



Contributed to Maine Memory Network by an individual through
Maine Historical Society
Date: July 20, 1818
Description: Josiah Pierce's last letter from Bowdoin College

Bowdoin College July.20.1818

Dear Father,

Your letter has been recieved, and I now sit down to write an answer; and this will probably be the last letter I shall write from Bowdoin College. My connexion with this institution is soon to be dissolved. The three years I had to stay, when I first came here has passed like the shadow of a cloud, but I hope they have left some mark for remembrance. sure I am that I can never forget that portion of my life, which I have spent in college - my mind has received impressions here, which cannot be effaced without taking reason away with them - I have acquired some information, which I hope will be of use to myself and others. I reflect on my college life with mingled emotions of pleasure and pain - Those of the former however, preponderate. I have every reason to be grateful to a beneficent God that has given me health, & continued to me my rational powers, who has given me what talents I possess, and enabled me to make what proficiency I have made. "Not more than others I deserve, but God has given me more."

& I feel how much I am indebted to you for the kind assistance you have afforded me, in obtaining an education,

I can only say that I hope that my future conduct may ^{never} give you reason to repent sending me here - that you may never see me using the knowledge I have gained to aid vice - to injure virtue - to destroy instead of promoting the happiness of mankind - In reviewing my college life I see instances in which I might have done better than I did do, I regret I have not at all times been as assiduous as I might have been - in some cases I might have been more frugal of time and money - & yet I do not greatly reproach myself for a wanton waste of either - were I to go to college again I think it doubtful whether I should study more, tho' I could now take more advantage of study - I feel some degree of complacency in the reflection, that I have not an enemy to my knowledge in college, or in Brunswick - but I have many warm friends - it is a satisfaction also to me, that I have not in a single instance incurred the censure of the government of college. College distinctions are not important, the habits formed there are vastly so. Students usually obtain a cast of character at college which lasts thro' life - - - -

My classmate Fessenden told me he saw you in Portland. I had a letter from Daniel last week which informed me George was more contented - I have written them both - I also heard from Nancy last week she too was well - Your children are much scattered but I hope they receive the kind protection of Providence.

I can only say that I hope that my future conduct never

may ^ give you reason to repent sending me here - that you may never see me using the knowledge I have gained to aid vice - to injure virtue - to destroy instead of promoting the happiness of mankind - - In reviewing my college life I see instances in which I might have done better than I did do, I regret I have not at all times been as assiduous as I might have been - in some cases I might have been more frugal of my time and money - & yet I do not greatly reproach myself for a wanton waste of either - were I to go to college again I think it doubtful whether I should study more, tho' I could now take more advantage of study - I feel some degree of complacency in the reflection, that I have not an enemy to my knowledge in college, or in Brunswick - but I have many warm friends - it is a satisfaction also to me, that I have not in a single instance incurred the censure of the government of college. College distinctions are not important. The habits formed there are vastly so. Students usually obtain a cast of characters at college which lasts thro' life - - - -

My classmate Fessenden told me he saw you in Portland. I had a letter from Daniel last week which informed me George was more contented - I have written them both. I also heard from Nancy last week she too was well - Your children are much scattered but I hope they receive the kind protection of Providence.

I called on Esq^r Putnam, but he did not recollect taking a letter for me, & could not find one. it is probably lost- he is too dissipated to be trusted with any thing- I shall need a coat for commencement- if you can get me one- and as I do not wish to make much tarry in Portland, I wish you would look a little for some black cloth, suitable, so that I can get measured when I come and have it made during vacation. Our examination will be Tuesday the 4th of Aug. & Vance & I purpose leaving Brunswick the next morning- we shall come by water if we can get a passage, if not we take the stage. at any rate you may expect us in Portland Wednesday afternoon Aug. 5. and I should like to go home next day if convenient. We think of going to the White hills in vacation, & we should like to have your waggon if you can spare it. I shall bring most of my things to Portland when I come- I perhaps it would be better for us to go to Baldwin in the waggon. We have had exceeding dry weather in this vicinity, but had a fine rain last night, corn looks promising.

Give my love to my ever dear mother and sisters and believe me your affectionate son Josiah Pierce.

I called on Esq^r Putnam, but he did not recollect taking a letter for me, & could not find one. it is probably lost- he is too dissipated to be trusted with any thing - I shall need a coat for commencement if you can get me one- and as I do not wish to make much tarry black cloth, suitable, so that I can get measured when I come and have it made during vacation. Our examination will be Tuesday the 4th of Aug. & Vance & I propose leaving Brunswick the next morning- we shall come by water if we can get a passage. if not we take the stage. at any rate you may expect us in Portland Wednesday afternoon Aug. 5. and I should like to go home next day if convenient. We think of going to the White hills in vacation, & we should like to have your waggon if you can spare it. I shall bring most of my things to Portland when I come- & perhaps it would be better for us to go to Baldwin in the waggon. We have had exceeding dry weather - in this vicinity- but had a fine rain last night. corn looks promising. Give my love to my ever dear Mother and sisters and believe me your affectionate son Josiah Pierce.