Washington, D.C.
July 11, 1864

Dear Mother

I take my pen in hand to write you a few lines to let you know I am still in the land of the living how did you spend the fourth of July I hope you had a good time. I will tell you the time we had we had orders to go to Soldiers Home and were up at 4 oclock on the morning of 4th tearing down our tents and packing up for the Teams were to be there at 7 oclock were soon ready the Teams come at 7 26 in all all 4 horse Teams, I suppose you think that a good many for to move 1 Com. but they were all loaded when we took up the line the train started first with a few of the boys to guard it the folks in Washington thought I guess when they seen us marching that the army of Potomac was coming we arrived at the Home and built our tents on the same ground where it stood last year and are still keeping house as usual well that is enough in that line ever since we hve been here the rebs have been near the city or advancing and was rather a scary place for the President to stay and several times he went to the City to stay Sunday night the sec. of war come up at 11 after Abe well Abe said he didnt think there was any danger but he went along at that time the Rebs were only 1½ or 2 miles from here up to fort Stevens on seventh street and once in a while we could the crack of a gun then we felt like we wanted to see the fun as well as the rest of the folks, so the boys were all wishing to be there so down to the city our Capt. goes for to see if he could go and after begging for some time he got orders to go that was in the evening the waggon started to town after hard tack we packed up but soon we had orders to send guard to the White House about 30 men were sent down we begin to think we couldnt go for half a Com. it wouldnt pay the guard were put on after getting at the White House the Lieu. reasoned the case with old Abe telling him that one man in the fortification was better than five in the city old Abe admitted that it was so so he consented to let us go but to be sure and come back again for he kneeded us so we got orders the guard was marched back and got here about 1 oclock Tuesday morning some of us were on guard at Home we were taken off after then come and come to camp at 3 oclock we were up for breakfast so to get ready we packed our things and each one got 100 rounds of cartridges and then fell in for to go at 5 we started for fort Reno some 7 miles from here but were met by an officer with orders to go to fort Derussee so we were marched back half a mile to take another road we soon come to the fort we halted and waked for orders it was little after 8 when we got there at this time there was a sharp skirmish going on not far from the Fort we were ordered after resting to Battery Rossell still farther to the left the fighting was going on

Concluded in our next