

In the trenches

Near Petersburg

Dec 20<sup>th</sup> / 64

My dear Pat, your letter was received day  
before yesterday after anxiously expecting it  
and was glad to hear that you and the children  
are so well. Glad to hear that my little Wesley  
goes to school so cheerfully, and tells Willie  
I told him she would catch him in passing  
her book. Glad to hear that the corn will be  
gathered before Christmas, but you did not  
say how much had been made. How many  
boys have you to kill and how the some  
return back. What prospect for boys another  
year. I was of course a little worried at the  
start of boys go down. Always try to  
keep ahead in pigs and then you can  
have a stock of boys on hand.

I wrote to you just a few days ago, and  
told you how I had suffered from the  
cold the weather is more pleasant to us  
but the sharp frosts are very bad  
in our front and we have to be very  
particular to prevent being killed at  
any moment.

I was a little mortified to hear that my coming  
home would be no pleasure to you - I  
don't expect to come now at the time I wish  
you, if I do at all, it will be not so soon  
than the 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Sleep being very little  
balm to me, but I am rejoiced to hear  
that your health is so fine, may the Lord  
keep you in such. When I lie down at night  
it is under the fire of the sharp shrapnel  
and when I awake in the morning it is  
to hear the whizzing of bullets over my head  
or the bursting of mortar shells. Oh how  
uncertain is my life! Benj. Walker was  
killed two days ago standing in his  
tent, not thinking of danger of death.  
Make an early start towards a camp  
near your post in the ploughing season  
as it is allowable, I rather think the  
fighting around here is done not for  
this season - but next Spring will tell  
an awful tale. Tell Mollie she must  
not be such a boy, but must leave  
her book more. Have the Colt altered  
this Spring. My best love to all, may the Lord  
protect you & them.

Yrs affec. husband J. L. Pollard