April 1st, Sat.

The people are decidedly down in the mouth, many bear up bravely and look forward to the better day that must come. Many are “whipped,” and are making plans to save something from the impending crash. I never thought Southern men could become so despondent and helpless. The ladies, as a class, show no such conquered spirit. Still we are putting forth vigorous efforts to repel the gigantic efforts of the enemy and if God does always favor the right, & give success then we may hope that the days of agony are nearly past. I fear to think of the skepticism, & infidelity that would prevail in our country should our cause fail. The people are giving much of their small supplies to support our armies, feeling it an evident truth that should the soldiers of our land fail to be supported, that of the enemy will strip them of it. Policies and patriotism alike [unified] to this noble determination.

The late raid of Sheridan from the Valley to the White House stripped the country through which his cavalry divisions passed of everything that can support man or beast- damaging very seriously the canal, the Central & Fredericksburg R Road [Railroad] he has cut off a great source of supply to the Richmond market, & army from Northern Virginia, though as I write, the same General, having crossed the James, in vicinity of City Point, has started upon another raid upon the South Side and Danville RRs [Railroads] – what result has attended his enterprise, we have not yet learned, we wait with untold solicitude the finale. Our Cavalry so poorly mounted, & so few mounted at all that it is folly for us to attempt to withstand or repel their assault by that arm of our service. Infantry cannot move with such rapidity and with all we have opposed us before Richmond & Petersburg. Such vast odds that we can ill spare. Any forces from the immediate front, & thus we are forced quietly and without opposing to watch the movements of the depredators. It is humiliating to feel how weak we are in the [material] of war & how oppulent [sic] are our Enemies – but how glorious it will be hereafter to remember the heroism fo these days.

Fighting of greater or less magnitude has become a daily routine along some part of the Extended lines. Each army is fearing the assault of the other. On Wednesday night, below Petersburg & near the Appomattox, the lines became heavily engaged on both sides, each supposing the other was assailing. Some of our papers heard of the unusual cannonading to & inferred that terrible slaughter has been done the Yankees and awaited impatiently the dawn to see how many thousand dead Yankees were strewn upon the bloody plain – day came, but the battlefield did not tell of carnage, – all gunpowder wasted fruitlessly, & every body felt that he was sold by the flaming newspaper bulletins. The Yankee account of this little episode has not come to hand, their version may tell another tale. Another such day as this will render inefficient the [storms] of past few days to block the game of war.