

Numbers 137. Report of Colonel Edward Harland, Eighth Connecticut Infantry, commanding Second Brigade.

HEADQUARTERS SECOND BRIGADE,
Opposite Fredericksburg, Va., December 17, 1862.

CAPTAIN: I have the honor to herewith submit a report of the operations of this brigade in the engagement with the enemy near Fredericksburg from Friday morning, the 12th instant, until Monday night, the 15th instant.

At 8 o'clock Friday morning, the brigade left camp and marched to the pontoon bridge below the railroad bridge, where I received directions from General Getty to remain until further orders. At about 5 p.m. I received from Captain Stevens, acting aide-de-camp on General Getty's staff, an order to cross the bridge with my brigade and form line on Caroline Street, running parallel to the river, with my right resting on the railroad; also to order the Fourth Rhode Island Volunteers, Lieutenant-Colonel Curtis commanding, to report for picket duty to Colonel Hawkins, commanding First Brigade. I did so, and the brigade remained in that position until morning.

In the morning, Lieutenant-Colonel Curtis, commanding Fourth Rhode Island Volunteers, reported back, and, by the order of General Getty, I placed the brigade on the bank, of the river below the bridge, where the troops were concealed from the enemy and sheltered from their fire. The brigade remained in this position, with the exception of the **Eleventh Connecticut**, Colonel Stedman commanding, which reported to Colonel Hawkins for picket duty, until about 5 p.m., when I was ordered by General Getty to move forward to the support of the First Brigade. I advanced the brigade in two columns, the Twenty-first Connecticut and the Fourth Rhode Island constituting the column on the right, and the Eighth, Sixteenth, and Fifteenth Connecticut that on the left. On the street in front of the slaughter-house I reformed the line, and advanced until the right of my line was nearly up with the Ninth New York and the left had arrived at the foot of a steep hill, about 10 rods in rear of the railroad, where the **Eleventh Connecticut** had been stationed during the day as a reserve for the pickets of the First Brigade.

At this point I halted the brigade, by the command of General Getty, communicated to me by yourself, and awaited orders. Subsequently I received orders from General Getty to remain in the position I then occupied until morning and to picket the same ground that was picketed by the First Brigade during the day. I did so, and in the morning, by order of General Getty, I removed the brigade, with the exception of the pickets, to the position occupied on Friday night. Being ordered to detail a regiment to relieve the One hundred and third New York, in support of a battery, I sent the Sixteenth Connecticut, Captain Upham commanding. I directed Captain Upham to picket the railroad and the ground to the creek, and to occupy the block-house near the railroad.

On the following morning, Monday, the 15th, by direction of General Getty, I ordered Captain Hoyt, commanding the Eighth Connecticut, to report, with his regiment, to Captain Upham, for the purpose of extending the line of pickets along the brow of the hill on the south side of Hazel Creek.

After dark I moved the brigade, with the exception of the Eighth and Sixteenth Connecticut, to position about 100 yards in rear of the line of battle indicated by General Getty, in case we were attacked by the enemy. The right of this line was about 200 yards in rear of the house occupied as headquarters by Brigadier-General Willcox. The general direction of the line was nearly parallel to Caroline street, running along the brow of the hill and in front of the slaughter-house. Preparations were made for throwing up a slight breastwork and for piercing the walls of some brick buildings near the line with loop-holes for musketry, and sentinels were placed on the line. Shortly after these preparations were completed, I received orders from General Getty to move any command back to their former camp, opposite Fredericksburg.

The Eighth and Sixteenth Connecticut were relieved from picket by the First Brigade, and I moved the brigade, with the exception of two companies of the Fifteenth Connecticut, which I ordered to report to Major Crosby, at the bridge, for fatigue duty, back to camp.

Appended will be found the list of casualties;* also the official reports of the regimental commanders.

I have the honor to be, captain, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

EDWARD HARLAND,

Colonel, Commanding Second Brigade.

Captain CHARLES T. GARDNER,

Assistant Adjutant-General.