

In the trenches near Petersburg  
Saturday evening, March 11th 1865

My dear Pat -

I have just today received your last letter and I hasten to reply for this purpose - I wish to say to you that while I deeply appreciate your affectionate feelings for me in sympathizing with my situation, you must not think of coming to Petersburg yourself. While I should be rejoiced to see you in other circumstances, yet I should be grieved for you to come to Petersburg. In the first place I have nowhere to carry you to spend your time, and in the second place I would spend but little time with you, as we are not suffered to remain out of the trenches over six hours. While I should rejoice to get some of your good eatables to eat, I could not think of your making that sacrifice and undergoing what you would have to do, should you undertake the journey. Another thing, you are not Mrs. Martin or anything like her. I don't wish you named in the same connection. You might send Winston with Mr. Minor or Schools, but I am even fearful in that case you would be losing too much at home in the way of ploughing. Everything that can drag a plow must now be at it or we shall not have a half crop of corn. It is now nearly planting season and our third of the land I reckon has not been ploughed up. Tell the "niggers" they must think of making a crop this year.

I have thought the same thing about the children that you write me. I should be happy that their education was better attended to, and they could have a good opportunity to go to school - but I don't see how we can better arrange it. Every day do I pray that our children may be nurtured up in the admonition of the Lord and that you may be endowed with the necessary qualities so to raise them. I am glad to hear that as the children have been sick, they all have gotten better, and that you are altogether recovered. What do the people say about bringing the "niggers" into service? The thing is very unpopular among the larger class of the soldiers - especially those that are non-slaveholders. I can't say whether or not it is a politic act. What says Cousin Jack? I did not intend coming home with the idea of buying up provisions. I expected the families of the men to send them boxes - so the men said they would. I had no idea of raising provisions in the manner you indicated. You know at any time boxes can be gotten up by the families of the men.

Now, dearest Pat, farewell, may the Lord bless you and take care of you. My best love to you and the children.

Your affect. husband

Jos. L. Pollard



in the trenches near Petersburg  
- Saturday evening, March 11th 1865

My dear father

I have just today received your last letter and I am glad to reply  
for this purpose - I am glad to hear that you are well and happy  
your affectionate regards for me in a letter which I have just received  
you were not afraid to come to Petersburg tonight. With a resolution  
I refused to see you in any other circumstances. I should have given you  
you to come to Petersburg. In the last case I would have spent the time  
to spend your time, and in the second case I would have spent the time  
with you, as we are not allowed to remain out of the trenches even six  
hours. This I should have to get some of your good wishes to say  
I could not think of your making the journey and undergoing all you would  
have to go, should you undertake the journey. Another thing you are not  
to, having on anything like that. I don't wish you named in the same  
connection. You might send a letter with Mr. Minor or someone, but I am  
each letter in this case you would be leaving your home in the  
way of fighting. Everything that you may do now must now be at the  
we shall not have a full crop of corn. It is now nearly planting season  
and our part of the land I reckon has not been ploughed yet. Tell me  
I reckon they must think of making a crop this year.

I have thought the same thing about the children that you write me.  
I should be happy that their education was better attended to, and they  
could have a good opportunity to go to school - but I don't see how we can  
best attend to it. Every day to have the children may be nurtured  
up in the education of the land and that you may be endowed with the  
necessarily qualities to raise them. I am glad to hear that the  
children were well and that they will have a better education and that you are  
a competent teacher. What do the people say about changing the riggers  
into parades. The thing is very important among the larger class of the  
soldiers - especially those that are non-commissioned. I don't say  
whether or not it is a political act. What was General Jackson's  
intentions with the idea of having the parades. I expected the  
parades of the men to send them boxes - as the men said they would.  
I had no use of raising provisions in the manner of Jackson. You  
know that the boxes can be gotten up by the families of the men.

Now, dear father, farewell, may the Lord bless you and take care  
of you. I have love to you and the children.

Your affectionate son,  
John A. Johnston

John A. Johnston