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Gilmore, Eliza OH (Mother), 8/31/1853

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West Point (Wednesday) Aug. 31st
1853

My dear Mother,

I presume Rowland will have already left you when you open this; and perhaps I shall be at the very moment enjoying the pleasure of his visit. You know I presume by the date of my letter that we have broken up our encampment and returned to Barracks. Tomorrow morning we resume our studies to be continued for the next nine months. And but for the labor they bid fair to pass pleasantly enough. I was changed from Co. C to Co. B as we came from Camp into Barracks. One Lieut. above me was reduced to ranks so that I became 1st Lieut of the next higher Company in rank. This has redounded to my advantage. The barracks which are occupied by cadets have 8 doors of entrance, & the entries (or halls) run perpendicular to the length of the entire building. All the doors, on the four stories to which each of these doors leads comprise one division. This division is subdivided into two sub-divisions. A company occupies two divisions: hence four sub-divisions. The Cadet Capt. of each of the three Regiments has one of these sub-divisions to inspect at 15 minutes after Reveille in the morning & at taps at night. He has to make out a morning report & sign a statement certifying that he has reported all violations of the Reg^o.

Each day. This is my duty as Inspector. I said I was fortunate in being transferred into this company - I am for two reasons - one that the rooms are much better - the second & more important is that I have the best room-mate for me in the Corps. Mr Chapman from Alabama I have spoken of here before. He is even a milder boy than I - and is, in short, just such a young man as I wish for a room-mate. His abilities are not above ordinary but he studies faithfully. We moved into Camp Barracks yesterday. If you could see us work you could judge whether or not Cadets can work if they choose. It would do you good to see them going to & fro with loads on their backs & their heads in their hands & in their arms - some more fortunate ones with loaded wheel-barrow - vary the general scene of busy bodies. Wasn't I tired last night when I lay my head on my pillow? This morning we had a review before Col Lee and afterwards the usual Muster that we have every two months on the last of the second month. I had a long letter from Charlie today - giving me an account of his visit home in detail. He spoke ^{in a} very commendatory style of my drawings which he said he found in our parlor hung on the walls. I expect all their beauty & interest arise from the idea that his brother painted them & sent them home. I presume you have given Rowland so much to love & see me that it will be almost cruel in me to ask for money now

but I will tell you as it is best that being a Lieutenant
has put me to some expence that I would not have had
if I had remained in ranks - I got the pair of thread gloves
with another young man from New York - I took six of them
I think the cost is two dollars & a half - I got my sash
nicely sewed privately as I could not do it by Order - I will
kinder it from getting injured, and as it of itself cost 15 dollars
on my check book I thought it worth preserving - this
cost me a dollar - some about 2.50 at Go's - I took
some of those who came to see me from abroad there
that I might see them more & eat with them - I do
not mean those who came to see me particularly, but
those who came - made my acquaintance & were pleased
to be with me - I took Mr & Mrs Bliss there the other
day & they would not on any account let me pay any
by credit or anyway. Now you see I have a few small
debts, which I can let go till I graduate, but which I
would prefer to pay now. So tell father, please, if he
has the money I would like to have him send me & charge
me ten dollars. The encampment is past & to my last
I spent the greater portion of it rather pleasantly
the whole. Mr Banks of Cold Spring Harbor who married
a cousin of my father's if I understand it right made me
a call today - said all were well at Newburg. Well was here
about two weeks ago, was well sends his love to all our
friends, wants Rowland to come & see him certainly.

Give my love to all - When Rowland comes I will make him
get me some envelopes so that I can write four pages -
Good night. From yr affectionate Son O. Howard.

PAID

Answer

Col John Gilmore
South Wells
Maine