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Gilmore, Eliza OH (Mother), 02/18/1854

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West Point N.Y. Feb. 12th

My dear Mother,

You may be looking for a letter before this reaches you; and since I am unfortunate enough to meet with accidents occasionally I fear you feel some anxiety on my account, but when you get this you may be assured that I am in perfect health. We are now studying permanent fortifications a work of our Professor Mahan - and as we have had to make drawings accurate & according to a given scale besides our ordinary lessons. I feel pretty worn out. For the past week I have drawn till very late at night, I tried very hard to do well but have not been able to master the subject in a manner so creditable to myself as I could wish; I was thrown back a little by my accident & it is hard to make up - and in fact impossible. but you need not be at all uneasy about me - I will graduate as high as I shall wish third or fourth & at the lowest fifth and if you consider or really know all the drawbacks I have had since I have been in this institution, you ~~would~~^{will} have to admit that this will be doing pretty well. The first Class are already

making provisions for clothing, engaging a suit of
uniform, under-clothes, a citizens riding suit &c &c
of the New York Tartars; I have resolved to get only
what is absolutely necessary & to get what I do from
West Point tailor, - for I know him that he is a good
honest man & I can depend on him to make me
good clothes. I do not wish to run in debt as the mass
of graduates do for clothing for I know it is so very
hard to get any again. I have resolved to remain in
the army at least till all debts are paid that I may
be necessitated to contract. I do not yet know what
an over-fit will cost. My room-mate, who is not
very well off for this world's goods, has made an
estimate of everything that he will be obliged
to get, leaving out of the account those things that
he would like to have but can do without. I he
made the last amount \$75.00. I had no
idea that it would cost so much. My equipments
fund will amount to \$92. - one half of which may be
necessary to square me with this institution - the three months
pay which I will have for the parolough after graduating will
be \$75. dollars. If I am right proceeder this may make
me square in the outset, but surely I would rather have
this amount surplus. He cannot do in the army
as elsewhere. A suit of uniform must be bought, a
travelling trunk & a travelling case, a sword, a suit

of epaulettes & other things. The New York com-
missioners send up & measure the members of the gradu-
ating class & send their clothes so that they can have
them on graduation. Their terms are very reasonable
but I fancy that I can do better in Boston
by getting some friend to assist me in my
purchases. Tell me my dear Mother, what course
you think I had better pursue, whether I had better
buy what things I need to make me a respectable
officer at once & run the risk of paying for them
or wait till I get money & graduate my dress
accordingly. You have always worked hard
heretofore to furnish me all the under clothes
I have needed, and they have cost me neither
money or care, and I presume you will take pleasure in
doing so still, but I do not know but I ought relieve you
of this care. I hear through the Misses Berard, who have
a sister at Dr Vaughean's in Philadelphia, that Maria
Cris is there. Miss Berard speaks in very flattering terms
of Maria, says she is very pretty, & says she will not
be spoiled in Philadelphia &c. and as she belongs to
that class who are wont to be enticed, viz: the class
of maiden ladies I presume my cousin is in pretty good
repute. I would like much to see Maria, she says she
is coming to West Point on her return. I should have
certainly anticipated a visit from Uncle & herself when

They went on. Had I known previously that they were
going. I have been to see my little plebe Fabler at the
Hospital today. He is very lovely. Says he cannot get
any flesh or strength. I know how to pity anybody
who has to be confined at the Hospital. It is
particularly bad for a new comber - but Mrs Lee
sends him many nice things & what is more than
all her sympathies. Little Casson has been in the
Hospital some time with a sore which he thought at
first was a boil, but which seems to be now something
else of a more serious nature. I get a permit to
visit him quite often I hope he will soon be cur.
You know I suppose that he is from Vermont & one
of my most intimate friends. He is our smartest
debater in the Society - so we miss him much
from our circle. First blossomer always visits each
other when by any misfortune any are thrown into
the Hospital. There is a great deal of intimacy
between the members of our Class now & I hope indeed
it will continue as unbrokenly as will. I believe I
told you that Mr Abbott & myself had brought
about a reconciliation. I am now on good terms
with all - Give my love to my all. I write you
when you can - You will get letters often from
me when I can write them. if you wish short
ones I can write such any time but I would rather
fill my sheet. My health is good & I hope this will
find you all enjoying all its blessings. My affectionate Son,
C. D. Howard