belowing finally a Slave State. It will soon be crowded with freemen who are ready I prompt to migrate and another Brothern state will The actiled to this Union. The very neces of manner in which the hele gurned to pursage will give binth In a pulming of spection to the interests of slavery, whereh will pervade subsequent electrics of juster more I more the spirit of cresention of paloney which has so anwisely hun awallened. When the elements of street have

particular profession are more narrow and more immediately practical than any I have offered. I am from and distake to dray myself on encumbered & debt, or triling to make every end meet, dubbling in little things, while my proofeets of altrade succep grow dimmer. I dimmer. A second It is a Staff loops gets all beli about to Choleans per month - and in him of peace his how will not be filled up with oner our duties. If I law ger located near a library of law poerson the stindy of law the advantage I mer neglect my duties in The least The only conficently his here. My heart will not go hand in hand with my profession. What will a man in the army do with af a wife? This question has offer accured to me & it is one I exerced answer. The one who drewer to below my wefer touch he willing to own my makes & he butgues to all the meonieners of treals to which her Choice had conclusived her. If the shrink from The risk well of good; if the low are as my wife ought the will be willing to those with we say furtien he is what is may. I shall not spice our The matter and west my prospect with an unneal helo. I do think I would lake Liggin to myself and do & her as well as lay a my hower at my Eurliest offwrhours, but from a recent letter, I find her a little disenselved to an early

Consummation of Those his which are to bend us ligether . In good of for has. Ih wishes to en me of talk with me first. What will be one wuntral contract Frile not be known lite I a return home. IT may mover many Sierie. I from the has not the physical strongth for a wild bind like me. I should chead a parting if action Service should call we into the freldyes more far more how the lannous Your or the clush of Stul. Ilan lineerin of my pource mustand then he would make Whose quiding there is Amtelion. But as you mee saw he guided by circumstances. When you entrasted fromen of elvenwelanes, you du nor Sum to think that women is a leverwelive of Corchinary moment. I shall you her a place in my I combination. I wish you would send me your thine on the missouri Compromise. I like to read your thoughts on National Greetins. I wished to write & much with regard to Dellin & Charlie hus I have not the or place to put my thoughto I si this letter. Much mu soon. They views you will not found hery extended or fromted. I lack realing more than peoplection. It is a good thing to the ke out you was first get the nichoul to think about before your ideas well avail much good night you affectionate brother W. O. Howard

103 3/11/1854 *From:* O.O. Howard *To:* Dear Brother [RB Howard]

RBH-067 West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Mar. 11, 1854

My dear brother,

I have just received & read your last letter, and since you have touched upon subjects that are near my heart, I will answer you at once. I intended to write you as soon as I should be appraised of your return to College. Some way I could not make out precisely whether you had returned or not.

First I will speak of some business before I forget it. I wish you would call on Carroll Everett, present him my compliments & pay him two dollars unless he says it is too late, that is, if you have the amount & to spare. He will tell you what it is for. Of course you will place the same to my account with the other Kindnesses of the kind that you have done me.

The question whether I shall remain in the Army permanently or not has not been finally settled yet. Capt. Boynton says if he could make as clear & elegant a speech as I delivered a week ago last Saturday night, he would leave the Army at once & study a profession, and very much more was added to this high compliment. Now this flattering success has not turned my head or altered the estimation in which I hold my talents. But I verily believe if there is anything more than another to which I could give my whole heart & energy it would be to anatomy. But there is so much drudgery & so much time that must be spent before one like me could come into notice, if the happy time ever did come, that I shrink from the risk & the trial. I do not doubt the justness of your remarks, but I do not see very plainly the bright opening for the American Soldier. Our Army is extremely unpopular with the mass of the American citizens, and her power under the present organization of our Government will never be for a long time in the ascendant. Demagogues & true statesmen both unite in keeping the Army as small and inefficient or rather as powerless as may be. It is only Intended as a nucleus - a gathering point in case of extreme danger.

The European excitement will not be likely to generate any such necessity, though the people may feel the contagious spirit of excitement & the papers be filled with laudatory or deprecating articles which like murders & steamboat explosions will be devoured with eagerness. And yet we know not what is our destiny as a people. There may be ere long events big with interest transpiring in our midst which may turn the attention of the world upon us. There may be ere long a shattering of this so promising a fabric of Government and a consequent opening for all the energy & daring which such revelations give birth to.

You are a young politician & cannot have failed to observe the gradual changes in the sentiments of our people upon the great & momentous question of Slavery, particularly in the North. Abolitionism under various names & covert phases gradually widens & deepens, till there is scarcely a public man that northern men are willing to acknowledge as a fair exponent of their principles who was not tinged with these opinions. Our present Administration & Northern representatives afford by no means a proper illustration of our prevailing sentiments & principles. And I regard the prompt & ready dissent from their public acts and the unanimous voice of hostility & warning which they excite, as convincing evidence that a breach will sooner or later be made between the different Sections of our Country. It is true the consequences of civil strife will be awful, incalculable, and wise men will long adhere to a government that has showered so many blessings upon them, but Christ says that a house divided against itself cannot stand.

I believe this Nebraska bill which has caused so much excitement & contention in Congress & drawn the attention of the people, will be far from composing in its tendency. At the first glance one might think it a triumph of the slave interest. But how is it? Nebraska by the acknowledgment of Southern men stands but a poor chance of becoming finally a Slave State. It will soon be crowded with free men who are ready & prompt to migrate, and another Northern State will be added to this Union. The very means & manner in which the bill gained its passage will give birth to a feeling of opposition to the interests of slavery, which will pervade subsequent elections & foster more & more the spirit of dissension & jealousy which has so unwisely been awakened. When the elements of strife have been broadcast who will pretend to estimate the resulting increase of sectional hostility? What power is so efficient that it can arrest it & reestablish national quiet, when once the

passions of men have been aroused?

The providence of God it may be. Some other great & potent disturbance may meet the torrent & like a returning tide, and check its onsets. We know not, we hope, while we cannot but fear. This ominous state of things in the old world, may be the very thing to turn our thoughts & our passions in a new channel, and the very responsibility & watchfulness which the concerns of this war in the Old world will devolve on Congress may allay bitterness & sectional difficulties & unite her members for our common protection, but this is enough.

I am not prepared to dabble in politics or calculate probable events. So I might talk at random with an eminent superfluity of gaseous nonsense, and I will stop.

You may think I have wandered from my question. No, it is by considerations of this nature that a young man should form his conclusions with regard to the career that he would choose, these taken in connection with a fairer & impartial estimate of his own talents. Probable success is our main incentive to action. We must carefully take our bearings & distances, before we can solve to any degree of approximation the problem of the advantageousness of our position. Many a wise head has made a mistake even after a careful consideration of all the pros & cons of a proposed course of procedure. The views which determined me to a particular profession are more narrow and more immediately practical than any I have offered. I am poor and dislike to drag myself on encumbered by debt, or toiling to make every end meet, dabbling in little things, while my prospects of ultimate success grow dimmer & dimmer.

A second Lt. in a staff Corps gets all told about 80 dollars per month, and in time of peace his time will not be filled up with onerous duties. If I can get located near a library I can pursue study of law to advantage & not neglect my duties in the least. The only difficulty lies here. My heart will not go hand-in-hand with my profession. What will a man in the Army do with a wife? This question has often occurred to me & it is one I cannot answer. The one who decides to become my wife must be willing to run my risks & be subject to all the inconveniences & trials to which her choice had condemned her. If she shrink from the risk well & good; if she loves me as my wife ought she will be willing to share with me my fortune be it what it may. I shall not <opine> over the matter & invest my prospects with an unreal Halo. I did think I would take Lizzie to myself and do by her as well as lay in my power at my earliest opportunity, but from a recent letter, I find her a little disinclined to an early consummation of those ties which are to bind us together for good & for bad. She wishes to see me & talk with me first. What will be our natural contract will not be known till I return home.

I may never marry Lizzie. I fear she has not the physical strength for a wild bird like me. I should dread a parting if active service should call me into the field - yes more far more than the canons roar or the clash of steel. I can conceive of no poorer husband than he would make whose guiding star is Ambition. But as you once said "be guided by circumstances". When you contrasted women & circumstances, you did not seem to think that woman is a circumstance of ordinary moment. I shall give her a place in my combination.

I wish you would send me your theme on the Missouri Compromise. I like to read your thoughts on National Questions. I wished to write much with regard to Dellie & Charlie but I have not time or place to put my thoughts in this letter. Write me soon. My views you will not find very extended or pointed. I lack reading more than reflection. It is a good thing to think but you must first get the material to think about before your ideas will avail much. Good night.

Yr affectionate brother O.O. Howard

You might write on this what Prof. Mahew did on one of my problems - "very carelessly done" but I trust you will be more generous than he.

West Point A.G. Spry 4 54

My clear Brother.

I have mislaid your last letter and cannot find it. I am somy for I wanted to be more efucifie in my refly than is possible When I am obliged to defend on a treacherous memory. I have found the letter. I might file my sheet with remarks on the Nebraska question But this question is in my opinion of well less enveguence to us, who are in favor of all practicable restrictions on the institubon that has stamped our matinal character of fretusions with the blot of meunscetung. Than many others, that excite less enthuliase & receive less attention. I will ment lay and the opinion may Marthe you, that, upon reflection of lareful bulening of the rectous profeson, I am rather in fever of the pussage of that will mdependent of its amendments Man against it. Our present constitution uncloubted Sanctions the institution of Slavery, and estatistes the independence of State governments. It hatever their either dues or lends to Shakle More powers that are delegated to the States tythe general government bears on its face a violation of the spirit of the Constitution. These sort of compromises that were uniontiedly the only preise measures but the time of their adoption do indirectly burt The free legislation of limit the powers that have to decolved on the Separate States. To us they may seen

of a desirable notion as respects slavery, and it was he as respects the end we wish to attain. But they will not admit of unwertal application. I henry established as a principle would soon lead to pulpuble violations of the letter of our Constitution In prospective legistation which must extend beyond the admission of a State into the Union has the Cenderey I speak of. You can clearly su the speration of the formeible if you substitute for slavery any other melitation - as the instatutions of Religion or if this are not fair - any institution promotalog of education -Causing such of such restrictions to be adopted in The primary State Constitution, as will forever close the door against these metitations; for ench is the arower object with regard to slovery. It be preses he to overside well the principles we advocate has the precedents me establish, as well as the end to be attained. I would be hoppy to be the usiless stripe, that has criser I will continue to be Sefe in our national ligislative Kalls so long as there is a chower to agetate the question of Slawy - Klase forever. He work of nork and orive no never the goal L'Emancifeation is not yet near its consumerties unlip by some Fromewer of got the latter are turned. There is much I would like to lay - I would like to que newsours for my views and show that they are not based on himitio Knowledge. I have cheided again against my prejudies of my syn pathees, but it his heen from a finor conviction that the grounds of

disiver of attempted to take were untinable. Thear you not with some such difficult while alternating to write on that guistion. In College, however, Something hediles dry logic is dumer essential to a writer. I lively imagaration when good eventrel will ever earry off the palm in seallenie halls. Turn complaints or outher your self-depreciations are Similar to min when there. I throught I lacked everything executed to a writer - I head neither knowledge or the habit you Speak of efclase Evanuette desevenmenting thought. If discouragement does not deige whom you, and cause you to stather your efforts. I organd this kan sense of your deficiences as the best carried of your altmate succept. Among equals of evities - among those who would rather like yourself he a little superior, and offer omit to extend to you will mireted praise of never pass over your faults in Silence, you must feel a little betternets and want of confidence in your natural powers, but these are the spure that excitingour latent evergues I awaken new ones - Three ove the Stair ways whom which many an similitious youth has wound his way to the heights of distinction. I always have felt a want of souticlever in my natural abiteties of strongly deprecated an ignerature that is deplorable of mould seem to one who was acquainted with the opportunities I have had for the cegaine ment of every viviely- of knowledge, quite semaskuble. But it is difficult to discourage me. Fam glad this you have one gift which I have nor viz: a relentive memory. I know that the immediate

104 4/4/1854 *From:* O.O. Howard *To:* Dear Brother [RB Howard]

RBH-068 West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. April 4 54

My dear Brother,

I have mislaid your last letter and cannot find it. I am sorry for I wanted to be more specific in my reply than is possible when I am obliged to depend on a treacherous memory. I have found the letter.

I might fill my sheet with remarks on the Nebraska Question. But this Question is in my opinion of vastly less consequence to us, who are in favor of all practicable restrictions on the institution that has stamped our National character & pretensions with the blot of inconsistency, than many others, that excite less enthusiasm & receive less attention. I will merely say and the opinion may startle you, that, upon reflection & careful balancing of the reasons pro & con, I am rather in favor of the passage of that bill independent of its amendments than against it.

Our present Constitution undoubtedly sanctions the institution of Slavery, and establishes the independence of State Governments. Whatever then either does or tends to shackle those powers that are delegated to the States by the general government bears on its face a violation of the Spirit of the Constitution. These sort of compromises that were undoubtedly the only pacific measures at the time of their adoption do indirectly curb the free legislation & limit the powers that have devolved on the Separate States. To us they may seem of a desirable nature as respects slavery, and it may be as respects the end we wish to attain. But they will not admit of unusual application & being established as a principle would soon lead to palpable violations of the letter of our Constitution. Any prospective legislation which must extend beyond the admission of the State into the Union has the tendency I speak of. You can clearly see the operation of the principle if you substitute for Slavery any other institution - as the institutions of Religion or if these are not fair - any institution promotatory of education, causing such & such restrictions to be adopted in the primary State Constitution, as will forever close the door against these institutions; for such is the avowed object with regard to Slavery. It behooves us to consider well the principles we advocate and the precedents we establish, as well as the end to be obtained. I would be happy to see the useless strife, that has arisen & will continue to be rife in our National legislative Halls so long as there is a chance to agitate the Question of Slavery, cease forever. We work & work and arrive no nearer the goal - Emancipation is not yet near its consummation unless by some Providence of God the tables are turned.

There is much I would like to say. I would like to give reasons for my views and show that they are not based on limited knowledge. I have decided against my prejudices & my sympathies, but it has been from pure conviction that the grounds I desired & attempted to take where untenable. I fear you met with some such difficulty while attempting to write on that question. In college, however, something besides dry logic is deemed essential to a writer. A lively imagination under good control will ever carry off the palm in Academic halls. Your complaints or rather your self-deprecations are similar to mine when there. I thought I lacked everything essential to a writer. I had neither knowledge or the habit you speak of of close connected discriminating thought. If discouragement does not seize upon you, and cause you to slacken your efforts, I regard this keen sense of your deficiencies as the best earnest of your ultimate success. Among equals critics, among those who would rather like yourself be a little superior, and often omit to extend to you well merited praise & never past over your faults in silence, you must feel a little bitterness and want of confidence in your natural powers, but these are the spurs that excite your latent energies & awaken new ones. These are the stair ways upon which many an ambitious youth has wound his way to the heights of distinction.

I always have felt a want of confidence in my natural abilities & strongly deprecated an ignorance that is deplorable & would seem to me who was acquainted with the opportunities I have had for the acquirement of every variety of knowledge, quite remarkable. But it is difficult to discourage me. I am glad that you have one gift which I have not viz: a retentive memory. I know that the immediate tendency of a memory more than proportionate to the other mental faculties is rather antagonistic to originality of thought, and makes you incorporate the sentiments of others to an undesirable extent, but it will not always rule the roost. It may throw together a mass of incongruous materials, but be assured that the judgment will mature in time and you will be

astonished to see the order that will grow out of the real or apparent chaos.

You are mistaken about the passage of the bill for increasing the rank and pay of the Army. It has passed the Senate, but such bills have a hard rub in the House. We are watching it with no little interest. I think it will pass, that is so much of it as secures the increase of pay. I do not care whether they increase the Army at present or not. It is my opinion that the necessity of so doing will soon be apparent.

I had a letter from Mother to day. All well. She got three letters the same night from her three boys. It does not seem possible that we can ever be to each other as our uncles on our father's side, so selfishly indifferent to each other's interests, as that each shall hardly know the whereabouts of the other. I pray God we may ever be affectionate & brotherly, that we may ever be able to repose in each other the utmost confidence and not blush to own that the warmth of fraternal affection does always stimulate our feelings & modify our actions.

Your affectionate brother O. O. Howard

The state of the s Same of the first of the same Mest Don't sy. Apreo! 5; the state of the second the state of the s age - Lagger of the said of the grant of the said of the said My Char brother, I have received Conserved to the following day to the Harm-The state of the s M. B. S. Lawing

Sind Office

Raine ladd here Plan Angelian por mo letters from you neither of which I have conswerted yet. Con class hus some line live commenced general heriew. The leasons are long and regum study, even more their they get from me. In you need, not be surprised at my dillatory method of corresponding. I shall not the able to write many mon letters of desert langthe hereafter the June. What is I may not I would like to chicaps the Nelvaska Bill with you but it might be unprefitable. I did not beel that you answered my objection. Ther the intention of the evistitution is to have the States perfectly green I unshackled by any liquilation of the prospective And by the General Governments. Now just fix a portion of levilory so that the Slave holder with his property earnot settle in is (This is your object), the you not violate first of which the second the second to be second this article. The estigues of Each state show he entitled to may in your through the war will be a second to the terms of the all the privileges of immunities of the citizens of the mise much so feel and last find a theory at Several States"! Slave property is legal underblidg under the present Constitution, if legal is must have ought to the same of the same is beginning as the same have to age to a top a so the sound The lane probetion as other property. If the property thouse the test the state of the state of the state of he illegal. The Constitution should be arreached so as not · Harperton Colonia to recognize it as such. But enough of this those engaged in

arguments, purtitularly of a political nature, where quar latetille of opinion is allowable, and not offer disposed to jield or met on evenou ground. I took wito everelevate how arguments like yours of allothers upon this question, before coming to a conclusion whom is. I have been obliged recently to memorize the entire Constitue tion, and Shiely Kints Commentaries on International Low of the Juris mulever of the limited States. I have recently read two the life of Kandolph and part of Heat of Wirt. These readings home promoted reflection when such national questions as the one we have heen considering. I would little to discuss them with your too but it requires time to consider such themes properly- and it lates my attention too much from The long of burdensome Course that much be learned before June. Our Instructor in Astilling Minj Thomas has her ordered away. We have completed his lourse. Consisting pro less than fine books, one of which is a large value in Firench (Thirang) Now you see we had no idea of remembering all this track we addetion to the bast amount of other things, with which we are transwing ourselve, for Maj Thomas The Inopersor Weham, Knows how to ask leading questions & will always help a hesitating low out of difficulty, but now some unsparing officer will have no of what pray shall! get is all why it is No late by all odds - Inte by to gue the course some little attention. You ever havely fring wheat a low will have been taken from my heart, just two moults, from

This day. Me have to be examined in Six different departments. Just & forewest Engineering with its various Opperelager - 2 English Studies - Low, Logie Movel Source ye: 3 Mineralogy & Gerbogy - 4th Artillery, 5th Cavalry 3 bolumes - 6th Infantry 3. vols. He Know much of the ballie two, lovely & infantry of a small past of Artilley from our continuous practicul lessons on the field. But when you some to evolutions. of the Line of 8 battalions - and get 50 payes for lesson i go ever the same but once, you would Jens it ruther stretching your capacity. He have to take that number of battaling and he able to till all the deposate chother of ruch efficer from the & to the lowest Subalterer - and repeated berbeten the compar lower ande of all - one word not do it unles he show got so accustomed to miletary lomorands as to learn them are glace. I am glad you went into Dortland of glas to hear ther Lizzio eyes ere so much beller. What she is so well generally. I herd from Charlie yesterday. He then I must be sick heerence I have not writter. It was after hall post g when & commenced this letter, so you may magin I have written in haste, for I must needs go to bed early - for & have to Commence my lesson in Engineering at 5 inthe morning - In good night - Tell me who is my plebe is who is to follow me have of you know Mr affection to brother Colo. Honord

105 4/20/1854 *From:* O.O. Howard *To:* Mr. R.B. Howard

RBH-069 West Point N.Y. Bowd College Maine

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. Apr. 20th '54

My dear brother,

I have received two letters from you neither of which I have answered yet. Our class has some time since commenced general review. The lessons are long and require study, even more than they get from me. So you need not be surprised at my dilatory method of corresponding. I shall not be able to write many more letters of decent length hereafter till June, that is I may not.

I would like to discuss the Nebraska bill with you, but it might be unprofitable. I did not feel that you answered my objection, that the evident intention of the Constitution is to have the States perfectly free & unshackled by any legislation of the prospective kind by the General Government. Now just fix a portion of territory so that the Slaveholder with his property cannot settle in it (this is your object). Do you not violate this article: "The citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges & immunities of the citizens of the Several States"? Slave property is legal undoubtedly under the present Constitution, if legal it must have the same protection as other property. If the property ought to be illegal, the Constitution should be amended so as not to recognize it as such. But enough of this. Those engaged in arguments, particularly of a political nature, where great latitude of opinion is allowable, are not often disposed to yield or meet on common ground.

I took into consideration arguments like yours & all others upon this question, before coming to a conclusion upon it. I have been obliged recently to memorize the entire Constitution, and study Kent's Commentaries on International Law & the Jurisprudence of the United States. I have recently read too the life of Randolph, and part of that of <Hirt>. These readings have promoted reflection upon such national questions as the one we have been considering. I would like to discuss them with you too, but it requires time to consider such themes properly, and it takes my attention too much from the long & burdensome course that must be learned before June.

Our Instructor in Artillery Maj. Thomas has been ordered away. We have completed his course consisting of no less than five books, one of which is a large volume in French (Thiroux). Now you see we had no idea of remembering all this trash in addition to the vast amount of other things, with which we are examining ourselves, for Maj. Thomas like Professor Upham, knows how to ask leading questions & will always help a hesitating lad out of difficulty, but now some unsparing officer will have us & what pray shall I get it all. Why it is too late by all odds. I will try to give the course some little attention. You can hardly fancy what a load will have been taken from my heart just two months from this day.

We will have to be examined in six different departments. First & foremost Engineering with its various appendages. 2d English studies - Law, Logic, Moral, Science etc. 3d mineralogy & geology. 4th Artillery. 5th cavalry 3 volumes. 6th infantry 3 vols. We know much of the latter two, Cavalry & Infantry & a small part of Artillery from our continuous practical lessons on the field. But when you come to evolutions of the line of 8 battalions, and get 50 pages for a lesson and go over the same but once, you would find it rather stretching your capacity. We have to take that number of battalions and be able to tell all the separate duties of each officer from the <general> to the lowest subaltern, and repeat verbatim the commands of all. One could not do it unless he had got so accustomed to military commands as to learn them at a glance.

I'm glad you went into Portland & glad to hear that Lizzie's eyes are so much better & that she is so well generally. I heard from Charlie yesterday. He thinks I must be sick because I have not written. It was after half past 9 when I commenced this letter, so you may imagine I have written in haste, for I must needs go to bed early, for I have to commence my lesson in engineering at 5 in the morning. So good night. Tell me who is my plebe, i.e. who is to follow me here if you know.

Yr affectionate brother O. O. Howard

[Envelope]

Mr. R.B. Howard Bowd College Maine [Postmark] WEST POINT N.Y. 22 APR 3