

In the Trenches near Petersburg
Dec. 20th 1864

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 Betsy goes to school so cheerfully and tell Willie I told him she would catch him in learning 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 hogs have you to kill and have the sows come back. What prospect for hogs another year. I was fearful Lewis would let the stock of hogs go down. Always try to keep ahead in pigs and then you can have a stock of hogs 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 now but the sharp shooters are very bad on 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 wrote you. If I do at all it will be not sooner than the 1st of Feb. Sleep brings 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 shooters, and when I awake in the morning it is to hear the whizing of bullets over my head, or the bursting of mortar shells. Oh how uncertain is my life! Bengy Walker was killed two days ago standing in his tent, not thinking I suppose of death.

Make an early start towards a crop next year, put in to ploughing as soon as it is allowable. I rather think the fighting around here is done with for this season, but next spring will tell an awful tale. Tell Mollie she must not be such a boy but must learn her book more. Have the colt altered this spring.

My best love to all. May the Lord protect you and them.

Your affect. husband

Jos. L. Pollard

