

In the trenches near Petersburg  
Jan. 15th 1865

My dear Pat:

I again seize another opportunity to write to you in answer to your last kind letter. I received all the things safe in the box, except a few apples that had been taken out. I received also the butter, brandy and socks sent by C. H. Martin. It was all right. The butter I have enjoyed amazingly and the brandy has nearly cured my stomach, so many thanks to you for them.

Tomorrow or next day I shall put in my application for a furlough, but don't count on my coming with too great surety. My application may be disapproved. Then I am almost afraid to come home. I have some lice on me and can't get clear of them as long as we are in these ditches. I have a horrid idea of going home in such a trim, but everybody has them here from Cols. down to the privates.

We have had the worst time lately that I have ever seen in the ditches. The rain almost washed us away. All our holes in the ground caved in and let in the water and drove us out. We have been in a miserable state, but for the last few days have been busy fixing up and trying to get dry places to stay in. The ditches too have been knee deep in mud and water, and such wading about you never saw the like. The weather has been such as to make a truce between us and the Yankees. They were in as bad a state as we were, and so all shooting has stopped and the men go about at pleasure without fear of being shot. It looks almost like peace between the two parties, after the sharp shooting to which we have been subjected. These ditches are dreadful things in bad weather.

We are on the shortest rations now since the war commenced on account of some breakage in the railroad. Be sure to save me something good to eat. Tell Willie I am in a part of the army that I never see a cavalry man, and hardly ever see a saddle. I should like to gratify my little boy but the cavalry never come in the ditches. They are away on our right some miles.

If I can get the gum arabic and almanac I shall certainly do so. I shall be in a great hurry however to get home, if I start. I am sorry the hogs turned out so badly, but am glad your corn will make you enough or more than enough to serve you.

This is the Sabbath, but the men are hard at work, fixing up the works that the rain washed down, so there are no services today. But may God still be praised in our hearts. Now, farewell, my dear wife, and may Heaven's rich blessings rest upon you. My love to you and the children.

Your affect. husband

Jos. L. Pollard

In the trenches near Petersburg  
Jan. 1915

Y dear girl:

I again seize another opportunity to write to you in answer to your last letter. I received all the things safe in the box, except a few apples that had been taken out. I received also the butter, candy and socks sent by G. I. Miller. It was all right. The butter I have enjoyed immensely and the bread was very good, so much so that I have to eat it for lunch.

Tomorrow or next day I shall get in my application for a furlough, and then I can come on my coming with too much anxiety. My application may be disappointed. Then I am afraid I shall not come home. I have some idea on me and can't get clear of them as long as we are in these trenches. I have a pretty idea of going home in such a firm, but everybody has them here from time to time.

We have had the worst time lately, but I have never seen in the trenches. The rain almost washed us away. All our holes in the ground were covered in and the water and drove us out. We have been in a miserable state for the last few days, but have been busy fixing up and trying to get dry places to sleep in. The trenches too have been made deep in mud and water, and such things about you never saw the like. The weather has been such as to make a trench between us and the Yankees. They were in a state of war, and so all shooting has stopped and the men go about in trenches without fear of being shot. It looks almost like peace between the two armies, after the sharp shooting which we have been subjected. These trenches are dreadful things in bad weather.

We are on the shortest rations now since the war commenced on account of some business in the railroad. I hope to see something good to eat. I will be in a part of the army that I never see a cavalry man, and nearly every one a cavalry man. I should like to see the boy and the cavalry men come in the trenches. They are away on our right some miles.

If I can get the gun repaired and mended I shall certainly do so. I shall be in a great hurry however to get home. At least, I am sorry the boys turned out so early, but am glad your own will make you enough or more than enough to give you.

This is the weather, but the men are hard at work, thinking in the works that the rain washed down, so there are no services today. But you can still be dressed in our hearts. Now, farewell, my dear wife, and may heaven's stars bless you. Love to you and the children.

Your affectionate husband

Wm. L. Poland