

U S Military Academy
West Point Oct 20th 1848

Dear Brother

I received your letter of the 12th inst. a few days ago. The statements you sent me came just in time. although I have not had to use them. I should have been past the examples, the statements of which you sent me, in your last letter, had not my section been turned back to review. My next lesson begins at Geometrical progression. I believe our class will finish Bourdon before Jan. and not take up Legendre until after Jan. We have finished Bullivios Grammar, and taken up Morse's Geography instead. In reciting Geography we have to draw the maps upon the black-board, and describe the principal lakes, rivers, and towns. We do not take up Blairs Rhetoric until after Jan. I am glad of it too; for the way we study Rhetoric here, it requires a great-deal of studying to get a lesson; We have about half a lecture at a time, and when we recite, we have to tell all we know about the subject, without any questions being asked; so you see that to get a lesson well is almost equivalent to getting it by heart.

As far as I have gone in Algebra I think that I understand it first-rate. and would not be

affraid to ~~pass~~^{risk} an examination of the most rigid and searching character. for I can give all the definitions repeat and deduce all the rules, solve and discuss all the problems, and in fact do all that is laid down in the text, and a good-deal more.

The cadets have a regular slang of which would be rather unintelligible to a person who is not acquainted with it. I will give you a few words so you can see what the nature of the West Point slang is. for the word study they use bonne. If a cadet is caught doing anything contrary to the regulations. they say he is hired. The word seps is used more than any other it originated as follows. When a cadet is called upon to recite, if he has not got his lesson he is obliged to confeß that he cannot do what is required of him; and as this occurs so often, the cadets have substituted seps for confeß as it is shorter. The word corresponding to seps is bag and has a contrary meaning. Going to Benny Havens, is called running it. because the officers frequently a watch along the road and if a cadet sees an officer when he is returning from Benny Havens, he has to take to his heels, so as not to be caught. Benny Havens lives about two miles down the river, the cadets go down there to get liquor and cigars.

I have fixed a paist-board shade so that I can study after taps, I studied last night until twelve O'clock and intend to study every night until I get my lesson. It is contrary to the regulations to study after taps, and

and
tions
own
which
in
, for
to
say
other
upon
to
s, and
sep
ing
e
in
from
not
and
I can
lock
ons
and

would probably give me five demerit, but the chance of their catching me is only one in a hundred, I have got ten demerit registered against me, and three that is not registered, I am at present confined to my room, at all times unless on duty, for the period of one week, the reason of my confinement is, the inspecting officer found tobacco smoke in my room when he was inspecting, I should not mind the punishment if it had been me that was smoking, but it was one of my roommates, and I can assure you that it is not very pleasant to be punished for the delinquencies of others.

I frequently get hungry about nine o'clock in the evening, when this is the case I put a piece of bread upon the point of my bayonet and toast it - I generally bring bread and butter from the Mess Hall when I return from supper. Some of the cadets, and in fact the greater part of them are in the habit of making hashes, the hashes are made of potatoes onions and butter, I have not made any yet, but I have tasted some that was made in the next room, and I can assure you that it was first-rate.

I have had my book settled up and I find myself twenty five dollars in debt, I find also that I have to pay postage on the greater part of your letters, so you had better not pay them for they generally charge them to me whether they are paid or not.

I shall have to bring my letter to a close, ^{for} ~~and~~ I have
to clean my cup brimming for Sunday morning inspection

Give my love to all our family and to all
inquiring friends

To Wm B Woods
Newark O

Truly your Brother
Charles B Woods
West Point NY