

July 15, 1863

Colonel Kevin Burton

Headquarters, Army of the Willamette

Colonel: I have the honor to submit the following report of the 69th New York from July 3-8 inclusive.

My understrength company was engaged in multiple skirmishes against overwhelming enemy forces throughout this period. The action was so swift during this time that I cannot recall much detail but there are a few instances which merit mention.

The first on the Third, I received orders to capture a piece of artillery. I relayed this order to Corporal Lee and he, with a platoon of my most able men, set out. At the outset, this appeared to be a glorious maneuver. They moved quickly and overpowered the gun crew almost at once. At this point, my attention was called away-someone undoubtedly requiring the need of my keen, tactical prowess to assess a situation. When I looked over again, I saw Private Lundgren suffering some kind of spastic fit as he crumpled to the ground. Sir, what began as a maneuver that would have brought a tear to the eye of Napoleon ended in disaster. The loss of these fine men will be felt deeply throughout the army, but I feel it only proper to bring charges against them for dereliction of duty and making their commanding officer look unbecoming. Again, Sir, that was Corporal Lee with two 'e's'.

The second, on the Fourth, found us manning the walls of Fort Bishop against a force which vastly outnumbered us. It was during this battle I received a serious wound to the butt-ock. I believe I may still be suffering from the fog of war as I am uncertain how I received a wound in the posterior while facing front. You will be pleased to know sir, I lay on the field, gallantly screaming like a girl. I was in and out of conscious several times while wounded, though I am told I bore my pain in a heroic manner. At one point, our situation became so desperate that my 'Little War Pony'-First Sergeant Napier charged the enemy singlehandedly and with no weapon. An act almost as brave as my wounding. It was shortly after this instance that I was accosted by Private Ulshafer-aka 'Beans', aka 'Puppy Killer', aka 'Private War Bonnet'-who under the guise of rendering aid, propped me up and used me as breastworks. I told him several times that he was breaking several rules of war by using his commanding officer as a defensive position, but I surmise the sound of battle had rendered him deaf. Luckily my gaping, infected buttock hole was not as serious as first thought. It was dressed on the field, and I was able to valiantly return to duty by nightfall.

The events of the Fifth aptly display the numerous soldierly qualities which make me, quite possibly the best captain in the army. We found ourselves again guarding Fort Bishop and came under a ferocious attack by an enemy brigade. I recall you were stricken with fear and unable to issue commands, so I boldly seized the initiative (if practicable) and launched a counterattack that resulted in only several safety violations. This movement began with capture (and holding of) the same gun that had given us trouble two days prior.

Once the piece was ours, I ordered my men forward at which point the enemy began to break. We continued our pursuit and roused them from the same positions we ourselves had just vacated. Eventually only a small band of secesh remained. I spoke with their officer and gave them one opportunity to surrender; they chose not to. The remainder of the enemy fled the field faster than a staff officer from manual labor.

I would like to note Sir, that in the final engagement, I saw an enemy officer throw up a white flag and I ordered my men to cease fire, after which I was overcome by the moment and forced to urinate on the back of my Little War Pony's head. Suffice to say, my conduct and bearing during this time were sterling.

I have the honor to be, very courageously, your obedient servant,

Capt. Robert J. Heenan

Cmdg, 69th New York