

Numbers 9. Report of Colonel Horace C. Lee, Twenty-seventh Massachusetts Infantry.

HDQRS. TWENTY-SEVENTH REGIMENT, MASS. VOLS.,  
In Camp at New Berne, March 15, 1862.

I have the honor to submit the following reports:

On Thursday, March 13, at the stated signal, we commenced landing troops, one company at a time (which was all the boat would accommodate), from each vessel—the Recruit and Ranger. Major Bartholomew was sent forward with the first company, and at 11 o'clock, four companies having landed, I went on shore and took command, leaving Lieutenant-Colonel Lyman to come forward with the balance. We marched up the road until night and then bivouacked as ordered and threw out pickets on our left flank, rear and right flank being protected by other regiments of the brigade. Our companies continued to arrive until midnight, when we had about 600 men. At daylight on Friday morning, hearing a rapid firing of musketry in front, I called in the pickets, ordered the men to fall in, and soon after, by order from General Foster, took up the line of march by flank in rear of the 25th. The first intimation we had that we were near the enemy was from a shell thrown directly up the road, but which passed without injury to the right of us. We immediately, by General Foster's orders, formed column by companies and forward into line, and advanced through the woods on the left of the road until we came in sight of the enemy, strongly intrenched directly in front. As soon as near enough to get a good range I gave the order to fire by wing and then by file, and continued in this manner, constantly cautioning the men to take deliberate aim before firing, until from the small amount of ammunition left I thought it best, not wishing to slacken the fire at all, to send to General Foster either for more ammunition or to be relieved. This I did by Captain Pendleton, of your staff, who had been with me from the first fire, and who rendered me good service in keeping the line unbroken. Not hearing from you, I sent Adjutant Bartlett, as we were then reduced to an average of 4 or 5 rounds, many of the men being out entirely. He returned with orders that we were to be relieved by the Eleventh Connecticut and were then to fall back to the rear. As soon as the **Eleventh Connecticut** came up and we were in position I ordered the men to cease firing and lie down. We soon after marched in good order to the rear, and had been there but a few moments when we heard cheering, and having formed again to advance, were met by an aide with orders to form in the fort, the enemy having retreated. My intention had been not to fall back, though the word came to me that we were to do so, but to merely continue lying ready for a charge, if necessary; but at the solicitation of several of my officers I did so. Having come up to the fort, we were at once ordered to follow the Twenty-third, which we did until we arrived at the burning bridge at New Berne. We were soon after taken across the river in boats and established in the camp just vacated by the Seventh North Carolina Regiment. From the position we occupied our loss in wounded is quite large, though fortunately but 5 men killed, which I attribute to the fact that the shot from the rifles and cannon of the enemy passed over our heads; two-thirds of the wounds, so far as I can learn, being caused by balls from smooth-bore muskets. I have not received the surgeon's report, and cannot say for certain that this is so, but think it must be.

I might mention individual cases, as well among men as officers, who displayed unusual bravery and coolness, but where all did so well it is almost impossible, and perhaps

impolitic, to do it. I can only say that with very few expectations I was perfectly satisfied with the manner in which they obeyed my orders and stood up without shrinking to the most terrific fire.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. C. LEE,

Colonel, Commanding Twenty-seventh Regiment Mass. Vols.

Captain SOUTHARD HOFFMAN, Assistant Adjutant-General.