

[Faint, mostly illegible handwriting, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.]

West Point Sept 10th 1849

Dear Brother

I have just taken your letter of Sept. 5th from the office and as it is Sunday I proceed to answer it without delay. You are very kind indeed to send me those statements, and I know of no other way of repaying you ^{at present} for your kindness, than by diligently attending to my studies, and gaining a high standing in my class, and to accomplish this I will use every means in my power. With regard to your the statements you have sent to me you may be assured that I will not make use of them only in cases of extreme necessity: that is I will not refer to them unless I cannot possibly work out the statements myself. I do not think however that I shall have any trouble in getting the statements to solve all the problems as far as Equations of the second degree, with the exception of some ten or twelve examples. I got along first rate last week, ^{before last} my march was fine and the ~~maneuver~~ was ~~very~~ good. I have done rather better this week, or rather last week than I did the first: although I was sick nearly all the week and two days I was so unwell that the surgeon excused me from academic duties. I did not, however, allow my illness to prevent my getting my lessons. I am in the seventh section in Mathematics and have Lieut. Haase for instructor. Professor Church visits the section to which I belong, two or three times during last week. I was called up twice when he was there, and I did first rate ~~at~~ both times, one good demonstration before

him is worth half a dozen before any of the instructors
The second demonstration I made before Prof. Church can be found
on the 48. page of the New Edition. it was to show "That the
difference between the same powers of any two quantities
is always divisible by the difference between the quantities
In making this demonstration I bugge right as the saying is
when a person does well. I did not make a single mistake
and only hesitated once during the whole demonstration. After I
had got through he asked me a good many questions, to be sure
that I understood all of which I answered promptly and
correctly. One of the questions which he asked me was "What
is the first remainder or partial dividend? I told him that
it was the product arising from multiplying the divisor into
the terms of the quotient not yet found. After I got through
he went over it after me. he made a little smoother demonstra-
tion than I did, yet he did not prove it any clearer
than I did. He told us that it was a very difficult demon-
stration, and that he considered it as a kind of test
and that those who went through it without any assistan-
ce stood a very good chance of getting into the first
section. My mark in ethics for week before last was $2\frac{3}{4}$
max. 3. I have not seen the marks for last week. Prof. Church
told us that he would commence transferring next Saturday

We use the second Edition of Davies Bourdon
and are require to go through equations of the second degree
by the first of Gauss. I have not got a Webster's Dictionary
nor have I either of my roommates.
We have got as far as equations of the
first degree, but on tomorrow we commence back at

the beginning of the book. I spoke of having been sick
last week. I am now perfectly recovered. I have straightened
up considerably since I have been here. When I got my uniform
coat it was quite loose in the breast, and I used to
throw back my shoulders as far as I could conveniently
and then put in two or three newspapers to make
my coat set smooth. Now I can now throw back my
shoulders without any trouble, so far that my coat sets
close to my breast and at times when I feel very
military I almost pull the buttons off my coat.
The trouble with my coat now is, that the surplus cloth
is in the back, and when I got it I thought it was too small
in the back.

I heard that you and Mr. Shields were out to
Mrs. Stewart's visiting a few weeks since. I suppose you got
acquainted with Florence. If you did, what do you think
of her.

I shall probably have time to write to you again
a week from next Saturday. I will then let you know
where I stand in my class. I believe it is customary for
the superintendent to send a report to the parents of all
the cadets, stating what proficiency they have made in
their studies. When father receives such a report
I wish you would let me know what is in it.

Give my love to all our family.

To
Wm. B. Woods

Truly your brother-in-law
Chas. R. Woods

P.S. I think I shall write to Mr. Duncan next
Saturday, and I will be sure and get all the words right.