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Negro 3rd Canad'n

(Continued from Page 3)

against the walls. No sooner had the battery become emplaced than Peel's guns were hauled forward, and once again came into action. The Highlanders advanced.

Unequipped with scaling ladders, the walls still unbreached, the Highlander came to a complete stop at the enclosure surrounding the Shah Najaf. From the loop-holed walls a relentless torrent of well-aimed musketry dropped them by the score. Frantically the infantrymen raged around the enclosure, seeking vainly for some means either of ascending or penetrating the walls.

Then it was that the men of the Shannon enacted that drama from which emerged the award of the Victoria Cross for William Hall.

The turning point of the battle had been reached. Either the Shah Najaf must be taken or Sir Colin Campbell's force must recoil in defeat.

Peel ordered two of his guns still nearer to the mosque. The sailors strained at the ropes and manhandled their pieces to within 20 yards of the wall. With one of these guns went William Hall.

A fire of musketry and handgrenades drenched the crews, all but annihilating them. The personnel of one was completely destroyed, and the men around the second were falling fast. Calmly Hall worked this gun beneath that murderous storm. Only his officer, Lieut. Young and he were left; but with no thought beyond accomplishing what he had been ordered to do, the Nova Scotian Negro continued sponging and loading, sending shell after shell crashing into the wall.

The Highlanders were meanwhile pouring in a fusillade, but this was not particularly effective, and they continued exposed to the musketry from the still unbreached mosque. Rockets were brought up, and a volley of fiery projectiles was sent hissing over the wall. Under cover of these the guns of the Shannon were hauled back.

The capture of the Shah Najaf was effected when a fissure was discovered just large enough to enable a man to climb the wall. Clambering to the coping, a number of Highlanders made their entry into the place and opened the great gate.

But the mutineers had vanished.

Sir Colin Campbell characterized it as "an action almost unexampled in war."

Both Wall and his officer Young were awarded the Victoria Cross for their unparalleled bravery before the walls of the Shah Najaf.

The Nova Scotian negro left the Royal Navy, presumably around 1880. Returning to Canada, he settled down at Avonport, in King's County Nova Scotia, devoting himself to farming and to his favorite recreation which according to "Who's Who," for the year 1900 was "shooting crows."

A brave and loyal man, well thought of by his neighbors, this son of a slave and a Canada's third Victoria Cross hero, died in August, 1904, at the age of 80.

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