

Camp Butler, Newport News, Virginia -

Thursday, July 4.th 1861

My Dear Wife:

According to promise made in my letter this morning I begin another letter to you today - This is the fourth of July but is very quiet here so far - The Col. wants to celebrate a little but has no powder for salute - We expect to do something this afternoon but hardly know what. Our company was detailed for labor this morning & for a while they hardly knew what it was for - They were sent out with other companies to finish the German fortifications - not finished till today - So that the Vermont Reg't have not only built their own share of the fortifications, but have built the whole of the bastion towards the right, and the last six or eight rods of the German works. Our company have got their share finished and are relieved from labor the rest of the day except drill at night -

You have no idea what beautiful weather we have here most of the time. Today is as cool and comfortable as could be asked for. The sun is not very hot, and in the shade it is almost too cool - This is said to be the healthiest place in Virginia so you need not be alarmed for my health, now my cough is gone - My duties are hard some days and then are very easy - Fortunately yesterday and the day before I had very little to do, so I that I had to travel but little. You think that I ought to have an assistant - I cannot, for my business is of a kind