TWENTY-FOURTH REGIMENT.

1. John L. Harris, Lieut.-Colonel.
2. Thaddeus D. Love, Major.
4. William G. Baird, Captain, Co. H.
5. Barna Lane, Captain, Co. E.
TWENTY-FOURTH REGIMENT.

By CORPORAL W. N. ROSE, COMPANY E.

This regiment was the Fourteenth Regiment of Volunteers, and served as such the first year of the war.

It was organized at Weldon, N. C., about the first of July, 1861, with the following Field and Staff officers:

William J. Clarke, Colonel, of Craven County.
Thos. B. Venable, Lieutenant-Colonel, of Granville County.
Jonathan Evans, Major, of Cumberland County.
John Ferrel, Assistant Quartermaster, of Halifax County.
John A. Williams, Assistant Commissary, of Granville County.
Dr. Bedford Brown, Surgeon, of Person County.
Dr. W. R. Wilson, Assistant Surgeon, of Granville County.
William W. Baird, Sergeant-Major, of Person County.
Company A—Captain, John G. Dillehay, Person County.
Charles D. Clark, Quartermaster Sergeant, of Wake County.
Lawrence E. Duffy, Orderly Sergeant, of Onslow County.

The following companies constituted the regiment:

Company B—Captain, George T. Duffy, Onslow County.
Company C—Captain, George W. Crockett, Johnston County.
Company D—Captain, David C. Clark, Halifax County.
Company E—Captain, Barney Lane, Johnston County.
Company F—Captain, Charles H. Blocker, Cumberland County.
Company G—Captain, Thaddeus D. Love, Robeson County.
Company H—Captain, John L. Harris, Person County.
Company I—Captain, Ira T. Woodall, Johnston County.
Company K—Captain, David W. Spivey, Franklin County.

The regiment, after its organization, remained at Weldon for a few days, practicing in regimental drill. From Weldon, the regiment was ordered to Richmond, Va., where it went into camp in the western suburbs of the city for one day and night. From here it was ordered to join General John B. Floyd, then operating in the region of the Gauley river, West Virginia.

Boarding the cars, we set out on a two days’ trip, it being often the case that the three engines attached, could hardly ascend the grades on this mountain road, then completed only to Jackson River depot.

The regiment remained at Jackson River about one week, it raining most of the time.

From here we took up the line of march to join General Floyd, then in the Kanawha Valley. This was a long and tedious march, of nearly or quite one hundred miles, over the mountain roads. The weather being very warm the boys began to see some of the realities of war and the life of a soldier. On this march we encamped for a short while at the celebrated White Sulphur Springs, Meadow Bluff and Blue Sulphur Springs. We joined General Floyd in the latter part of October, on his return from the Kanawha, where he and General Wise had a fight with General Rosecrans, then in command of the Federal forces in West Virginia.

General Floyd, retreating into the mountains, being pursued by the Federals, took a position on Big Sewell Mountain with the enemy in front. Here he built a very substantial breastwork of chestnut logs, and in this position the two armies remained during the fall and early part of the winter of 1861.

Heretofore the boys had not been used to hard marching, and the severities of camp life. The measles having broken out among them, many died from disease. We remained, however, in the mountains of West Virginia until the winter
was well advanced. It was in this campaign that the Twenty-fourth Regiment served under the immortal soldier, Robert E. Lee, then a Brigadier-General. From here the regiment was ordered to Richmond and on to Petersburg, where we went into winter quarters at the Model Farm.

Here the boys had fun and a good time generally.

In the early spring of 1862, the regiment was ordered to Eastern North Carolina. We remained at and near Murfreesboro, N. C., for quite a while watching the enemy. It was near this place in May, 1862, that the regiment was reorganized and became the Twenty-fourth Regiment, State Troops. As stated in the outset, the regiment up to this time was twelve months Volunteers and the Fourteenth Regiment. In the reorganization there was some dissatisfaction among the volunteers at having to move up to higher numbers. The Fourteenth Volunteers, however, became the Twenty-fourth State Troops and reorganized as follows:

WILLIAM J. CLARKE, Colonel, of Craven County.
JOHN L. HARRIS, Lieutenant-Colonel, of Person County.
THADDEUS D. LOVE, Major, of Robeson County.
OLIVER D. COOKE, Adjutant, of Craven County.
JOHN FERREL, Assistant Quartermaster, of Halifax County.

JOHN A. WILLIAMS, Assistant Commissary, of Granville County.

DR. WM. R. WILSON, Surgeon, of Granville County.

DR. CHARLES DUFFY, Assistant Surgeon, of Onslow County.

EVANDEE MCNAIR, Chaplain, of Robeson County.

Other Staff Officers about the same as first year of the war.

COMPANY A—Captain, James Holeman, Person County.
COMPANY B—Captain, Geo. T. Duffy, Onslow County.
COMPANY C—Captain, John D. Gulley, Johnston County.
COMPANY D—Captain, David C. Clark, Halifax County.
COMPANY E—Captain, Barney Lane, Johnston County.
COMPANY F—Captain, Jas. S. Evans, Cumberland County.
Company G—Captain, A. A. McIver, Robeson County.
Company H—Captain, Jas. C. Bailey, Person County.
Company I—Captain, Ira T. Woodall, Johnston County.
Company K—Captain, David W. Spivey, Franklin County.

Having thus organized, we were now "in for the war." The regiment left North Carolina for Virginia just before and in time for the seven days' fight below Richmond. We had passed the first year of the war in marching and watching the enemy, and many of the boys were fearful that the war would close without giving them a chance at the Yankees, but the time had now come when such fears were no longer to be entertained, for it was on 25 June, 1862, that the Twenty-fourth Regiment was led into its first engagement at White Oak Swamp, below Richmond.

In this fight Company E, of the Twenty-fourth, was thrown forward as skirmishers, and while deploying William Scott, of this company, was killed. This was the first man killed in the Twenty-fourth Regiment by a Yankee bullet. In this fight we began to see war as a reality. We held the line that had been occupied by the Tenth Louisiana Regiment in the morning part of the day, they having been badly cut to pieces. At sunset the Twenty-fourth was ordered to take a Yankee battery that had been shelling us during that afternoon, not more than 150 yards in front, but while we were forming in the hedgerow, the Yankees began falling back.

Soon after dark, the Twenty-fourth Regiment was relieved by Colonel Zeb Vance's Regiment, the Twenty-sixth North Carolina, and sent back immediately in the rear to rest for the night. However, we were not out of danger, for during the night Vance's men got up a fuss with the enemy, and Yankee bullets came thick and fast among us.

Next morning, 26 June, the Twenty-fourth Regiment was ordered to re-occupy the same position of the evening before. On reaching this post, Colonel Vance came up to Colonel Clarke and asked him if he was ready. Clarke answered him yes. Whereupon Vance said: "Very well then, Colonel. I will open the ball, and the baby shall be born."
In a few minutes he turned and walked off in the direction of his command, whistling as jovial as a boy going to mill.

Reaching his command he gave the order to charge, but the Yankees did as the evening before—they limbered up and got further. This was the first time the writer ever saw Colonel Vance, and this little incident made an impression that Vance would do to tie to, no matter where you placed him, and we never had cause to change that opinion. Later in the day, the Twenty-fourth Regiment was ordered to the right of the Confederate lines, and later to the extreme right. About dark an order passed down the line to fall back in good order. This order proved to be a false order, but was not so understood by Captain Lane, who was on the extreme right of the regiment, until he was lost in a thick marsh or swamp, where we had to remain during the night in water almost knee deep. We could hear the enemy as they were moving near us on our right. We could hear the clanking of their armor, and did not know what moment they might discover our isolated condition, Company E being cut off from the regiment.

To the writer, this was perhaps the most miserable night of the war. Captain Lane, however, at dawn of day, found his way back to the regiment, and Company E resumed her place in line. The regiment was then ordered to drive the enemy from an oak thicket in front, which was done in admirable style.

We quietly remained on this line the remainder of the day. The 28th was passed quietly by us on this line. The 29th was quiet also.

The 30th, moved to the left and did some skirmishing.

1 July, McClellan’s retreat from Richmond was discovered. Lee’s pursuit commenced. The Twenty-fourth Regiment had previously been assigned to General Robert Ransom’s Brigade, and Ransom’s brigade was among the advance troops, the Twenty-fourth Regiment at the head of the column. Reaching the fork of the road near Frazier’s farm, we found General Lee and Staff on horseback. General Lee remarked to Colonel Clarke that we were an hour too late, that
McClellan had just passed. We followed on, however, reaching Malvern Hill about 3 p. m. Wright’s Georgia Brigade on Ransom’s right led the attack. The Twenty-fourth Regiment was posted on the hill behind an old fence. While in this position, Ransom rode in front of the line, and gave the order to wait until we could “see the whites of their eyes, and d—n it, give it to them.” We were soon, however, moved to the support of Wright, who by this time was getting things hot. Soon after the whole of Lee’s army became engaged, and from then until 9 o’clock at night, the contest was unabated. It was here that Captain Bill Gulley, of Company C, from Johnston County, was found dead in advance of any other Southern soldier that fell on this blood-red field. We slept at night on the battle field, expecting a renewal of the strife the next morning. Morning came and with it the rain in torrents, which prevented a renewal of the strife.

McClellan retreated to Harrison’s Landing, on the James. Lee followed. McClellan evacuated Harrison’s Landing and swung his army around to the north of Richmond. Lee moved to the Rapidan. The Twenty-fourth Regiment camped for a few days near the old Seven Pines battle field, and then crossed the James, camped near Drewry’s Bluff. From here we marched through Petersburg, and went into camp near City Point. It was here that we heard the farewell address of our beloved Vance, who had been elected to the governorship of North Carolina. From here the regiment moved to the north of Petersburg and camped on Dunlap’s farm. About the first of September we reached Richmond, boarded the train to Gordonsville, the railroad having been torn up beyond there to Manassas. From Gordonsville we took up the line of march to Frederick City, Maryland, fording the Potomac north of Leesburg. The first night in Maryland, a detachment was sent out to attack the Yankee picket at Monocacy bridge, under Captain Duffy, of Company B. Crossing the canal, an attack was made, in which Captain Duffy was severely wounded and he and his men taken prisoners. The following day we recrossed the Potomac at Point of Rocks, south of Harper’s Ferry. The next day we marched
thirty-eight miles to reinforce troops near the Ferry, whose garrison was captured the next day.

From here we forded the Shenandoah and 16 September we crossed the Potomac near Shepherdstown. At night Lee's army was drawn up in line of battle in front of Sharpsburg. On the following morning Ransom's Brigade was placed on the extreme right. The battle opened from center to left of Lee's line, soon Ransom's Brigade was transferred in double quick to the left. Here we were ordered to lay off our knapsacks, which we never saw again. The Twenty-fourth Regiment was ordered to dislodge some Yankees from behind a stone fence, and of course we did so in good style, General J. E. B. Stuart, with General Ransom, watching this charge from a distance. General Stuart remarked to General Ransom that every soldier in that command was worthy to be made a commander. Ransom replied, "God bless the gallant boys, I will never curse them any more."

It was in commemoration of this gallant charge that Mrs. Mary Bayard Clarke, wife of our Colonel, wrote that beautiful poem, which runs something like this:

"Well may the noble Old North State,  
Be of her soldiers proud,  
But of her glorious Twenty-Fourth  
I'll sing with praises loud.  
Right gallantly they've borne the flag,  
Their State unto them gave;  
Though torn by many a shot and shell,  
Long may it o'er them wave.

"God with us on this blood-red field,  
Is set in purest white;  
For by His arm and their good swords  
They trust to win the fight.  
On Sewell's Mount they tentless lay,  
For days in sleet and snow,  
Faced sickness, hunger, cold and toil,  
As bravely as the foe."
"They foiled the wily Rosecrans,
Neath Floyd and General Lee,
And bore their part in Richmond fights
With Ransom and Huger.
That bloody charge, which cost so dear,
At Malvern Hill they led.
And in the foremost rank they left,
Their brave and honored dead.

Upon Potomac's famous banks,
Again their banners flew,
In Sharpsburg's fight they won a place
And stoutly held it too.
The gallant Louisiana Tenth
Which fought with them on Malvern Hill,
Here again beside them stood,
And cheered them with good will.

"And when their General saw them charge,
His eyes with tears ran o'er,
'God bless the gallant boys,' he cried,
'T'll ne'er curse them more.'"

On the following day we remained in line, but that night we were again on the march, with orders to follow our file leader and ask no questions; daylight the next morning once more finding us across the Potomac, near Shepherdstown.

We then went on to Martinsburg; and on to near Winchester, Va., where we went into camp for about ten days. From here we were ordered to Culpepper and Madison Court House, whence in the latter part of November we marched to Fredericksburg where we occupied a very important position. On the famous Marye's Heights, 13 December, the Twenty-fourth Regiment suffered severely, losing many men and several valuable officers. It was here that Lieutenant London Browne, of Company E, was mortally wounded and died a few days later.

It was after the battle of Fredericksburg that Ransom's Brigade left the army of Northern Virginia (3 January, 1863) and was sent back to North Carolina.

General Robert Ransom, in June, 1863, was promoted to Major-General, and sent west, and Colonel Matt. W.
Ransom, of the Thirty-fifth Regiment, promoted to Brigadier in his place, thenceforth he was our Brigadier.

Just here, the writer would say for General Matt. Ransom, what we believe every soldier would say that ever belonged to the old brigade, that North Carolina never produced a more noble son or a better soldier. He was ever kind to his men, and as indulgent as army discipline would permit him to be, always urging them to duty and at the same time warning them against unnecessary danger. The night before the storming of Plymouth, N. C., by Ransom's Brigade in rear of the town, the writer was acting as a courier for General Ransom from the skirmish line and as such bore a dispatch from Captain Lane to General Ransom with regard to the bridge at the creek below the town. He asked us many questions, spoke words of kindness and caution, and said that he would not have one life lost unnecessarily for the glory of beating the Yankees in the morning. Such a commander will ever be held dear in the hearts of the old brigade, and his memory can never perish while there is one left living to tell the story.

About the first of March, 1863, the regiment reached Weldon, N. C.; went on to Goldsboro and Wilmington, back to North East river, and on to Kenansville. Ransom's Brigade was sent down here to guard the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad. The Twenty-fourth Regiment reached Goldsboro from Kenansville 21 March. From Goldsboro we were ordered to Kinston, where we did picket duty below the town at Wise's Fork and Gum Swamp. At the latter place we had some skirmishing with the enemy, and drove them as far in the direction of New Bern as "Deep Gully." 20 April the Twenty-fourth Regiment was ordered to Weldon. Nothing transpired worthy of note while at this place. 31 May ordered to Virginia; 10 June down on Blackwater, Va. While in this region, and near the home of our beloved General, we had a fight with Spears' cavalry at Boone's Mill near Jackson, N. C. The Yankees caught some of the boys in the pond swimming, but of course, they were out in time and "whipped" the Yanks just the same. The next morning after this little fight, General Ransom took the
Twenty-fourth Regiment to his home near by and gave us breakfast, and some of the boys said here was the most fried bacon they ever saw at one time. The Twenty-fourth Regiment had also a skirmish down on the Blackwater with some Yankees that came up the river on a gunboat.

Ordered from here to Drewry’s Bluff, reaching that place 16 June. From this place, a few days later, we were sent down below Richmond, at Bottom’s Bridge. 4 July had a fight near the bridge, in which we lost several men, and drove back the enemy with severe loss, after which we returned to Richmond about 8 July, and went into camp for a few days below the city. On the march from Bottom’s Bridge one of the boys became sick, and the writer was detailed and left behind to take care of and help him on to camp. Night soon came—one of those dark, dismal nights, that is so intensely dark that we can almost feel it with the hand, and we had to pass over the old battle field of the seven days’ fights below Richmond of the year before. As we trudged along we talked of the loneliness of the hour and of the sacredness of the ground over which we were passing, not knowing what moment we might stumble over the bleaching bones of an old comrade that had fallen on this blood-red field the year before. We moved on, however, reaching camp late at night, tired and worn out. The Twenty-fourth remained here a few days, after which it was ordered to Petersburg.

From Petersburg, on 20 July, the Regiment was ordered to Weldon, N. C. Reaching that place we went into camp on the east side of the town. It was expected, when the Regiment left Richmond, that we would go on to Rocky Mount, N. C., as the Yankees had the day before invested that town and burned part or all of the public buildings; but on reaching North Carolina it was found that the enemy had fallen back nearer the coast. The regiment remained near Weldon for quite a while awaiting orders. On the 28th of October we left Weldon for Tarboro, N. C., reaching there on the 30th. On the first of November we set out for Hamilton, N. C., arriving there on the 6th. Here the regiment remained for some time, doing picket duty at Rawl’s Mill and below there. Scouting parties were often sent out from the
regiment to go down in the enemy's lines in the vicinity of Washington, N. C., to watch their movements. The writer had some experience along this line, but time and space forbid any account of the same here. 22 November, ordered to Williamston, N. C. Here the regiment did picket duty on the river below the town for some time.

In the latter part of December Major Love took a detachment of three companies from the regiment, to-wit: Companies E, I, and F, and went down near to Plymouth to ambuscade a regiment of Yankee cavalry that was in the habit of going in the country to forage. After a hard march all night over hedges and byways, we reached a place of concealment to await their coming; but soon after the rain began pouring down in torrents, and so thoroughly wet our guns and ammunition that the Major gave up the idea as a bad job, and we set out to retrace our footsteps, marching on until late in the afternoon. We reached a mill, where we found Colonel Clarke with the remaining companies of the Twenty-fourth. Here we camped for the night, completely tired and worn out. On the following day the regiment set out in the direction of Weldon, reaching there a day or two later, where we remained for a few days.

13 January, 1864, the Twenty-fourth Regiment reached Tarboro, N. C., and remained here for a short while, doing picket duty below the town. In the latter part of January the Twenty-fourth was ordered to Goldsboro, and from this place to Kinston, New Bern and back to Goldsboro and on to Weldon. It was a continuous move, with no fighting, except at New Bern, where we had what we called a little "round" with the Yanks. From Weldon, 19 February, the Twenty-fourth Regiment was ordered to Petersburg, Va., and went into camp on Dunn's Hill, near the city. 17 February returned to Weldon, N. C. 24 February the regiment was called on to re-enlist for the duration of the war. It was understood by the boys, however, that they were in for the war, and the consequence was, but few re-enlisted.

On 25 February Major Love took Company E, with three other companies of the regiment, and went down in Eastern Carolina on a series of hard marches. The de-
attachment reached Gatesville about the first of March. From Gatesville on to South Mills, which place had previously been burned by the enemy. At this place the Yankee cavalry was stationed, and on our approach a running fight ensued up the Dismal Swamp Canal. We followed up the canal for several miles, driving the enemy before us, until we reached the only house we had seen since we had left the burnt town. Here we halted, and at night Major Love placed the detachment in ambush, and awaited results. Soon after, the enemy was heard moving in our direction down the canal; and had it not been for the impatience of the detachment highest up the canal, who fired too soon, we must have had a nice time of it. This, of course, spoiled the whole trick, and the Yankees whirled about and made a hasty retreat up the canal—not however, without leaving several dead and wounded.

It was now snowing, and the night was intensely cold, and we without fire or blankets. Major Love called to order and returned down the canal, breaking the dikes behind him—reaching South Mills in the early morning, where we remained that day. The following night we set out on a march of about thirty miles and went into camp; remaining here for a day or two, or until the regiment joined us. From this place, the Twenty-fourth set out for Suffolk, Va., which place was in possession of a regiment of negro cavalry. Moving on during the day, we camped within seven miles of the place. At 3 o'clock in the morning we resumed the march, General Ransom with the brigade having joined us the night before. Moving on in the darkness, we came in contact with what we supposed the enemy drawn up in line of battle at the fork of the road. Ransom ordered Colonel Clarke to form the Twenty-fourth in line and advance as near as possible without forcing a fight to observe, if possible, if it was the enemy or Colonel Tom Kennedy’s cavalry that was supposed to have been captured a day or two before. It proved to be Kennedy, which was found out when it was light enough so that we could see their gray uniforms. Each party sprung their guns many times that morning, and had one gun been discharged, there would have been a dreadful slaughter among friends. After the parties were known to each other, Kennedy took the
TWENTY-FOURTH REGIMENT.

1. James A. Holeman, Captain, Co. A.
2. John A. Williams, Captain, Commissary.
3. C. S. Powell, 2d Lieut., Co. E.
4. J. A. Long, Orderly Sergeant, Co. H.
5. Edwin G. Moore, Private, Co. A.
left hand road and Ransom the right. We ran in with the Yankee pickets about three miles from town and drove them in. In the afternoon the Twenty-fourth Regiment was sent around to the west of the town at a church. Soon after we saw in the distance a squad of Yankee cavalry. At this moment Captain Durham, of Ransom's Staff, took charge of the Texas Zouaves, about fifteen in number, and mounted on very poor horses, dashed forward to meet them. A running fight ensued, the Twenty-fourth being ordered to follow in double-quick. Durham pursued at close quarters until reaching the lower part of town, when the enemy received reinforcements and a hand to hand conflict was had. The Twenty-fourth Regiment had now reached the scene in disorder, having double-quicked about two miles. The ladies were on the streets with their inspiring words and telling us that it was but a regiment of negroes, to go forward. At this moment General Ransom came up and commenced forming the men in ranks. In the meantime the negroes were forming for a charge, splendidly mounted on fine chargers, and at the command dashed forward as if they would ride over us; but every man of the Twenty-fourth that had arrived needed no words of command to make him do his duty, except to hold his fire until the proper time. On they came to within forty paces, when the order was given to fire, which was done with telling effect. It was enough. The negroes wheeled their horses and fled in the direction from which they came; and the writer has often thought this the most splendid exhibition of horsemanship we have ever witnessed. The negroes did not return. Those that fell into our hands were in some houses in town and refused to surrender, and continued to fire out of the windows until they were burned up in the houses. Late in the evening General Ransom permitted the Twenty-fourth Regiment to plunder the camps of the enemy, which were rich in many good rations, which were very much needed by our boys. We remained in Suffolk two days, and our parting with the citizens and ladies were as sad as our meeting upon entering the town was joyous. On 12 March, 1864, we again reached Weldon, worn out and tired, and went into camp, soon after which orders came to clean guns and get
ready for regimental inspection. We remained at this camp for several days.

We left Weldon in the early part of April and reached Plymouth, N. C., about the 15th, and began the siege of that place. There were about 3,500 Yankees here, under the command of General Wessell, strongly fortified by a series of breastworks and forts, well mounted, with nearly two hundred heavy siege guns, which would seem to make the place well nigh invulnerable to an equal number of troops as the assaulting party.

General Hoke established his lines on the upper town or river, and Ransom’s Brigade on the south or front part of the town, all under the command of Hoke. On the 18th, Ransom was ordered to assault the works in front of the town which, by the way, was that part of the work that embraced the three principal forts and could not be carried by an assault made directly in front.

Preparatory to making this assault the Twenty-fourth Regiment was drawn up in line of battle in a skirt of woods, some three-quarters of a mile from the enemy’s works, and a detail made, to intercept and drive back the enemy’s sharpshooters, posted some two hundred yards in front of us in the open field. Our line advanced about half the distance, when the firing commenced, and we can truthfully say, that this was the finest work of the kind we ever saw, our lines steadily advancing, while the enemy’s retreated into the forts.

The Twenty-fourth Regiment followed the line of skirmishers to within a short distance of the forts, where we were halted and ordered to lie down in a deep ravine. At this moment (dark) all the artillery on both sides, that could be brought to bear was in full play, and from then until a late hour at night it was a sublime, as it was also an awful scene, to watch the transition of the bursting shells, dealing death and destruction on every hand. The light caused by the vivid flash of the cannon and the explosion of shells, made it sufficient at times to have picked up a pin from the earth. In this assault our casualties were comparatively light, considering how terriflic was this artillery duel.

We withdrew late at night, and the next day Ransom’s Bri-
gade was sent around in rear of the town on the river to make the assault from below. Company E, of the Twenty-fourth, was thrown forward as skirmishers and to find out, if possible, if the bridge at the creek had been burned. As we have before stated in this sketch, the writer was acting as courier from the skirmish line to General Ransom's headquarters. It was now night, and I had delivered a message from Captain Lane, in charge of the skirmishers, to General Ransom, with regard to the force of the enemy at the creek, when Lieutenant Applewhite, of Texas, and acting as aid to General Ransom, was standing by and asked permission to take "this man" (myself), and go to the creek and ascertain if the bridge had been burned. Ransom at first objected, but finally yielded, and Applewhite and myself set out, but did not go far before we met General Dearing, of our cavally, and one other man.

On learning that we were going to the creek, Dearing and his man joined us and we four soon stood on the bank of the creek. The bridge had been burned and a small boat was on the opposite side. Dearing asked who would swim the creek and get the boat, and no sooner said than the man we did not know was across the creek and had the boat. The enemy, as we soon learned, was about forty paces from us behind breastworks. The man that swam the creek, we have learned since the war was Cavenaugh, from Onslow county. It was a brave deed, and we mention it simply to show the material that composed the Southern army, then around Plymouth, and no doubt there were hundreds of equally brave spirits in that unequal contest, some of whom fell that night and the next morning in the storming of this strong citadel.

Captain Lane, with Company E, of the Twenty-fourth, now arrived at the creek, and soon after a pontoon was fixed and Lane and his company went across to the Yankee side. When he gave the order to forward, the enemy poured into them a heavy fire from behind breastworks, wounding several of Lane's men. Lane, however, maintained his ground until reinforcements arrived, which was about ten minutes later, when the Yankees fled.

We followed on to a hedgerow about one thousand yards from the main forts, when Company E held the skirmish
line during the night. At dawn of the day, the 20th, Captain Durham of Ransom's Staff, ordered Captain Lane to forward his line of Skirmishers. This order was greeted by a shower of minie balls from the enemy. At the time all of his artillery that could be brought to bear upon us was in full play, which made the earth quake beneath our feet. Amid this storm of shot and shell, Lane led his line in advance of the line of battle to the first fort. On arriving at the fort, Daniel King, Orderly Sergeant of Company E, mounted the parapet and demanded its surrender, which order was obeyed. The second fort was then stormed and carried; the third also, and our victory was complete. The Twenty-fourth Regiment and Ransom's Brigade had stormed and taken an army greater in numbers than they themselves, and the enemy well fortified within these strong forts, but this was not done without some loss to us, for in Company E, Lane's, alone, we numbered twenty-one killed and wounded.

Hoke's Brigade occupied the line above town on the river and consequently did but little of the fighting on this day. This was a complete victory for our side and it was greatly due to Ransom and his brigade.

The recapture of Plymouth, N. C., under the existing circumstances, was one of the most splendid victories achieved by Southern arms in this great contest, and about the only hard fought battle on North Carolina soil. At night, the troops were marched out of town and the dead buried with military honors. On the following day the Twenty-fourth Regiment was sent to garrison the town where we remained for a day or two, when we were relieved by the Fiftieth Regiment, North Carolina troops, and Ransom's Brigade sent to lay siege to Washington, N. C.

Soon after our arrival at this town the Yankees took to their gunboats and left for parts unknown, and we set out for New Bern, N. C., reaching a point near the city on the south side of the Trent, 6 May. Here we had some fighting, capturing about fifty prisoners, with a loss of but two men on our side killed.

8 May, we reached Kinston, N. C., on our way to Virginia. About 10 May, we reached Petersburg, Va.,
and were sent down on the James river to intercept Butler, then advancing on Richmond from the south side of the James; Ransom’s Brigade was now assigned to Bushrod Johnson’s division, under command of General Beauregard. Ransom’s Brigade was now sent to Drewry’s Bluff, and on the 14th, was sent down the railroad to occupy a line of breastworks on the extreme right of our lines. The Twenty-fourth Regiment rested its right at the end of the works, on a marsh said to be impassable by troops.

The enemy was closing in upon us in front and file. Soon after reaching this position the enemy broke through this swamp and attacked our line in rear, breaking our line temporarily and severely wounding General Ransom. At this moment, the gallant Captain Durham was killed at the head of the Twenty-fourth Regiment, which was now being pressed from all sides and the only alternative was to cut through the enemy’s lines from the rear, which was done in admirable style. The Twenty-fourth was ordered to cover the retreat up the railroad, the enemy shelling with all their artillery which made this position anything but comfortable. At night, the Twenty-fourth was ordered to rest on their arms and Company E was sent forward on a skirmish. During the night we could hear the cries of a wounded reb in front of our lines, the words of whom we could not understand at the time, or that it had a special signification or meaning until hostilities ceased for the time and the wounded man was brought safely into our lines. It was said, by men that knew, that this man was a Free Mason, and was thus safely rescued. Firing was kept up during the night, and in the early morning of the 15th assumed the proportions of a regular battle. Fighting was kept up during the day, and in the afternoon the whole line became engaged, Ransom’s Brigade occupying much the same position of the night before. The Twenty-fourth Regiment suffered terribly during the day. Company E lost nine men wounded and one killed by the exploding of a shell. It was here that Colonel Clarke, commanding the brigade, was severely wounded, and never again returned to the regiment. Night closed this day’s fighting, and as the morning of 16 May, 1864, was ushered
in, we were again on the move, the Twenty-fourth Regiment occupying the left of the line from that of the previous day. About 9 o'clock Ransom's Brigade, in command of Colonel Rutledge, of the Twenty-fifth Regiment, was ordered to retake a portion of our works that had been captured the day before. Lieutenant-Colonel Harris led the Twenty-fourth to the charge. The route over which we had to pass was about 500 yards.

The timber had been cut and felled in the direction from which we had to make the advance. At the word forward, we made our way as best we could, losing our men at every step. Reaching the works occupied by the enemy, the conflict became fearful, the breastwork only dividing the two lines. At this moment the Twenty-fourth Regiment had one hundred or more of her already thin ranks stricken down, and for the first time in her history had to fall back in disorder. On reaching the point from which we first started; Colonel Harris reformed the regiment for a second charge. Captain Lane, Company E, on getting his men together, found that he had but two men left. The writer was one of the two. Addressing General Beauregard, who was present, in tears, told him that he had lost all of his men but two, pointing to myself and Creech. Beauregard said to Lane: "Captain, you have done enough; take those two men and act as rear guard and recruit your company." But when Harris ordered the second charge, Lane ordered us to fall in and we did so. But on reaching the works the Yankees had fled, leaving their dead and wounded behind.

This was a heart-rending scene. The dead and wounded were lying in every conceivable condition, and cries for help went up all around. It is enough that we should say, that none could look on and not weep, unless he possessed a heart as unsusceptible as stone, or that he were a soldier. Butler retreated to Bermuda Hundred. Beauregard followed. About the first of June, we had a heavy skirmish fight at Bermuda Hundred, and the fighting was kept up from day to day for several days. On one occasion Company E was sent to reinforce Company H on the skirmish line. Soon the whole regiment was sent and drove the enemy back. Reach-
Twenty-Fourth Regiment.

287

ing a road, Colonel Harris gave the order to lie down, and just here happened a little incident that we will mention for the fun of the thing. When the order came to lie down, the writer crossed over the road and took a position behind a forked oak, and began firing at the Yankee colors about one hundred yards off. Soon we were joined by Tom Toler, who also began to fire soon after. Looking around we saw that the regiment was going. Calling to Tom to let's go, he said, "No, we are going up."

We shook hands and parted and on reaching the regiment, I told the boys Tom was gone up; that he was a prisoner, but in a few moments up came Tom, out of breath, puffing and blowing, and said the next time he offered himself to the Yanks, they would be sure to have him. The boys gave a loud yell at Tom's expense.

18 June below Richmond, near Bottom's Bridge, doing picket duty on a creek. This was as bad picket duty as we ever did, the two lines being divided by the stream and not more than forty yards apart. All that was necessary for the exchange of shots was to show yourself or shake a bush.

21 June, left Chaffin's Bluff and went to Petersburg, fighting every day. On reaching the city, we were hastened forward to reinforce some militia that had withstood the Yankee forces around Petersburg up to this time, and had been driven to our last line of works. Soon after our arrival, the enemy charged our regiment in heavy column. We let them come sufficiently near, when we mowed them down so fearfully that hundreds threw down their guns and surrendered.

At night the firing was kept up on both sides. Just before day the enemy broke Johnson's (Tennessee) Brigade and came in our rear before we knew it. The result was that all of the Twenty-fourth that were asleep were captured, being over one hundred. It was now day and the remainder of the Twenty-fourth fell back to a new position, and were ordered to build new works and support Miller's battery. We worked during the day with our hands and bayonets, and by night we had a strong work. At night Colonel Faison, in command of the brigade, ordered us to move to the left, and soon after to take back a portion of the works that Wise's Virginia Brigade
had been run out of. The Twenty-fourth Regiment was led by Major Love. This was a desperate struggle, it being necessary to club the enemy out with the butts of our guns. It was soon over, however, and our loss was light, considering the situation. We remained here in this captured works until just before day, the enemy’s dead and wounded in piles among us, when we were moved to the right. This brought day of the morning of the 23rd, and we were again ordered to built breastworks which was again done during the day with bayonets as our only tools. The enemy massed their columns all day in a deep ravine in our front.

About sunset they advanced several columns deep. Our lines were doubled also. On they came to within seventy-five yards before we gave them the first fire; still they came until the third round, when they weakened and fell back down the hill, still firing but to no effect, as the balls passed well over us. About 9 o’clock at night, we were relieved by General Longstreet’s corps, and sent out near the reservoir for rest, the first we had had for several days. On leaving the works, we came in range of the enemy’s bullets and suffered considerable loss. The siege of Petersburg now began by General Grant, and the line of breastworks built this day by the Southern army was the line maintained and held by them during the remaining nine months of the war. During this nine months, there was scarcely a moment, and certainly not an hour, but the sound of arms could be heard on some portion of the lines. Time rolled on, Ransom’s Brigade occupying that portion of Lee’s line from the right bank of Appomattox river to and beyond the iron railroad bridge, east of the city. Skirmishing was now an every day occurrence.

In many places the two lines were not one hundred yards apart.

On 30 July, Grant sprung the mine, afterwards known as the “Crater, or Blow-up at Petersburg.” The right of the Twenty-fourth Regiment rested within a few paces of the “Crater” at the time of this explosion, and was among the first troops to engage in repelling “Burnside’s Negro Soldiers” from this bloody chasm. We remained here among these dead negroes until they were buried, or partially so, for
several days, the stench being unbearable under other circumstances. This portion of the lines was ever after known as Mortar Hill. Subsequently, the Twenty-fourth Regiment was moved to the left, and occupied the line from the iron bridge to the river as before stated. Here it was our daily occupation to watch the enemy through port holes made through sand bags and to dodge mortar shells. At night we did picket duty in the rifle pits between the two lines, in some places not more than forty yards from the Yankee pickets. Often we would meet and exchange tobacco and coffee, and have a social chat with each other.

In October, the Regiment was recruited by conscripts from Camp Holmes, which swelled our ranks somewhat, and many of these men made good soldiers. Time moved on with its many changes, in men and other things. The Yankees often making desperate efforts to break our lines, but were as often repulsed, and sometimes with heavy loss. About 15 March, 1865, Ransom's Brigade was relieved and sent about seven miles west of the city. Here we remained for a few days in some houses or huts that had been built by the army. About 24 March, at night, we were ordered to fall in ranks, not knowing what was going to happen next. We took up the line of march in the direction of Petersburg, which place we reached after midnight. We were ordered to the place we had left but a few days before, at the iron bridge. It now became apparent that something had to be done. About one hour to day, the Twenty-fourth Regiment was ordered to mount the works and move as quietly as possible on the enemy's works.

Moving on in the darkness we soon came in contact with the enemy's cheveaux de freise fastened together with wire. Through this we soon made an opening, and entered the works without firing a gun, the Yankees not expecting an assault. As we brought them out in their night clothes we would send them to the rear. A moment later firing commenced to our right, but the enemy was so completely taken by surprise that their effort was but a feeble one, and we had their line for a mile or more. For some unknown cause the advantage we
had then gained was thrown away, and we were permitted to quietly remain where we were until Grant moved a portion of his army from Hatcher's Run, some nine miles away.

It was now 9 o'clock in the morning; and when the Yankees came, they presented a sublime scene in their long lines of blue. We prepared to receive them as they came; but soon yelling commenced to the right of Ransom's Brigade, and later they came in both front and rear and poured into us a heavy, enfilading fire, which was very destructive to our men. It was here that Lieutenant-Colonel Harris was severely wounded, and Major Love took command of the Twenty-fourth Regiment. We were now powerless to help ourselves, as the Yankees were closing in upon us from every quarter, and the order was given to fall back by companies, beginning on the left of the regiment; but before the right companies received the order the enemy had cut off all chances of retreat. The writer was present with Major Love at the head of the regiment when the Yankees came, and saw him wrest from the hands of a Yankee color-bearer his colors, but of course he was not allowed to keep them, for we were now prisoners, or at least one-half of the men belonging to the two right companies were. We have never known the number killed and wounded in the Twenty-fourth in this engagement, but it was very heavy in both men and officers, as there was but a handful of men left under the command of Captain ———— to surrender at Five Forks, a week later. We believe, however, that the Twenty-fourth Regiment was represented at Appomattox in the final surrender by our beloved commander, but by no organized command. Those of us taken prisoners were sent to Point Lookout, Md., and to Johnson's Island, N. Y., where we remained until June, 1865.

Thus closed the services to the "Lost Cause" of one of the best regiments that the Old North State furnished during the late war.

W. N. Rose, Jr.

Overshot, N. C.,
9 April, 1901.