Camp 26th Va. Regt. Barton's Farm June 12, 1863

My dear Pat:

Our Company starts on an expedition tomorrow, five miles below near the famous battle ground of Malvern Hill, where we will remain a week, and knowing I shall not have an opportunity of writing to you during that time, I have concluded to write today. I am the more anxious to do so because in my last letter I stated that I was unwell, and I know that unless you hear from me in the meantime you will be very uneasy about me. Peachy Latane left here yesterday and offered to carry a letter or message to you for me, but not having time to write at that time I declined writing by him. I have a repugnance anyway of laying myself under any obligation to the "official characters" in the army. They are generally so exclusive and seem to think nobody fit for associates but their brother officers - then they hug to their bosoms however "small potatoes" they be. For two or three days I was quite sick with the Spring disease that has considerable sway among our men, but soon rallied and am now almost well. Now and then when I eat anything that disagrees with me my bowels trouble me a little, but as soon as that passes off I am well again. I became a little reduced in flesh, but that makes no difference this warm weather. The butter you sent me, eggs and meal, came in good season, for we have nice batter-bread and I got some tea from the Surgeon, and these suited my appetite remarkably well. How shall I ever be thankful enough for your thoughtful kindness!

I almost wish sometimes that I could have a right tight spell of sickness, if by that means I could get home and spend some time with you. I know this is a wicked wish, and I ought to be more than thankful to God for his great goodness to me, but I long so to spend a month or so at home that I am almost guilty of this wickedness sometimes.

I have not been to Richmond yet and shall not be able to go until my return from the picket duty to which our Company has been assigned. I am very much afraid Wm. Phillips is not going to attend to that matter as I asked him, and I am so situated that I can't. I am afraid through his negligence I shall loose Fuller's value, if it could be gotten. He does not write to me, as he promised, and does not let me know whether the surgeon has returned or not. If I could get the necessary proof of Fuller's having died in the services of the gov. under impressment, I would place the matter in the hands of Bob Montague. Phillip was to get this statement from the surgeon, but he has not written to me and I have not been able to get to Richmond to see him.

I suppose you have had a dreadful drout at home, as I understand there has been no rain in King & Queen for a long, long time. Suppose everything is suffering dreadfully on account of it. I suppose the negroes are getting in tolerably well with the crop. Did the hail reach you. I heard there was quite a storm in the neighborhood of Mt. Landing, destroying the wheat

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I suppose the children are as happy as larks, that they run out all day long without their bonnets and that Betsy is as yellow as a mulatto. Ohthis war, this war, when will it have an end? Oh God how long wilt thou afflict with thy terrible scourging this people - Oh will not thy heart incline to mercy and wilt thou not withdraw thy hands full of terrors. Accept my love, dear Pat, yes my love - this is all the consolation I can send you - in what dark times we live, no bright gleam of hope breaks through the gloom. Likewise say to the children, Papa sends his love to them. Write very soon. Yr affect. husband Jos. L. Pollard

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