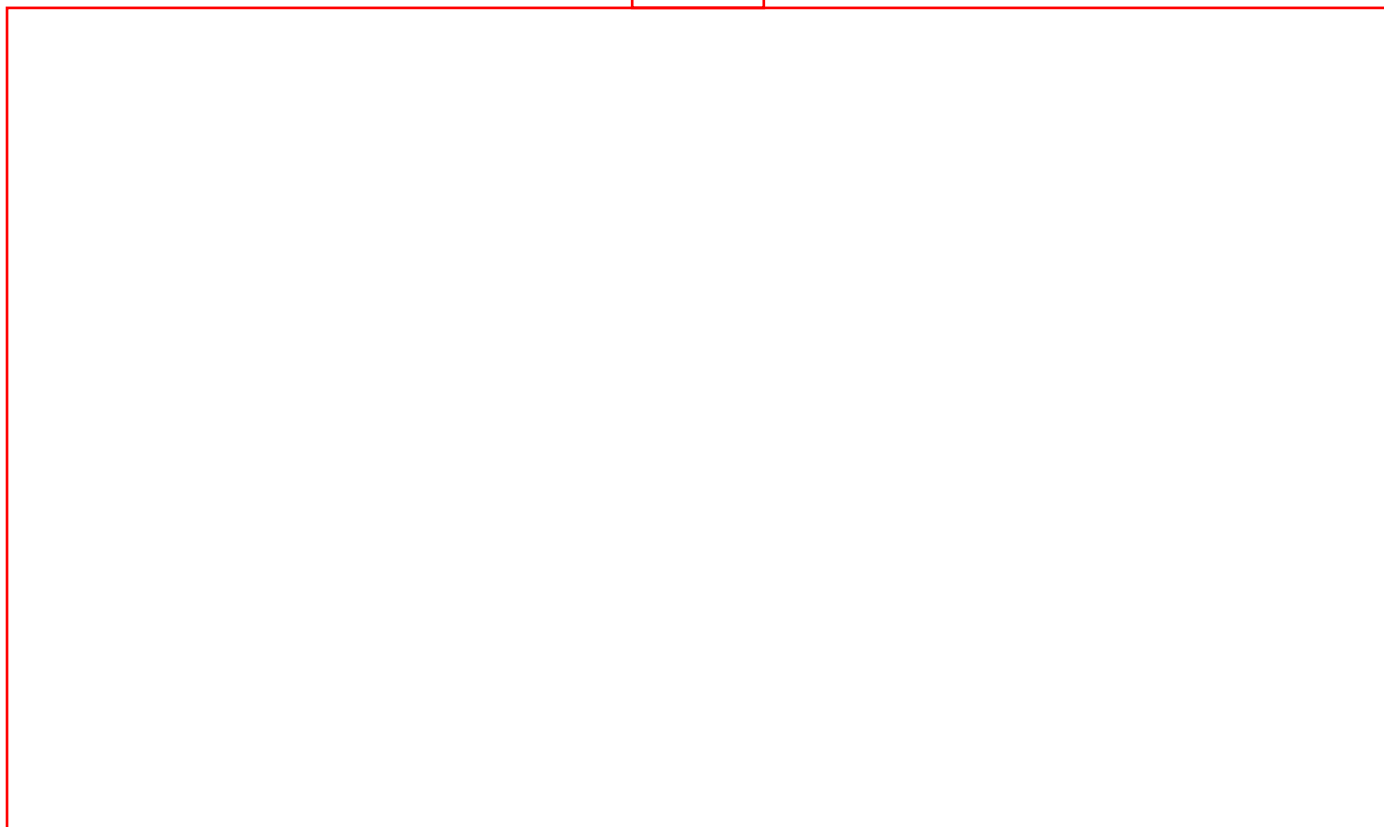


Battle of New Berne



March 18th 1862



[Regimental Report](#) [Brigade Report](#) [Official Report](#) [Congratulations](#) [Confederate Report](#)



Pvt. Henry Brown, 21st Mass. Vol.
Newbern, NC, March 18, 1862

Dear Parents,

I thought it was time to write and let you know that I am well. We have had another great battle and driven the enemy back from Newbern. It will be no use to give you a detailed account of it as you will hear about it in the papers before you get this letter. There was about 6000 of infantry, 2 regiments of artillery, one of calvary that comprised the force of the rebels. The fight was four miles from Newbern. The enemy had breastworks three miles long. They extended from the river to the railroad and from the railroad one mile and a half south. At the water was battery of thirteen guns. One artillery regiment was between this and the railroad and the other on the other side.

The fight commenced on the right. It lasted about four hours. Our right wing charged on battery and drove the rebels back. The rebels formed and charged on the right wing and drove them back. Our left wing fought on the left of the railroad. We lost a good many during the fight. Every regiment done its duty. The rebels loss was great. The ground was strewn with the dead and wounded. I cannot tell how many there was on either side. You will see it in the papers as soon as the returns are made.

Our regiment is encamped near the battlefield. The others are farther toward Newbern. The rebels burned the bridge as they got the train across. They made a stand at Kingston. It is reported that General Siegal has taken Goldsborough. It is reported that Richmond is taken. If it is so, the war will soon be over. I hope it will. I have seen enough of it myself.

The inhabitants have all left. The slaves are left alone. The city was mostly deserted. The shops and stores have been rifled. The plantations have been scoured of poultry, pigs and such like. There is any quantity of sweet potatoes. We found plenty of provisions in the camp: pork, flour, lard and sugar. We have coffee from the quartermaster. We make out to live pretty well. There was a brickyard where the wounded were carried. They have since been removed to Newbern on hand cars.

We expect to go to Newbern in a few days. The Third Brigade are to start for Beaufort soon. We had a funeral service over the dead today. There was fifteen killed in our regiment and some forty wounded. We had not much larger force than the rebels. They ought to have stood 50,000 men the way they were entrenched. I don't see how we ever took so small a loss but the rebels took no aim. Every man

that showed his head above the ramparts had a dozen bullets shot at him. Most all on both sides were shot in the head.

I wish you would send me some postage stamps as I have got out and there is none to be had here. I will finish my letter with the girls.

Goodbye to you both,

Henry W. Brown



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