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Howard, Charles (Brother), 2/13/1856

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1 letter from Lizzie
 3 " " Rowland
 " " Charlie
 " none from Mother
 " " Mr. & Mrs. Bellie
 " " Mrs. Lane, Mrs. & Wood
 " " Mrs. & Mr. S. L. S.
 I have sent letters
 to somebody by
 every mail.
 Residents of Tampa
 600 Negroes & children
 included - Am not
 a slave owner yet -
 Have written a letter
 to Ella.
 Buy a good pen
 Charles Henry -

Otis Howard
 and Sons
 & Co

Tampa, Fort Brooke, Fla.
 February 13th 1856.

My dear Brother,

By Wednesday's mail I received a
 letter from you just after your return to Brunswick.
 The next mail does not leave here till Sunday night
 but I begin this early while I have time. I can
 appreciate your feelings on returning to those cold
 walls after a winter vacation and don't think I can
 envy you all your physical enjoyments to say the
 least. I should have written you before if I had
 known where to direct. I thought you would return
 home after your school closed and would get a
 chance at my letters to mother. But the mails
 have been very uncertain in that direction &
 my letters have hardly got through yet. I have
 written no less than ten to Lizzie and on the 28th
 ult. she had not received one from me after I left
 Palatka, and was in an unpleasant state of anxiety
 respecting her poor husband. She has probably
 received several by this time. As you ask me, I
 will run over my journey hither in brief. I kept a
 journal during the journey & have continued it ever
 since but I won't trouble you with a transcription.

I left my little family on the 24th of December last in a
 severe snow storm. One of the enlisted men took me and

my trunk to Albany - where I took the cars for New
York. I arrived in safety that evening. Staid at Cousin
Frank's till Saturday the 24th when I took passage in the
Steamship Alabama for Savannah. I found pleasant
company on board, was well the whole way and had an
unusually fine passage. We drew up along side of the wharf
about noon of Tuesday the 30th Dec. It was showering all the
time I was in Savannah, but I got a chance to see the city -
I visited the monument of Pulaski, went to a fire in
the evening and enjoyed the meeting of two officers of
the Army & Mr Sawtelle, the ex member of Congress &
father of my classmate Ch^{as} G. Sawtelle. I met also a
young man, that I had seen at Uncle John's. George
Crabtree. I slept at the Pulaski House. At half
past nine on Wednesday I left on an old steamer
called the General Clinch. for Palatka. This boat
had seen some thirty years service or more, was
without staterooms, flat bottomed & as fitting as possible.
Some of the passengers were from the Alabama and had
got to be old acquaintances or soon became so. One was
a young Doctor, who had run to the north to attend lectures
and who had drained all sorts of dissipation to the dregs -
a poor broken-down young old man. I spoke kind words to him
and got a friend for the voyage. One young merchant & two
pretty young ladies his sisters-in-law from New York & bound
for Jacksonville on an excursion. One old man, amusing from his
balls & odd speeches, bound to some Springs to cure Rheumatism -
One College Professor from Oxford Georgia, president of Emory College -
A Spiritualist, a rich man & crazy only on one subject. A young

planter from South Carolina, on his way to his farm, which he
was about to sell in Okala Fla. An overseer, two Catholic
Priests, a Bishop, and a young lawyer from St. Louis, who
was lame, going to Florida for restoration. There were
these & secondary rough gentry who came on board after
we left Savannah & left before we got to Florida. We
took the inland passage. It seemed like a river, narrow &
deep & currentless. It wound its way like a serpent, through
flats, swamps & oyster-beds. We passed some nice fields, cultivated
islands & villages. One town was called Brunswick, one Fernandina
and another St. Marys. These towns present a beggarly appearance.
We were on the open sea some twenty five miles in crossing
St. Johns bar, where we passed between two rows of breakers.
We entered the St. Johns river, stopped at Jacksonville & one
or two other small places, sailed up the Black Creek on the
right, a small narrow stream, covered with the woods on both banks.
Till we reached Middleburg, on the forks of the creek. Here we
found quite a flourishing little town. We were twenty five miles out
of our way. We then returned to the St. Johns & went on up.
No scenery would enchant you like this where the Black Creek
opens into the large river. You see in a large lake completely
shut in by forests of mop covered trees, such as ever green oaks
Palmettos & the Splend^{id} Magnolias. You see a point of land
ahead, make for it, when you get there there is no point, but
you see another lake that rivals the last. We touched at
several places; Palatka, seventeen miles from St. Augustine &
connected with it by stages & Magnolia a resort for Invalids
&c. We reached Palatka a little after nine on Saturday the
3^d of January. Here I staid till Monday morning. Went to church

on Sunday & heard a very good sermon in a house built of
logs from a young man of the Presbyterian persuasion - walked
about the town, visited a grove of Magnolias; saw an orchard-
like, filled with orange trees & loaded with their yellow fruit.
Palatka is situated on the left bank of the river. Everything seemed
then in primitive style. no houses painted, none of brick &
plenty of log huts. but I found that Palatka was the
very epitome of civilization compared with the interior of
this same Florida. On Monday morning early. Our canoe four
fine boxes pitched to a heavy vehicle, I paid my fare. nineteen
dollars & a half & then dollars extra for a heavy trunk & with
several other passengers got aboard. We started into the
woods. the road had one track & the sand was deep. The
whole way from Palatka to Tampa is much like the plains
of Brunswick. The pine trees are taller & the sand is deeper.
We made sixty miles the first day between sun & sun. There
we found Okala. a place about the size of the Slab City in Inds.
There we got supper & took a two horse stage for the night. rode
all night. I rode part of this night on horseback. The trail
contractor was taking his horse through to ride back on. The
moon was bright & I trotted on now behind & now ahead of the
stage. The forest was continuous, did not see a house or an
opening for the whole night. We rode all of Tuesday. Slept ^{travelling} ~~restlessly~~
night in a very comfortable log house & reached ^{Tampa} Palatka
about eight on Wednesday evening. But no rest yet. I found
the Steamer Fashion, employed by the Quartermaster, was to leave
for Fort Myers immediately. I got my supper, got my trunk
on a negro's head & started for the dock. Got my trunk into a
small boat & also myself, just as she was shoving off. Then

4 oarsmen began to pull for the open bay where the fashion
 was lying at anchor. In half an hour we were on board.
 I found here a very comfortable bed, and after I had put
 a few pencil marks in my diary & walked the deck with
 the Captain and learned that he had a wife from whom he
 was forever separated & two little children & sundry other
 pieces of confidence, I turned in, pitying the poor Captain & wishing
 that I had a true wife & sweet, darling boy to whom I might, in
 the providence of God, some day return. I slept soundly till it
 was broad day Thursday morning. I got up & went on deck. Here
 on the one hand was the Gulf of Mexico & on the other the
 long & low coast of Florida covered uniformly with forests &
 bordered with a beach of white sand. At noon we reached
 the mouth of the river Caloosahatchee; the point on the right
 is called Punta Rapa. Here I found three officers & a company
 of the 5th Infantry. After dinner the Captain manned a
 row boat with five oarsmen & we set out to ascend the river.
 These men pulled twenty miles without stopping three minutes
 to breathe & against a strong head wind. I got pretty well
 chilled in this breeze. We reached Fort Myers at last, about
 half past eight P.M. A young officer Mr Burns took me in
 and gave me some supper & then conducted me to the
 quarters of General Horney. He treated me very cordially. I
 had got ahead of my orders, had in mind I was coming,
 so much for promptitude. He had just received a mail &
 asked me to excuse him while he read some letters, His Adjutant
 Adjutant General, Capt. Pherson was with him. I sat &
 scrutinized these individuals. The old general, is some six feet
 & three or four inches in his stockings, has a well formed head, big

forehead & clear blue eye which in repose looks pleasant, but has
somewhat of the devil in it as soon as he is excited. The General
weighs about two hundred & is remarkably well formed: his
hair is sandy & sprinkled with grey & so his whiskers. He works
himself into a passion at a word, a thought or for a want of
either, and then the oaths roll out in a way to frighten the
uninstructed. Captain Pleasanton, is very small, has a handsome
form & a face strikingly beautiful. You would not believe
he was more than twenty two. He says very little, never gets
impatient & always speaks pleasantly. What a contrast between
those two men. The Gen^l says, finally, "well Mr Howard are you
ready to go back to Tampa tomorrow?" Yes, Sir. "We shall
leave at eight o'clock. We got away about nine the next
day. The General took me with Dr McLaren, his surgeon, &
Capt Pleasanton in his own boat, with four soldiers for
oarsmen. There was a breeze for a while, but it died away.
and then such a time as we had beggars description; one of the
men was crazy & laughed in the General's face continually. The others
being green at the oars rocked the boat. General Harney boiled
over with passion - cursed & threatened the men, cursed the
sergeant who sent such men, and hardly could be pacified till
we came opposite the place, where he & some forty men were
surprised by a night attack many years ago. Here they were
killed, here they were all murdered but two or three. One he him
self ran along the beach backwards in his drawers; here he
was taken off by a small boat. After five weary hours in the
hot sun we pulled along side the Fashion at Punta Rapa.
We spent an hour in catching some fish with a seine &
then made our way back in the Fashion. During the evening, we

I have come to the eighth page, have said much about my little self which will be of interest I know to my brother who loves me. Now let us change the subject. What you said of Rowland surprised me. I trust the Spirit of God was wrought by his willingness a change in his heart. If he can say I am willing to give up all for My Saviour I am glad. If he feels it his solemn duty to preach the truth I will urge him on & bid him God Speed! But he will have to forget the word Success as it has been understood by us generally when we use the term. God will give success if in humility we serve him. But why give up the law? Is it not that he fears he shall fail, that he fears poverty? He may & should be a faithful follower of Christ & a lawyer, as I may & should be & a soldier. Paul says, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;" - It is not well to change your course without substantial reasons. Persevere & fear nothing. Rowland is eminently fitted for the Bar - a good reasoner & a good thinker. His very dry training - those statistics & principles so abstruse & unpalatable, are the curbs & checks to the mind to keep it from galloping away nobody knows whither. I tell you Charlie I fear for Rowland as a minister - Applause is too pleasant to him - as to me - could he endure persecution, opposition, could he suffer all things for Christ?

Good night Charlie, brother, I must to bed. I have written this letter at a sitting. I have done a good deal to day & begin to feel a little tired. Give my love to your dearest Mother - I hope to see you all again, and it may be if not on earth, in Heaven. May God guide you aright, & guard you - I hope & pray that you may lead a useful & happy life - My love to Father & Ellen - Yours most affectionate brother - Otis -