

Private Mrs. Mary Howard
Olympia Feb. 1st 1856

I thought, Dear Mary, I would not write you until the Gov. and Hazy came home, for I was rather uneasy, not much either, as my rule is not to borrow trouble and I thought they would all come out right sooner or later, as they have done. I have a splendid horse coming from the Dalles. Haz says he is just the thing for me. I do enjoy riding on horse back so much. You seem to think I am living in the country on a farm, far from it. We are right in the midst of the town, but I have my cows and hens here. Ellen has struck for 40 dollars a month, or else leave for San F. Her cousin is there writing her all the time to go to her. I will pay her, but it is an imposition. She is not worth such wages. The Gov. brought in a french man who does everything about the house. I would send her off but [illegible] says no.

Butter is a dollar a pound, eggs 75 cents a dozen. This war is playing the deuce with the territory. Farmers are afraid to go on their claims to plant. This is the month to plant. The Gov. says he will stop the war in two months and is taking the most vigorous [sic] measures. Mr. Mason he has sent on to Washington on business. You will see him probably. You can't think what a loss Mason is to me. For the last of months we have been together most of the time. Walked and rode together and he has been full of kindness and little attentions. I never knew a young man that I liked so well. If he heard me express a wish for anything he would get it for me. Then he has a fine intellectual taste and is highly educated. He took as much interest in me as I did in him. I expect you will think I am running on at a furious rate for a married woman concerning a young man, but you can understand the tie between us. When you consider how few people in this country I had my sort of sympathy with. Haz has just come in from school the chap is so full of strength and energy he pitches right into me. I am as wild as a hawk. Just been off in a bout with Haz to take me riding on the Sound. It is a charming climate. I went off without either bonnet or shawl on. As mild as May. There has been very little rain and summer weather is far. We are all as happy as possibly out here. Lin says she will not leave here if I do. It amused us much about [illegible] saying. Only think of Margaret in that Indian country. Poor thing I pity her. I never was so well or happy in my life as now. Take [illegible] comfort. As for Indians I have not the slightest fear of them. They are far from Olympia. I am interested in seeing the Gov. [illegible] and order the men about. Almost every man far and near have put themselves under his control. I want to have a house built about a mile from here on some 8 lots he owns now covered with immense trees. Have some of them cut down, leaving clumps here and there. The Sound running at the back of it. It will be charming. Set out front – trees which grow rapidly here in two years. It would be a fit place for Mary to visit and enjoy life in. I will work it out soon. Capt. Keys of the Army is coming to visit me and assist the Gov. about the war. [Illegible] has sent an Indian chief with 100 Indians to scout and bring him news of the hostiles. I will write you again soon and tell you how we prosper. Don't [illegible] apply the epithet poor thing to me again. It is too funny. I am as fat – and lazy, as possibly. Here comes the Gov. so good by.

Yours Ever,

Meg