

I kept on going, but in a few seconds I got a bullet right through my shoulder. It entered below my arm at the back, and came out just below the shoulder-bone, making a clean hole right through.

I fell into a shallow shell-hole, which was just the size to take me in, and as I lay there, the possibility of capture first came to me. Up to that time I had never thought of it as a possible contingency; but now, as I lay wounded, the grave likelihood came home to me.

I scrambled to my feet, resolved to take any chances rather than be captured. I have an indistinct recollection of what happened for the next few minutes. I know I ran from shell-hole to shell-hole, obsessed with the one great fear — of being captured — and at last reached the reserve trench, in front. I fell over the parapet, among and indeed right on top of the men who were there, for the trench was packed full of soldiers, and then quickly gathered myself together and climbed out of the trench and crawled along on my stomach to the left, following the trench to avoid the bullets, which I knew were flying over me.

Soon I saw, looking down into the trench, some of the boys I knew, and I dropped in beside them. Then everything went from me. A great darkness arose up from somewhere and swallowed me! Then I had a delightful sensation of peace and warmth and general comfort. Darkness, the blackest, inkiest darkness, rolled over me in waves and hid me so well no Jack Johnson or Big Bertha could ever find me. I had n't