

humble Navy - if not it will inform
 that much information by any intro-
 duction - also that I originally left
 home when rather young and became
 a soldier - rather of the Capt Jacks order
 that after my brilliant (?) career in that
 line had culminated and ended I
 returned to my own ~~own~~ existence ~~fantasizing~~
 about Cambridge - but eventually, after my
 finances had commenced falling to an
 alarming extent, I was suddenly transplanted
 into a different orbit - rather a circum-
 scribed one, within the walls of the US
 Naval Academy where I emerged after
 four years study, with "honors" of course (I don't
 everybody graduate with honors!) and entered upon
 my present duties. Our craft had the bad
 luck to run hard aground a couple of months
 ago since which time we have been in the
 little city undergoing repairs and as soon
 as they are completed our purpose turning
 for the United States in order to give our eccentric
 Captain the benefit of a General Court Marshal
 so that when you write - say a couple of
 weeks after receiving this second direct to
 your affectionate Pers. known officially as
 Misr. C. P. Rees.
 Care of Navy Dept. Washington D.C.

Don't forget to give my best love
 to Mrs. Rees - I will do the little
 thing
 Recd Nov 14 1871
 M.D.

"U.S.S. Guerriere"
 Spezia Oct 10 1871

Dear Bro Willard

No doubt
 you will be greatly surprised
 at receiving a letter from this
 quarter of the world - quite as
 much as I would be to become
 the recipient of one bearing the
 Bitterville post mark - but no
 matter I will hope that your
 surprise may be tinged with
 a slight degree of pleasure
 at hearing directly from a brother
 whose name you barely know
 - whose face you have never seen.
 It strikes me that I did
 not writing to you once before

while away at the Naval Academy;
but this may be only a dream,
a sort of fancy growing out of
the many good intentions which
I know I have formed in days
gone by. It is said that habitual
story tellers frequently get to
take the oft-repeated creations
of their own imagination. Perhaps
my own uncertainty may originate
in a similar manner, and in
course of time I might come
to say I know I wrote to
that far distant brother whose
very existence seems but a dream.

It might be all this you know
but at present I will limit
my knowledge to the proposition
that whether I wrote or not I
know you never answered.

I came down from watch
only a few minutes ago, and
finding the stateroom vacant - the
fellows having nearly gone for
a stroll in the town I was

for a little while at a loss how
to occupy my leisure between the
and bed time, but soon the
happy idea came of writing a
letter - but with it the thought
"to whom?" - "mother?" - "It has only been
two or three days." "Declarator?" Two letters
to him within three weeks. "Jacob?"
- "Care me a letter?" "Sartre-Keane?"
"Haint none!" But I recollected
that mother (who I believe thinks
more of her children than any
other person living) had suggested
in her last that your address
was Britesville, &c and that you
might perhaps be glad to hear
from me. So I knew what to do
at once. Write a little note as
an experiment - to see if he cares
enough to answer and if he
does then bore him with a
larger one. There's the plan!

Possibly you may know that
your humble servant is an
humble officer in Lord Darnley's