Washington, March 26th, 1820

My dear friend,

I look forward to the time when I hope to see you with much impatience, which I hope will take place in about a month from this time. The day of adjournment is not yet fixed, yet the 17th of April is now supposed to be the time which will be agreed upon. I am the more anxious to be at home before the first of May, to relieve you from any care respecting our farming business, especially if Garfield should choose to leave the farm—however, I am determined to be at home if I am well about that time whether Congress adjourns or not.

I have received no letter from you for the last week or two, which, according to your usual arrival, ought to have been received yesterday or the day before. The mail has been robbed again near Baltimore, the driver murdered, and all the letters carried off; on account of the money contained in them—but I have just learned that the robbers have been taken and are now confined in the jail at Baltimore, and will be hanged, I hope. A very unpleasant occurrence has happened at Alexandria during the last week.

Commodores Decatur and Barrow have settled a point of honor agreeable to the laws of this part of the country. Decatur was shot into the body and died in about 13 hours, and Barrow was shot into his leg—but is not dead and probably will recover; he is in great distress, and not able to turn himself in bed, nor to be raised up without pain. Decatur has been justly considered the pride and ornament of the navy—and was universally esteemed...