

My Dear Son

Wash. D. C. Apr. 1827.

I recd your letter of the 27th March and was glad to hear from that, as well as from Mr. Smith, that his party had visited West point. He informed me, and I was rejoiced to hear, that you were contented and happy. My desire is strengthened rather than weakened that you should continue at the point, and prosecute your studies there with assiduity and perseverance. When they are completed, the choice of professions will be before you. You may enter the army if you please, or study the law. Whatever course you pursue, your studies will have been of the greatest advantage and, my life or it, you will when they are completed never regret it. You think at something about joining Mr. Holley. My dear son, I think Mr. Holley's project most quixotic. You will find it will so turn out. It is a scheme to enable Mr. Holley, at other people's expense, to gratify his inclination to pass a few years in Europe. Mr. Holley is not the man that I would commit, in such an enterprise, the care of my son to. But if his plan were good, and if he were the fit person to execute it, I have not the means to enable you to join him. I have promised you, and if I live I will perform it, to let you go to France, after you have remained at West point, to stay some months. It will be at a season of life when you can profit more by the voyage.

I am the more anxious about you, because I have not much hope left about my two older sons. Poor Thomas! he brought tears from me to behold him. He begins to show, at his early age, the effects of a dejected life — swollen jaw he has. He promises, but here I fear the matter will end. If you too disappoint my anxious hopes a consolation, never good, and now almost