

Boston
 Dear Sister Mary
 I am sorry to say that more than
 two weeks have passed since the reception of your very welcome
 letter. I had already delayed so long that when your letter
 came I most fully purposed to give it an immediate reply
 but I was soon confined with an attack of fever & was
 sick at the same time and when able to be about my
 domestic cares had so multiplied that this is the first leisure
 moment I have found to devote to absent friends. Language
 would fail to describe the feelings with which I receive my
 pen to address you my dear sister separated from all the
 friends you ever held so dear and I find it quite
 impossible to realize the fact that when this letter is finished
 it must be two or three months on its way. We had long
 been feeling very anxious about you not knowing where you were
 and when Bob directed her last letter she felt as if it was
 very doubtful whether you received it. We looked with interest
 for every Home Missionary and searched the papers hoping to see
 something from you but when your letter came I found we had
 not even thought that a letter written in November would not
 reach us until March. I am seated by the same old table
 and in the very place where you have so many times written
 to friends in Vermont and I feel quite inspired with the
 spirit of other days but I must not allow my thoughts thus
 to run for there are so many things crowding for admittance

Boston April 1850

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that I hardly know when to begin or what to say first Bob
has written a number of times and of course given you the
particulars with regard to his own family and Williams and all
society matters and if I were to tell you all that has transpired
since I last wrote I might well confine myself to our own family
Last summer I was sick again most of the time and when
one of your letters came I was so feebly that I could not read
at all In the fall my Brother and Wife came for a visit and
have not been home since John has gone into business with
Francis and they board with us My Brothers health has not been
as good for years as it is now We have a very pleasant family and
enjoy ourselves much I am feeling lonely this evening as B is
gone He went to Detroit on Monday expecting to return to day but
has not come and as usual I imagine ten thousand things
that have prevented Since Bob wrote we have sustained quite
a loss During one of the coldest nights in february we were aroused
from sleep by the ringing of the bell In a moment we were all
on the floor The light shone brightly into our rooms and we
all exclaimed with one breath it is our store Fire! In less than five
minutes John Ward and Francis were dressed and on the spot The flames
had reached our store B broke in and all hands went to work
clearing the store with the greatest exertion and exposure on the part
of B and F They succeeded in saving all but three hundred dollars
worth of goods The next morning the goods were all moved into
Mrs Wilsons store and soon put up all in order They received
no injury the ground being frozen every thing could be kept
clean The fire broke out in the store next to ours five buildings
were burned Williams Denisons among the number The seems to
feel his loss very much as he depended upon the rent: B

estimates his loss at fifteen hundred. He thinks he shall do very well if he can collect his debts. Most of those who sustained loss except F and W had some insurance. Huston & Tomhenson to quote a large amount. Tomhenson is going to build of brick on the same spot this summer. In March we had a very pleasant visit from Mr. & Mrs. Post Richards & Elizabeth. They visited Henry and came from there here. We talked much about you and indeed I could not help thinking of you all the time when in Mrs. Post's presence she looked and appeared so much like you and Francis. I should think they occupied missionary ground but under very different circumstances from those in which you are placed. It was our common when they were here. Eliza said she had not been present at such a season before in two years. They seldom hear any preaching but Methodist. We how delightful it would be if you could once more make one of our number. How much I have to say that I can never write how much that would give me unspeakable pleasure to communicate and though I have had reason to think from some circumstances that your feelings had become prejudiced still I know if we could meet I should find in you that same dear friend whose friendship I have so much valued and if our lives are spared I really think we may. I know from your letters and I know from the feelings you expressed when in Michigan that you often feel desolate and that you are far away from kindred and home but I have often looked upon a missionary life in all its bearings as far as I could without experience and felt that in many respects their situation was preferable to a Pastor's life in our large towns and villages. No situation without its trials and were it not for these how little prepared should we be for our future and eternal home. I often contrast your situation with my own. Here I am surrounded with every

comfort and convenience every thing pleasant and delightful
still I have things to say if you know what that I should not have if
I were in Oregon now my dear sister you see I am trying
to make you contented and happy and I know you
do except when you think of absent friends I know in the
bosom of your own family you have all that is necessary to
endear you to life and with the hopes of being useful
I shall ever feel that you will be willing to meet with trials
with the full assurance that your reward will be in Heaven
I really wish we could become more acquainted with your
excellent and worthy husband I have never seen any thing
from his pen except a few lines to John I presume his
time is very much occupied still we should feel ~~very~~ much
interested in hearing from him your friends all enquire
particularly about you and wish to be remembered when I
write Mrs Stone I see quite often and number her among
my best friends I saw her yesterday she sends much love
Mrs Davis formerly Emily Swasey calls to see me when she visits here
and enquires with interest about you she is a lonely widow it is nearly
two years since the death of her husband and she still seems very
desolate she has a beautiful little girl her husband was wealthy
and I have been told that her home in Chicago is one of the
most delightful in that place Miss Stevens and her mother spend
a part of their time with the sister who lives in Chicago Mrs Davis
sister whose wedding you attended is dead I should think from
what I have heard that she never lived very pleasantly
Miss Smith Mrs Skeltons sister was married last summer to Mr Graves
of Detroit a very fine man and in good circumstances they
of course seem ~~very~~ happy I suppose you would like to hear
something about our new Mrs Welch I am very well pleased with
we are the same kind of neighbors as in former days but I do not
feel the attachment nor can we see that I did to the first Mrs W they make
~~very~~ large parties with every variety that money can purchase for
entertainment and Mr W wishes to have her dress very gay and fashionable
Pootin has moved to Washings William Hoyt who lives there
told us that he was often so drunk as to be obliged to be carried
home Poor Caro I think for some time she has carried a burden
countenance in spite of all their efforts to appear cheerful Drunkards have
left her for California and some of them think of going to
Oregon City Mr Hays among the number if so he will enquire for
you and may find you you recollect he lived opposite us it was
a subject of the revival a year ago and truly seems to be an altered
man I hope he will not yield to temptation during his absence
but return as he left a decided Christian