

AMERICAN SOLDIERS' VALOR

Stories of Brave Deeds in the Philippines.

Entire Skirmish Line Swims a River While Under Fire—One Private Attacks a Houseful of Filipinos.

Could all the acts of striking individual heroism performed by our soldiers at Manila be related the continued success of regiments and brigades over vastly superior numbers of the enemy would cease to be surprising. Able generals we have, and to them belongs primarily the credit of our continued success, but in the unofficial published reports there has been a tendency, in praising the commanders, to overlook the important part played by the individual behind the gun. Deeds of bravery performed under the eye of commanding generals are proclaimed to the world and liberally rewarded, while many others of equal daring are allowed to pass almost unnoticed. The whole world knows of the bravery of two Kansas volunteers who swam the Rio Grande river under fire from the opposite bank, and the two have been recommended for medals and commissions in the regular army. But it is not detracting from the magnificent courage displayed by them on that occasion to report the fact that the feat has been almost duplicated on several occasions by other soldiers at different places, and passed with a mere word of praise.

In the Malolos campaign a whole skirmish line swam the Bab-bag river under a terrific fire and climbed over the enemy's trenches, striking such terror into the hearts of the enemy that a captured insurgent described them as "the men who swam the river with their rifles on their backs, a knife in each hand and one in the mouth, and with eyes flashing fire."

At Pateros, two men of Company L, of the Washington regiment, rowed two canoes some distance up the Pasig under a fierce fire from intrenchments on the opposite bank, and a platoon of that company, under Lieutenant Ballaine, rowed across to attack the trenches, disperse the enemy, and fire the town.

At the town of Pasig, George W. Harlan, a private of the same regiment, who is an honor graduate of the university of frontier American Indian scouting, performed a deed well called extra hazardous. The two armies were lined up in rows of buildings about 80 feet apart on opposite sides of a stream. Harlan crossed the stream alone, burst in a door with the butt of his rifle, and fired the building while the insurgents were shooting from the windows directly above his head. Realizing that he would be overcome by numbers if he ventured further, he stood in the door and called back with almost a reckless indifference: "Come on over here, some of you brave men. I've bit off more than I can chew." Six men—Sergeants Harrison and McGee, and Privates Piney, Ward, Scott and Courtney—hastened to his assistance. Passing around the building, the party helped one another over an eight foot stone wall, jumping down into a small yard almost upon the heads of 15 armed insurgents. A spirited hand-to-hand fight ensued, in which Courtney was killed and Piney and Ward were wounded, and seven of the insurgents disposed of. The party, being too small to pursue their fleeing opponents, helped their disabled comrades back over the wall and made their way back to our lines.

This is one of the most daring incidents of the campaign. Private Harlan has been on scouting duty continuously since the war began, and has performed many daring deeds. At Guadalupe he reconnoitered thoroughly the trenches occupied by a force of 3000 insurgents, going in and out of their lines at night repeatedly to do so, and furnished to the commanding general of the first brigade, first division, most thorough information concerning the enemy's numbers, position, disposition, and defenses. At Taytay he entered the insurgent lines and went into the town to learn whether an American imprisoned there was a soldier. It was found to be a civilian, who was captured outside the lines before the outbreak. During the Santa Cruz campaign it became necessary to dispatch a man in a small native canoe thirty miles across the lake to carry dispatches to General Lawton, and Harlan was selected for the task. He set out from Pasig, was fired on by insurgents, ambushed on the shore, chased back to his

canoe from a place where he had landed, and climbed up a hill to get his bearings. He was pursued by insurgents in boats, and they came so close that he was compelled to run in behind a fish trap, and from the cover it furnished him he fired at his pursuers, killing several before the others retreated. He lay there until darkness enabled him to escape unseen by the natives on the shore, but he arrived at his destination and delivered the dispatches without even telling of his adventures until questioned by men who witnessed part of them from the tower of the Taguig church, seven miles away across the lake.

Harlan's daring and his consequent success led to envious feeling on the part of some of his comrades, and one day several of them "put up a job" on him. Going out one morning from Pasig toward Caiente, over ground which Harlan was in the habit of reconnoitering almost daily, they surprised an insurgent outpost and killed one of the pickets. The others ran away. The jokers then propped the "nigger" up against a rice dyke in a natural position and retired behind a clump of bamboos. In about an hour they heard a shot from their left from an almost perfectly level, open field. Peering out they saw the head of a man looking up cautiously from behind a bunch of grass. It was Harlan. Soon there was another shot, another, another, and another. Then the decoy fell slightly forward and rolled down on his side.

Harlan advanced cautiously and picking up the insurgent's rifle turned back toward the brush-line. On the way back he met the men who had killed the Filipino, and they claimed the captured rifle. At first Harlan was indignant, but they persisted and called his attention to the stock of the gun, on which was written, "This gun belongs to Corporal _____ of Company _____." He gave up the rifle. A few days after this incident Harlan came into headquarters and reported that he had ambushed an outpost and killed an insurgent, but that his comrades had managed to carry away the dead man's gun.

"Yes you are always telling about killing insurgents and not getting their guns." This begins to sound fishy," Harlan said nothing, but went away and came back after about an hour, bringing a piece of an insurgent's blouse with a blood-saturated bullet hole in it, and a brown human ear. His stories are no longer doubted.

Though easily stamped by an intrepid charge, the Filipinos have shown in scores of cases that in a fight where both lines remain stationary they are brave soldiers. During the opening of the battle a guard of 25 insurgents occupied a small nipa hut on the Santa Ana road, 80 yards in front of our line. The firing at this point began at half-past three, and an entire platoon fired continuous volleys into the hut. Notwithstanding this, the insurgents held their position until daylight, by which time all of their number had been killed or wounded, except seven. Five of the seven were wounded in attempting to escape. Of our men deployed directly in front of the hut, 23 were hit.

There are a great many remarkable stories told of the strange freaks of bullets and their effect. I saw a man hit squarely in the face with a Mauser bullet, and though the missile could not have come more than 400 yards, it landed under the cheek-bone and eluded the efforts of the surgeons to locate it until they applied an X ray. The only theory by which one can account for the bullet's not having gone through the head is that the power was weak. The man is now on duty. In a skirmish near Taguig, on April 20th, a man was shot in the left eye. The bullet ranged downward, emerged from the lower jaw, entered the body, emerged from under the arm entered again and lodged in the forearm. The man was in the hospital only a few weeks.—Leslie's Weekly.

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And he won't dispute it, for he is long dead—
This truly remarkable man,
For he never did wrong.

But he always did right,
And he never sang a song,
And he ne'er had a fight,
And he ne'er caught a fish, for he ne'er had a bite—
This very remarkable man.

This wonderful man never captured a prize
For the size of his turnips or pumpkins or lies,
Nor made a furor with the shade of his ties—
This truly remarkable man.

He never got fined,
And he ne'er went to jail,
And he never was wined,
And he never went bail,
And he ne'er caught a coon by the ring of his tail—
This justly remarkable man.

No, nothing remarkable e'er did he do;
No maiden he rescued, no tiger he slew;
He never felt happy and never felt blue,
This truly remarkable man.

He ne'er spoke before
An assembly, nor led
An army to war,
Nor talked with the dead;
He never got tipsy nor fell out of bed—
This simply remarkable man.

Why, so eventful this citizen's life,
He never was noticed, and even his wife
Could never embroider him in battle or strife—
This truly remarkable man.

As he lived so he died—
He just faded away,
And nobody cried
Or mourned him a day,
For nothing he left on which lawyers could prey—
This strictly remarkable man.

But when he at last for admission applied
At paradise gate, it was swung open wide,
Nor failed they an elegant crown to provide
For this strangely remarkable man.

And this was the cause
Why so highly he stood—
No story he'd spoil
(As most any one would)
By springing another that wasn't so good—
This truly remarkable man.

—Boston Globe.

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