

CIVILIZING 'EM WITH A KRAG
THE STORY OF A COMPANY OF U.S. VOLUNTEERS
IN THE PHILIPPINE INSURRECTION

by

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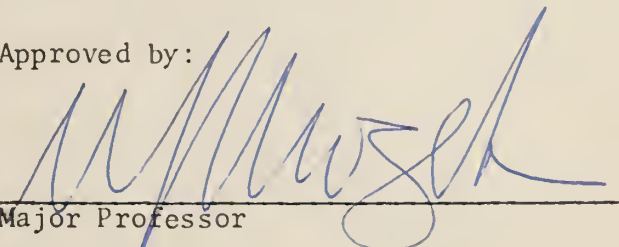
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Damn, damn, damn, the Insurrectos!
Cross-eyed ka-ki-ack ladrones!
Underneath the starry flag,
Civilize 'em with a Krag,
And return us to our own beloved homes.
"The Soldiers' Song"

INTRODUCTION

Private Willie Grayson of the First Nebraska Volunteer Infantry gazed uneasily into the tropical darkness. Had he really seen movement or was it just his imagination? Grayson had reason to be apprehensive. He and two other men from his company had been ordered to patrol the small village of Santol, located on the eastern outskirts of Manila; part of the American outpost system. The young volunteer was over seven thousand miles from the familiar prairie of home, soldiering in a strange land combining the mysteries of the ancient orient and the equally incomprehensible traditions of Spain.

The Filipinos themselves were an enigma to Grayson and the other American soldiers. Many were friendly but others were sullen and antagonistic. Since the arrival of the First Nebraska Volunteers in July 1898 and the surrender of Spanish forces throughout the archipelago, the relations between the U.S. Army and General Aguinaldos' Filipino insurgents had deteriorated. The natives had just rid themselves of one group of colonial masters, and with the increased arrival of more American soldiers during the summer it was evident that the United States planned a prolonged stay in the Philippine Islands. In fact, an agreement would be reached between the U.S. and Spain as a result of the Treaty of Paris, ceding the islands to the Americans for the payment of \$20 million to Spain.¹ Of course, affairs of

state were not the concern of the Nebraskan nor was he probably interested in the machinations of statesmen. What was of concern were the constant insinuations of cowardice hurled at the Americans by the insurgents coupled with their menacing behavior. The insurgents, now calling themselves the Philippine Army, had dug sixteen miles of trench line, manning it with 30,000 armed Filipinos, facing the 14,000 Americans occupying the Manila defense perimeter.² Emilio Aguinaldo, the principal leader of the islanders, had proclaimed Philippine independence on 12 June, established a provisional government on 23 June and set up his capital at Malolos, north of Manila on 8 September.³ In addition, but unknown to most Americans, Aguinaldo had also issued secret instructions on 9 January to the Manila Sandatahan, a sort of citizen's militia, of what was expected of them in a possible forthcoming anti-American uprising.⁴ The stage was set.

It was about 8:30 p.m. and Private Grayson was now certain he saw four armed Filipinos. Firmly gripping his Springfield rifle he challenged the approaching figures. After he called out halt a second time, he heard the distinct metallic sound of a rifle being cocked. The American brought his rifle to his shoulder and pulled the trigger, dropping the leading insurrecto in a cloud of black-powder smoke.⁵ The date was 4 February 1899 and the first shot was fired marking the commencement of what was to be called the Philippine Insurrection or the Philippine-American War as it is known in the Philippine Islands. Admiral Dewey was later to say in his autobiography:

The growing anger of the natives had broken into flame. Now, after paying twenty million for the islands, we must establish our authority by force against the very wishes of the people whom we sought to benefit.⁶

Now that McKinley's administration found itself with a war on its hands, the President realized that action would be required to provide an army to fight it. Although Major General E. S. Otis commanded over 15,000 troops in the Philippines, the bulk of his force consisted of the nine infantry regiments and three artillery batteries of state volunteers raised for service during the Spanish-American War and scheduled for muster-out during the autumn of 1899.⁷ The departure of the state volunteers would leave the U.S. commander with an army of 3 regular infantry regiments, 6 regular cavalry troops, and 6 regular artillery batteries, much less than the 30,000 men the overly optimistic Otis had estimated as a minimum force to subdue the insurgency.⁸ With this situation in mind President McKinley received authority from Congress, in an act approved 2 March 1899, to increase the size of the Regular Army to 65,000 men, primarily by increasing the number of enlisted men in each infantry company from one hundred twelve to one hundred twenty eight, and to organize twenty-four regiments of volunteer infantry, and one regiment of volunteer cavalry.⁹ By the end of the Philippine Insurrection in 1902, 126,468 American soldiers would have served in the Philippine Islands, and the maximum strength at any one time would reach over 74,000 officers and men.¹⁰ A point of particular significance is that one hundred per cent of the men in this army, designated the Eighth Corps, would be volunteers.

The Philippine Insurrection was to be the last major armed conflict in which the U.S. would participate with a force made up entirely of volunteers. The volunteer was promised no bonus, no war risk insurance, no vocational training and no hospitalization until 1922.¹¹ And yet the army had little problem filling the ranks of its Philippine army. This is all

the more surprising taken in the context of the period and the kind of war to be fought. The U.S. had just concluded a peace with Spain following the war of 1898, which ended in a storm of accusations of scandal in high office over the conduct of that war. As early as January 1899 a variegated group known as the Anti-Imperialists called for neutralization of the Philippines and began to work for removal of U.S. presence there.¹² The war itself was of the most unpleasant sort. Beginning as a war of sizeable regular military units, by 12 November 1899 Aguinaldo ordered his forces to undertake a guerrilla war.¹³ It was an infantryman's war of steaming jungle trails and fierce agile bolomen. The American superiority in fire power meant little in the rugged country of rain forest and muddy trails and the conflict degenerated into a condition of man versus man, where bravery and quick thinking meant everything. When the soldiers were not fighting, they were faced with the tasks of nation building. Establishment of schools and municipal governments, reestablishment of commerce, providing health services and enforcing municipal sanitation measures became tasks of the soldiers which were as important as battling the insurgents. Within sixty-five years the U.S. would again find itself engaged in a war which bore much more than just a cosmetic resemblance to the Philippine Insurrection.

The commencement of America's direct involvement in this later war was marked by the creation of the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (USMACV) on 9 February 1962. The conflict was primarily a guerrilla war and continued until April 1975. It involved an American Army manned, in large part, by conscripts. For a number of reasons the army reverted to a volunteer force following its most intensive period of participation in the Vietnam War. Prior to the advent of the All-Volunteer Army, with the end

of the draft on 1 July 1973, many of the non-commissioned and junior officers showed a great deal of skepticism as to its ability to accomplish its missions. Many of the volunteers who had enlisted and served in Vietnam proved a disgrace to the army and the nation. Officers and NCOs who led at the small unit level usually found the draftee to be the better soldier both in combat and back at base camp. Those individuals involved with the administration of military justice during this period quickly discovered that court martial proceedings involved enlistees more often than conscripts. The reasons for this phenomenon during the war in Southeast Asia will not be discussed as they are not particularly pertinent to this paper. However, the military capabilities of the volunteer soldier are relevant to the subject under study.

In light of the army's current posture, a look at the U.S. Army's last war in an all-volunteer status is in order. As one considers the accomplishments of America's Philippine fighting force, he must keep in mind that the social environment and system of values in the United States has undergone many changes in the past seventy or so years. This paper will view the experiences of a company of U.S. Volunteers in order to ascertain, through its record, what a volunteer unit is capable of accomplishing. The unit selected as the vehicle for this investigation is Company H, Forty-third Regiment of Infantry, U.S. Volunteers. The regiment was organized under provisions of General Order Number 150, Headquarters of the Army, dated 17 August 1899.¹⁴ The choice of this particular unit was made based on several facts. The primary reason was personal, as the author's maternal grandfather served as the second lieutenant of the company. The few letters left behind by this relative represent a second consideration, as they add

to the record a color which is virtually impossible to gain from studying official documents alone. The 43d Regiment was made up of men recruited mainly in the north-eastern quarter of the U.S., with the exception of Companies L and M which were organized in California. This provides a broad spectrum of backgrounds. Soldiers of Company H were recruited from Waterville, Maine, Paducah, Kentucky, and Leavenworth, Kansas as well as other towns and cities in between.¹⁵ And finally, the company's parent regiment served on the islands of Samar and Leyte until July 1900, and then just on Leyte, acting as the supreme American authority over the inhabitants without any significant interference from higher headquarters on Panay to contaminate the effects of the Regiment's civil and military activities.

PART I

The Forty-third Organizes at Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont

Complying with his orders from Army Headquarters in Washington, Colonel Arthur Murray, U.S.V. arrived at Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont, a recently built post located north of Burlington, at 9 p.m. on 24 August 1899.¹⁶ The white-bearded Murray, by being assigned as commander of the newly designated Forty-third Regiment of Infantry, U.S. Volunteers rose from an artillery captain of regular army to colonel of U.S. Volunteers, bringing with it a large increase in prestige and pay and allowances. Graduating second in his West Point class in 1874, he must have looked upon this long awaited opportunity with excitement bordering on delirium.¹⁷ At this point, however, the colonel was a commander without a command. Soon newly assigned officers would begin arriving, mostly former state volunteer officers with the exception of his three West Point educated majors, but still the unit lacked troops. His orders authorized him to direct his newly arriving lieutenants to regular army recruiting stations for recruiting duties.¹⁸ For the next two or three months the greater portion of his officers would involve themselves with the feverish search for suitable men to fill the Regiment's ranks. The Forty-third found itself competing with two other regiments in the quest for material to be transformed into soldiers.¹⁹ Recruiting would continue into mid-October before the 43d would be considered up to strength by Army Headquarters.

Harry M. Dey of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania reported for recruiting duty at Camden, New Jersey after learning of his appointment as a first lieutenant assigned to the 43d Volunteers on 26 August 1899. After a period

of recruiting in New Jersey and command of various provisional companies at Fort Ethan Allen he assumed command, on 8 October 1899, of Company H. His two lieutenants, also assigned on that date, were 1st Lieutenant Frank Gordon, a forty-one year old Washington, D.C. lawyer and 2d Lieutenant William Henry Wilson, a twenty-two year old bank clerk, bringing with him an excellent record as an enlisted man in the 22d New York Infantry Regiment of Volunteers and a burning desire for a career in the U.S. Army.²⁰ Gordon would be discharged in November 1899 for reasons of health, being succeeded by 1st Lieutenant Joseph F. Sweeney from Newport, Rhode Island.

Prior to his assignment to the company, Sweeney performed recruiting duties in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Joining the Regiment on 3 October as a 2d Lieutenant, he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant by the end of the same month.²¹

Of 2d Lieutenant Wilson's experiences before assignment to Company H, we have more information which gives some idea of the officer's experience as a recruiter. Wilson received his telegram dated 26 August, notifying him of his 2d Lieutenant's appointment and further ordering him to the New York City recruiting station for duty. For about two weeks he worked in the Yonkers sub-station after which he reported for duty at Fort Ethan Allen. No sooner had the young lieutenant arrived than he was ordered back on recruiting service, this time for the Regiment. On Thursday afternoon 14 September he opened an office in the second floor of the Allen Building, overlooking Water Street in Augusta, Maine.²² This slim, mustachioed young officer wearing the high collared blue uniform with the white infantry trim, as he moved about this Kennebec River town, posting recruiting notices in conspicuous places, must have been an impressive sight to the local citizenry.

All men between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five, of good character and habits, able-bodied, free from disease, and capable of speaking English were invited to join the 43d.²³ Wilson contracted with Doctor G. H. Brickett, a civilian physician in the area, to perform the medical examinations required by army regulation. Between the opening of the enlistment office and its closing on 2 October, the lieutenant received eighty-three applicants. Of this number only twenty-three passed the physical. Eight of those accepted were destined for the 39th Volunteers regimental band at Fort Wayne, Indiana and one was rejected by the Adjutant General's office in Washington when records showed he had received a discharge "without honor" from the U.S. arsenal at Augusta. Another fifty-six were refused enlistment without a physical.

Some were married, others were over 32 years of age, others under 21, and without the consent of their parents, still others were bums and not wanted.²⁴

The preceding indicates the discretion used by Lieutenant Wilson in his selection and can be attributed to his personal code of duty and, of course, in some measure to the realization that some of these recruits could well be assigned to his company upon his return to Fort Ethan Allen. The new soldiers were sworn in by the recruiting officer administering the oath:

All and each of you do solemnly swear (or affirm) that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America, that you will serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies whomsoever, and that you will obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the officers appointed over you, according to the Rules and articles of War.²⁵

They were now soldiers of the Forty-third Infantry Regiment of U.S.

Volunteers. At 6:30 in the morning of 3 October with his fourteen charges safely loaded aboard the train, 2d Lieutenant William Henry Wilson departed Augusta for the Regiment's post in the shadows of Vermont's Green Mountains.²⁶

On 8 October 1899 Company H was activated under provisions of General Order No. 18 with Captain Harry M. Dey as commander. Sergeant Joseph B. Graham, a six foot tall ex-salesman born in County Down, Ireland twenty-nine years before, became the company first sergeant two days later. The next most senior NCO, also appointed on Company Order No. 1, was Quartermaster Sergeant John W. Ward. By 4 November 1899 the unit contained four sergeants, twelve corporals, two cooks and eighty six privates in addition to the three officers and two senior noncoms.²⁷

The soldiers of Company H transferred from the large brick barracks built in 1895 to Sibly tents which had been set up in rows. The tents were used in lieu of the barrack buildings for two reasons. The first was space. Fort Ethan Allen had been designed to accommodate a squadron of cavalry, about 500 troops, not a 1,000 or more man infantry regiment. The second was based on Colonel Murray's discovery that the constant cold winds for which the post was renowned created a heating imbalance inside the barracks so that one side was frigid while the other would be intolerably hot. The wooden-floored conical shaped tents, on the other hand, were kept livable with heat evenly distributed by the stove mounted in the center.²⁸

With the company formed, training became the primary mission. The raw material had to be transformed into warriors, and the time was short. Back on 7 September the regimental commander had determined the training day with the publication of his "List of Calls" his headquarter's second

published General Order.²⁹ A letter from Lieutenant Wilson to his mother on 22 October indicates that the regiment still kept closely to this timetable. Since Lieutenant Gordon was assigned as range officer and, therefore, excused from drill, the company's second lieutenant attended to the troops during most of the drill periods. Because basic courses for officers had not yet been founded by the American army, the Regiment's officers attended an evening officers' school, established by order of the Regiment's commander, in an effort to learn their trade. Since all officers were required to have volunteer service as an officer, or in some cases, as a noncommissioned officer before appointment, most basics were probably fairly well ingrained by this time. Wilson's letter of 22 October mentions the study of tactics, probably based on Emory Upton's United States Army Infantry Tactics, which would prove more suited to battle on the open plains than in the guerrilla war in the Philippine jungle. The junior officers were also burdened with the age-old tasks of officer of the guard, recorders of boards of survey, participation on various boards of officers, and completing a multitude of army paper-work chores. The typical duty day ran from 5:45 a.m. to 11 or 12 p.m. for the company officers.³⁰

The men of the company were also busy. Rumors of up-coming deployment dates for the voyage to the Far East were continually going the rounds. This stimulated a genuine sense of urgency within the unit resulting in full training days for the soldiers. On the rifle range each man was required to fire at targets from 100 to 600 yards distant with the issue Krag rifle.³¹ In late October Company H recruits were put through the prescribed rifle qualification course. By the end of the range period each man and company officer was required by Army Regulations to have fired 110 rounds in the

preliminary and record stages. Both prior to and following live fire the men cleaned their weapons using rags saturated with soda water, when available, or plain water.³²

A few comments about the Krag rifle are appropriate here as it was the primary tool of the U.S. soldier of this period. The Krag-Jorgensen rifle, officially designated the United States Magazine Rifle, caliber .30, was a modification of a weapon originally designed by two Norwegians, Captain Ole H. J. Krag and Erik Jorgensen. Adopted by the War Department in 1893, it was the army's first bolt action service rifle. By 1899 two primary models were being issued, the models 1896 and 1898, both produced by the Springfield armory. Although made there it was not called a Springfield as that term referred to the single shot .45-70 Springfield models 1873-1889 which were still in service in some state units in spite of their obsolescence. The Krag-Jorgensen is a handsome, business-like appearing rifle with probably one of the smoothest bolt actions ever designed. It weighs about ten pounds with a fixed bayonet and a full five round magazine. It had a combat proven maximum effective range of over 1,000 yards, but because of the low velocity of its bullet it caused concern when fired at a moving target.³³

To present a balanced picture of the blue-clad infantryman at Fort Ethan Allen, however, one must realize it was not all school of the soldiers, instruction in outpost duty, skirmish drill at double time and live fire practice at the rifle range. There were, of course, the routine police details, the grinding, wearisome lot of the soldier. And on 22 October the men spent Sunday being measured for their khaki uniforms and pith helmets in anticipation of tropical service.³⁴

Soldiers also took part in the delights of off-duty activities. As early as 25 September Colonel Murray found himself sending an apologetic letter to the Municipal Board of the Village of Essex Junction, Vermont regarding the "depredations" committed by troops of the command among the citizens' fruit trees.³⁵ There was always the five cent electric tram ride into Burlington, Vermont for those men desiring a night in the big city and with enough money to realize that pleasure. The deluge of blue coats really struck that city after the 9 November payday, during which period the troops wanted to make up for all the good times they would probably be missing while serving in the Philippine Islands. After the night of 13 November there were so many drunken soldiers apprehended that Major Gilmore had to contact the chief of police and ask him to "grind them out and then let me know and I will come down and pay up."³⁶ When the Forty-third finally departed for New York, the Burlington Daily Free Press was to report with a sigh of relief, "This class of men will hardly be bidden farewell with regret."³⁷ Between 15 October and 15 November, Summary Court records immortalize nine company members as AWOLs and one as drunk and disorderly in quarters. The Regiment's AWOL statistics were especially high just prior to the rail journey to the port of embarkation on 15 November 1899.

On 6 November the company was tasked by Regiment to provide Private Adam Unsinn as part of the ten man detail under Major Henry T. Allen, the Regiment's senior Major and commander of 3d Battalion, along with Second Lieutenant F. W. Mills, for duty aboard the U.S. Army Transport Meade berthed in New York harbor. The tents at Fort Ethan Allen were struck on 7 November and troops were crowded into the permanent barracks. All the Regiment's heavy baggage was packed up and loaded onto twenty-five baggage

cars belonging to the Central Vermont railroad on 10 November and, after a verbal altercation between railroad officials and Murray, were shipped to Brooklyn.³⁸

Situation in the Philippines in November 1899

While the 43d struggled to complete its preparations for departure from the increasingly frigid Vermont, it was quite unaware of the subtle transformation in the state of military affairs taking place in the land of its destination. Three days before the Meade sailed from New York, the self-declared President of the Philippine Republic, Emilio Aguinaldo, decreed the existence of a state of guerrilla war against the U.S. forces throughout the archipelago following the sound beating of his army in open warfare that summer and autumn.³⁹ Because of this changed state the American command felt that the insurrection was on its last legs, a common enough mistake. On 1 December Major Allen was to confess in a letter to his wife Jeannie that he feared most of the fighting would be over by the time the Regiment reached the Philippines.⁴⁰ Soon, however, U.S. commanders would realize the error of their hasty judgment.

As early as December 1898 Aguinaldo, recognizing certain qualities of merit in him, sent Vicente Lukban to the Island of Samar from his previous command in the Camarines. Selection of General Lukban for this assignment was based as much upon his ability as a revenue collector as his military skill. Aguinaldo's choice proved to be as unlucky for the U.S. forces to serve on Samar as it was fortunate for the insurgent cause. Lukban's would be the next to last major insurgent command to collapse, and this would not occur until February 1902, almost a year after Aguinaldo's capture on Luzon.⁴¹



U.S. Army Transport Meade

A second appointment made by Aguinaldo at about the same time, 4 January 1899, was that of Colonel Ambrosio Moxica to be military governor of Leyte.⁴² During the period of his command of insurgent forces on this island, Moxica would find himself dependent upon the more effective Lukban for both military and moral support. Still, he ordered the surrender of his forces only after the capture of his commander in chief, Aguinaldo.

The Forty-third would soon find themselves in battle with the wily and unpredictable guerrilla forces commanded by these two leaders. But on 13 November few in the Regiment were concerned with more major a problem than loading troops aboard rail cars of the Rutland Railroad for the trip to Weehawken, New Jersey.⁴³

The Forty-third Journeys to War

Except for those men placed on special duty by Regiment, six deserters and Privates Clark, Webster, Kimball, Keough and Nolan who were all later to pay for their tardy appearance, Company H loaded on its assigned train on 13 November. Troop loading went smoothly throughout that cold but clear day, the men marching to their cars in heavy marching order. Colonel Murray, however, was later to describe the train accommodations to Weehawken on the thirteenth and fourteenth as beggaring description.⁴⁴ The train carrying Major Andrews' 1st Battalion struck a freight train with a resulting three hour delay.⁴⁵ Disembarking from their rail cars the Forty-third must have made a Kiplingesque showing as they marched to their ship at Pier 22, Brooklyn clad in their blue uniforms, tan campaign hats, canvas leggings, and field gear with their Krags at shoulder arms. American fighting men, off for the purpose of "civilizing the natives" of the Philippines, in Senator Lodge's words of 1898, or in the later penned soldiers'

song, to "civilize 'em with a Krag."⁴⁶

With their baggage stowed on board the Meade, 42 officers and 1,072 enlisted men of the Forty-third, along with a load of Christmas gifts for the men already in the Philippines, waited for their 15 November departure.⁴⁷ As is often the case in military operations, however, fog prevented sailing until 6:30 a.m. the next day, leaving behind Privates Gurley and Pahlin of Company H who had jumped ship.⁴⁸

The "Succinct History" of the Regiment describes the trip as "exceedingly interesting and instructive." However, Major Allen, in one of his frequent letters to his wife, states that on the first few days out the ship received a beam wind putting "many under the weather." The Meade was a sleek looking twenty-six year old foreign built steamer rated by the Quartermaster's Department at a capacity of 60 officers and 1,171 men.⁴⁹

On 16 November the commander established the initial list of calls which suggested that no particularly demanding program was to be followed.⁵⁰ A revision was made to the list, to be effective on 21 November, which included periods of daily physical exercise, a good indication that the command had finally gotten its "sea legs."⁵¹ Company H was to perform its daily fitness session on the main deck along with their fellow sufferers of Companies G and K. Until disembarking at Manila life would begin at 6 a.m. and cease at 10 p.m. each day with few exceptions.

Finally on 27 November the Meade anchored at Gibraltar for a one day layover. Continuing through the Mediterranean the Regiment arrived at Valetta, Malta at 9 a.m., 1 December. The ship berthed at 10:00 a.m. after knocking off the bow sprit of a merchant vessel and nearly colliding with a British man of war.⁵² Colonel Murray had issued orders for the troops to

assemble at 8:30 a.m. in blues, campaign hats, leggins and cartridge belts without bayonets to be reviewed by the Governor of Malta ashore. Rain that morning put that plan to rest, and the troops instead were granted shore liberty at the rate of two hundred per day. The British were particularly hospitable and accommodating to the Americans during their two day stay in Malta, possibly due to their involvement in the South African War and the resulting lack of much international support in that endeavor. Prior to the Meade's departure, the English treated the Forty-third's officers to a dinner at the Governor's Palace.⁵³

Colonel Murray commended the men for their creditable conduct ashore, in spite of the fact that two men failed to make the ship prior to its departure. Privates Keough, Lee and Casey of Company H made the ship in time but received sentences of one month's confinement and loss of three months' pay by summary court for overstaying their passes ashore. As the Meade glided out of Valetta's harbor, with care this time, the crews of thirty-four British ships of the line cheered their passage.⁵⁴

The small steamship reached Port Said at the northern entrance to the Suez Canal on December 6 just long enough to make arrangements for the ship to transit this water avenue and for short period ashore for some of the officers and men. The time was sufficient for Private White, a member of Company H, to return to the vessel forty minutes late and somewhat intoxicated. It was also long enough for some of the Regiment's soldiers to purchase the first members of what was to become an ever-growing tribe of monkeys which was soon to be the scourge of the ship. The bothersome animals became such a torment to the Meade's captain that he threatened to put them all ashore if the men failed to control their pets. On Sunday



Some Officers of the 43d with a
lady at Port Said, Egypt

Dec. 1899

1. Captain (Grandpa) Elliott, Regimental Quartermaster
2. 1st Lieutenant John H. Evens, Co. K
3. 1st Lieutenant Joseph T. Sweeney, Co. H
4. Mrs. Francis L. Buchannon, Red Cross Nurse
5. 1st Lieutenant M. E. Morris, Co. I
6. 2d Lieutenant Wilson, Co. H

morning, the seventeenth, the largest of these apes broke his chain, leading the soldiers and sailors on a merry chase from the promenade deck about the ship until it was bagged by the men.⁵⁵

After several other uneventful port calls the Forty-third steamed into Manila Bay. The date of arrival was 31 December 1899. That afternoon at 3:40 p.m. crates were opened and khaki uniforms were issued to the men for the first time.⁵⁶ The next morning at 10:00 a.m. the men of the Regiment began the new century by disembarking from their home of the past forty-eight days and marching to the front through the streets of Manila.

Companies L and M, which had been recruited in California, and had arrived with the Forty-fourth Volunteers aboard the City of Puebla, joined at the Regiment's defensive position between San Francisco del Monte and El Deposito on 4 January. For two weeks the entire Regiment remained on outpost duty in this area known as the North line. During this period the troops had the opportunity to become acclimated to the heat of the tropics which was described by Major Allen as recalling Fort Riley, Kansas, but with delightful nights.⁵⁷ The company's program while in the outpost line included a three day march north east to the town of San Jose and back, a distance of over fifty miles.⁵⁸ During this operation the men were able to exercise their long neglected muscles as well as familiarize themselves with the country around Manila. While in their positions north of Manila, officers and men also quickly learned to discern the field soldiers from the headquarters dandies:

In town it is easy to distinguish between the officers from the front and those stationed in Manila. The former wear soiled trousers, leggings and blue shirts; the latter white duck suits and white collars, etc.⁵⁹



Nipa Barracks, Malate,

Luzon in 1899

On 14 January the troops were moved from their line of outpost camps and marched to Nipa Barracks, Malate, about one mile south of Manila's Pasig River. There the men of the company were billeted in large bamboo barracks with high nipa roofs and lined with matting.⁶⁰ The stay at Malate was to prove to be a short one. Orders for the occupation of the hemp ports had been issued by General Otis, the U.S. Military Governor of the Philippines, on the day the Regiment was moved from the North line.⁶¹

PART II

Company H Moves South with the Kobbé Expedition

Brigadier General William A. Kobbé, U.S.V. was directed by General Orders No. 5 on 15 January to occupy, in addition to several other areas, three port towns on the Islands of Samar and Leyte. The stated purpose of this move south was to open ports in these areas so that the trade in abacá (Manila hemp) could be recommenced.⁶² The reason U.S. troops were now required in the region was the presence of General Lukban on Samar and General Moxica on Leyte.

About a month following his arrival on Samar in 1899, Lukban had issued instructions to his customs officials regarding taxes and customs to be collected. By the end of the year his agents had collected revenues of over six million pesos, a very sizeable contribution to the insurgent war chest on Luzon. A munitions factory was also set up on the island which provided supplies of low grade, but still lethal, ammunition for his men's fire arms. Using locally available minerals, salvaged materials and converted sewing machines, the insurgents continued to produce cartridges even after the capture of their main plant, near Catbalogan, by Allen's 3d Battalion in January 1900. By the arrival of the Forty-third in Manila at the turn of the century, both Lukban and Moxica had organized their respective island commands for partisan operations against invading U.S. forces. These leaders had appointed municipal officials, sometimes after rigged elections, proselytized the native populations and organized military commands and guerrilla units.⁶³



NORTHWESTERN SAMAR 1900

(See special note on maps)



Lukban's munitions factory near
Catbalogan, Samar after its capture
by Allen's 3d Battalion

(Allen Papers, Library of Congress)

The Filipino was not to prove the only enemy of the Americans in Samar. The Island of Samar is a body of land about the size of Ohio laying off the extreme southern tip of Luzon and is characterized by its high backbone of mountains from which swift streams boil to the sea. No roads crossing the island existed in 1900, only winding jungle paths which sometimes ran along stream beds. The dense jungle undergrowth tore at a marching soldier's uniform and caught on his equipment as slimy leaches burrowed into his skin and sucked his blood. Once out of town it became a green and brown nightmarish hell where even the insurgents' under-powered homemade bullets and slashing bolo were equal to the Americans' Krag.

The army which Lukban led was a blend of Filipino regulars of Tagalog and Bikol extraction brought from Luzon with their mixed inventory of rifles, mainly Spanish Mausers and Remingtons taken from the defeated Spanish army and some Krags, and Visayan irregulars. It is doubtful that the untrained eye of the U.S. soldier could distinguish one from the other as the Filipinos wore no uniforms and were indistinguishable from the peaceful farmer working his fields. In most recorded engagements the bolomen outnumbered the riflemen by at least three to one. Sometimes the fanatical bolomen of Samar attacked American troops without fire-support of any kind and sometimes with astonishing success as at Balangiga on 28 September 1901.⁶⁴ Tight control over these men was impossible, a characteristic of guerrilla armies. Some of the excesses on the part of the Insurrectos of Samar can be attributed to Lukban's inability to impose a firm discipline over his fighters. In some instances, such as when dealing with the mountain bands called the "Dios Dios" men, a group of quasi-religious zealots who would just as soon fight Lukban, the Bikol, as they would the strangers

from a land 7,000 miles to the northeast, he had no control at all. Proclamation after proclamation was issued under Lukban's name attempting to control his fighters but evidently with only limited success. In spite of General Otis' optimistic statements that the soldiers of the Forty-third "would only be up against a few Tagalogs sent down from Luzon to Samar and Leyte," Murray's troops would soon find quite a different reception awaiting them.⁶⁵

The American command in Manila brigaded the Forty-third and Forty-seventh Infantry, U.S.V. and Light Battery G, Third U.S. Artillery and placed them under control of General Kobbé.⁶⁶ Major Gilmore's Second Battalion, of which Company H was a part, boarded the chartered transports Aeolus and Castellano in Manila and sailed south on 18 January together with four other transports and one navy gunboat, the USS Nashville. Enroute the 47th was landed at the towns of Sorsozon, Legaspi and Albay in Southern Luzon. While the landings were taking place during the next few days, the men of the company whiled away their time, swimming in Sorsozon Bay and participating in boat races. Soon the games were done and the convoy moved on, entering the harbor of Calbayog, Samar in the early morning hours of 26 January. At 8:20 a.m. the signal to land was sent from the Nashville, at which time the boats, into which men of Companies E, H and F were loaded, raced to the shore. The landing, covered by the guns of the Nashville and the recently arrived gunboat Helena, was unopposed. About 300 yards from shore the troop-carrying launches grounded, requiring the men to scramble out into the waist deep warm waters of the bay. Since Company H was in the lead, the men were ordered to form a skirmish line by Captain Dey after which they swept through the virtually abandoned town of Calbayog.⁶⁷



Soldiers of the 43d landing
on Samar, January 1900

(Allen Papers, Library of Congress)

Captain Fair with Company E and part of Company F moved around Dey's left and around the northern edge of town. From his location, Fair observed insurgents belonging to Captain Rafael's 2nd Company in the foothills to the northeast. The Battalion Commander directed Captain Dey to secure the town after which Major Gilmore took command of Fair's force and moved towards the enemy sighting. The troops with Gilmore and Fair came under fire from an enemy cannon as they approached the hills. With the sound of musketry crackling in the heights outside of Calbayog, Company H went about the business of securing the town. Guards were posted on all public buildings including the large church. Although the men of the company were missing the fireworks in the hills, they were fortunate in not having to share the pleasures of negotiating densely wooded hills on a very hot day. Later in the day Gilmore, who had since been joined by Company G and the rest of Company F, wearily returned to town after a running fight of about two miles.⁶⁸

Battalion headquarters was soon established in the town's Tribunal building. Quarters recently vacated by insurgents were designated to house two of Gilmore's four companies with the remainder billeting themselves in two school buildings. Company H moved into the old barracks of the 2 Compañia de Artilleria. In what was to become a ritual in every town the Forty-third was to occupy, a street cleaning department was formed with local natives. In this case, thirty or so "Chinos," ethnic Chinese, were put to work policing the town. This practice, although a dull chore and often a cause of friction between soldier and Filipino, was a major factor in the low rate of debilitating disease among the soldiers of the Insurrection as compared to the Americans who fought in Cuba in 1898. Once firmly

ensconced in this port town, the Americans commenced to extend the secured area about the recently seized battalion post.

On the morning of 28 January Allen's Third Battalion landed at Catbalogan putting Lukban to flight and, for the time being, pretty well demoralizing the insurgent effort on Samar. In fact, Gilmore received reports that the insurgents had been scattered to the four winds and that General Lukban was heading north hoping to find refuge in southern Luzon. The surrender of Colonel Zabatel, Lukban's second in command on 11 February seemed to confirm that Samar's rebellion was at an end. However, with patrols being sent out from Calbayog the Americans began to encounter signs of enemy resistance. A patrol composed of Company F men and led by Major Gilmore returned from a forty mile patrol into the interior on the night of 1 February reporting that they had received some ineffective fire on the night of 30 January. The patrol also found that the insurgents had put the torch to a part of the river town of Gandara.

Upon his return, the battalion commander was informed that one of E Company's men, Private Johnson, had imbibed a little too much "vino" and had wandered off.⁶⁹ On 3 February several parties were sent out to follow-up on reports of Johnson. One patrol with 12 H Company men led by Lieutenant Wilson traveled to Napora, eight miles distant, to investigate one lead brought in by a native. Reaching the village around noon and finding the information faulty, the detachment broke for dinner. Wilson departed the town at 2:15 p.m. heading back to Calbayog. The muddy trail over which they moved was lined on both sides with high tropical grass making it impossible to observe anything from the trail. At intervals the route crossed streams which had to be traversed over slimy logs. About twenty

minutes march from Naporo the soldiers came to an area where the trail opened up on one side with a thickly vegetated rise about forty yards from the path across the open space. The troops, traveling in a fifty yard long single file, shortly found themselves strung-out in the clearing. Suddenly a volley from about fifteen rifles blasted from the hill followed quickly by a second. By the second volley Wilson's men were flat in the mud, their rifle butts firmly seated in the hollows of their shoulders, awaiting the commands of their Lieutenant. The order came, "Fire at will, commence firing!" A steady fire from both sides continued for about ten minutes during which time Private C. P. Nolan took an enemy round through the fleshy part of his left forearm, a painful, but not lethal wound. Then Wilson, kneeling, commanded, "Rapid Fire! Commence Firing!" almost as though they were on the drill field at Fort Ethan Allen. The small hillock virtually exploded in a cloud of splintering bark, leaves and atomized bananas. The enemy fire died out after each of the Americans had expended about fifty rounds. For good measure their officer joined the firing with eight rounds from his Colt revolvers. With Nolan's wound rinsed out and bandaged, the procession continued along its course without further delay at the ambush site. On the return march the patrol encountered another band of insurgents just north of the town of Palales. With little ceremony the Americans took these fifteen Filipinos under fire at a range of over 500 yards dropping two of them. After this encounter the troops pressed on to the north to Calbayog.⁷⁰

The following morning Captain Dey took a twenty-five man detachment from the company and along with Wilson returned to the area in which the action had taken place. At Napora the villagers told the Americans that of

the party of thirty insurgents only their Lieutenant and twenty of his men raced back through the town after their ambush of Wilson's patrol the previous afternoon. South of Napora at Balon, Dey's party bivouacked for the night. The next morning the soldiers pushed on the Tambungan, the last half mile was negotiated through a swamp waist deep in mud. At St. Louis on the south side of the Gandara River, which they had crossed, the Americans received a friendly welcome from the townspeople. In addition, a reception committee of three citizens of Pelayo, sent by that town's Presidente, met Captain Dey and requested that the patrol come to their town on the bank of the Gandara. At Pelayo the Americans were able to witness at first hand the poverty and famine that the war had already brought to the island. From here they returned to Calbayog, partly by water to Santa Margarita, then by "hiking" overland the rest of the way.

During the time the aforementioned activities were taking place Gilmore and Allen received a proclamation signed by Colonel Murray, for dissemination throughout the villages of Samar. The purpose of the document was to explain the purpose of the American presence on the islands of Samar and Leyte and to establish certain rules of conduct to be observed by the citizenry.

Proclamation American

The Americans have come to the islands of Samar and Leyte to open their seaports to the commerce of the world, and not to oppress their inhabitants, but to protect them in all their rights of property and life.

No interference will be made by the Americans with the religious rights or ceremonies of the people.

All persons engaged in peaceful and lawful pursuits may rest assured that they will receive every protection that can be afforded them by the Americans and all offenders against the laws may

expect to receive full punishment for their offenses.

Until good order is established, the inhabitants of all towns occupied by Americans will be required to be in their homes, and all American soldiers not on duty to be in their barracks, at 8 o'clock p.m., at which hour the church bell will be rung. All unauthorized persons found on the streets of such towns after 8:15 p.m., will be arrested and taken before the officer commanding the military guard for examination.

All good people of the islands are requested to assist the Americans in promoting peace and good order.⁷¹

The day following the signing of Murray's proclamation, Vicente Lukban wrote his own newsletter. Dated 4 February 1900, the letter was sent to "Local Presidentes." It is not likely that this missive was written in response to the "Proclamation American" as was to be Lukban's habit with later U.S. announcements; however, it gives that effect. He presents a dreary picture of the insurgent situation stating that, "our soldiers at present are divided into small bands by force of hunger," elaborating that the "troops (are) living on good edible roots." The insurgent leader accused the "Yankees" of having come to the Philippines for the purpose "of exterminating us later, as they exterminated the Indians of America."⁷² Although lacking subtlety, his pronouncements appear to have been effective, especially during the early period of American military occupation. Initially the army could count on reliable support only from the "Chinos," who were fearful of their lives at the hands of the Filipinos, and the European businessmen who had commercial interests in the stability offered by a military occupation. Continually citing the example of the North American Indian and listing alleged brutalities perpetrated by soldiers of the Forty-third against the people of Samar and Leyte, he was to maintain his lonely struggle until 1902 when a combination of tough military measures

and properly administered civic action stripped the insurgents of popular support.

With the situation in the area apparently well in hand, as indicated by the return of the towns' populations, the surrender of insurgent officers and weapons, the disorganized enemy resistance and the seemingly hospitable attitude toward the soldiers by the local people, General Kobbé, the Brigade Commander, felt that the time had come to secure additional ports on Samar.⁷³ On 19 February the company commander received his orders from Battalion. Company H was to "proceed, fully equipped, with 200 rounds of ammunition per man, and sixty (60) days rations, to Laguan, and there to take station."⁷⁴ This was typical of the fragmenting process which was taking place throughout the archipelago. By 1 March 1901 the U.S. Army had garrisoned a total of 502 posts in the Philippines.⁷⁵

Major Gilmore embarked with H Company on the steamer Santander Tuesday afternoon 20 February. The expedition sailed at 3 p.m. and landed about a mile west of Laguan at about 5 a.m. the next morning. The landing party composed of Major Gilmore, Lieutenant Wilson and thirty or so men raced into this port town an hour later to the surprise of the awakening natives. Sr. Primitivo Acebuche, the former presidente who had been a captive of the insurgents at Catbalogan, accompanied Gilmore. The town, which was to be the site of H Company headquarters, normally accommodated a population of 8,000 or more souls but the troops found it partially deserted on this day. The town was described by Lieutenant Wilson as about as pretty as he had seen in the Philippines with several stone Spanish style houses, recently built wooden houses and wide streets, a few of them paved with some combination of concrete.

Finding no resistance here, the Americans received a report that an insurgent force under the leadership of Abrique was to the south, up the Catubig River at a village called Bido.⁷⁶ Gilmore took half of the company with Lieutenant Sweeney in command, and the battalion adjutant Lieutenant Stewart, transferred to a smaller steamer, the Cuco, which they found in the harbor, and set off for Bido at noon. About an hour after leaving Laguan, the Cuco received fire from entrenched enemy riflemen. The troops responded with a vigorous fire of their own causing the Filipinos to abandon their well prepared positions. Pursuit of the fleeing insurgents was badly hampered after the first enemy volley since the vessel's captain deserted the pilot house and sought refuge in the anchor chain, the wheelman was paralyzed with fear, and the crew went overboard. Finally getting to the bank, the Americans discovered that the area in front of the firing trench was laced with camouflaged wet ditches filled with sharpened bamboo. Although warned earlier of their existence, several men still managed to stumble into these treacherous man traps. Fortunately, no one was impaled on the stakes. The soldiers pursued the guerrillas several miles but were unable to reestablish contact, and, therefore, returned to the Cuco for the trip back to Laguan.

Captain Dey now set about his mission of turning this semi-deserted town into a viable commercial hemp port once more. General Kobbé had already appointed the company's junior lieutenant as Inspector of Customs and Captain of the Port of Laguan. Ten thousand picos of hemp were found awaiting shipment during the company's inventory. Of course, the routine cleaning, draining, and lighting of the streets was commenced. Laguan's Presidente was authorized by Gilmore to keep his force of thirty policemen



Coastal steamer of the
type used for troop transportation
on Samar and Leyte

which had been on the town's payroll before his imprisonment.

The plan of action before leaving Calbayog had been for half of Company H to garrison Catarman once Laguan was securely occupied. However, once on the scene, Gilmore and Dey decided that the occupation of Catubig, directly south of Laguan up the Catubig River, would offer greater advantages. Although the former town had an advantage over the latter in hemp supplies, Catubig was situated in a large rice producing area, and its occupation would deny its use to the enemy as a base of operations.

Harry Dey gave the mission of taking station at Catubig to his first lieutenant, Joseph Sweeney, who, together with fifty men from the company and the battalion commander, loaded on the Cuco for the thirteen mile journey up the river. The trip on 22 February was accomplished without enemy sightings. Sweeney's detachment arrived and moved carefully from the river bank into the town, finding it abandoned save for the fifty-six Chinese who had been rounded up by the insurgents. The "Chinos," whose future at the hands of the insurrectos had been uncertain, were set at liberty by the Americans. The men took possession of the abandoned convent building adjacent to the large stone church which would serve as a combination barracks and supply and orderly room until disaster struck that spring.

Catubig, in normal times, had a population of about 10,000, but as was usually the case, prior to arrival of the blue-shirted soldiers, the Filipino inhabitants fled into the hills. As has been noted before, Lukban had over one year to move about Samar telling tales on the Americans and their barbarities to the natives. Whether or not the Visayans swallowed the insurgent's stories is not certain, but it certainly was logical for



Company H Soldiers at Laguan prior to a hike.

From left to right

Front Row: Lindsey, Casey, White, Flavin
and Connors

Back Row: McCabe, Kerrins,* Dey, and
Sweeney, D.J.

*killed at Catubig, 18 April 1900

the people to adopt a wait and see attitude before delivering themselves into the hands of the invaders. Usually the townspeople would begin to trickle into the newly occupied pueblos several days following the arrival of U.S. soldiers.

Prior to parting company with Sweeney, Gilmore appointed a temporary town presidente, Sr. Thomas Tafalla and gave verbal instructions for the lieutenant to take a patrol to Poponton to the south as soon as things quieted down at Catubig. Sr. Tafalla informed him that he had received orders from Abrique to slay the Chinese who had been assembled by the guerrillas, but it was retracted upon the presidente's refusal to obey. Major Gilmore was also told of two letters Tafalla had received from Lukban in the mountains near Matiginao. Both messages urged all soldiers to rendezvous near Matiginao with their weapons within five days. The Major concluded that the insurgent leader's purpose was not to fight but to assemble all his riflemen and officers for surrender to the Americans, taking advantage of the amnesty.⁷⁷

The battalion commander returned back down the river to Laguan and departed on the steamer Santander from there before dawn on 28 February. Before he left, Gilmore, acting on another report, directed Captain Dey to scout the mountains around Palapag to the east. The company commander took fifteen men on 26 February to check out the information which claimed that Abrique was in the area. The patrol failed to find the guerrilla officer but uncovered and destroyed about seventy sacks of rice stored in a house for probable insurgent use. The next days were busy but uneventful. Consolidation of the company's two bases continued as did the constant patrolling required for security. It was still a period of optimism in

which the Americans were sure it was just a matter of days before Lukban would accept the generous terms of surrender and come in with his entire force of Tagalogs. A long term plan of counter-guerrilla operations does not seem to have occurred to the commanders of the Forty-third at this time. But then, why should there be any great concern? The villagers were returning to their homes. Even in Catubig some of the townsfolk were returning. Joe Sweeney interpreted the failure of the bulk of that town's population in returning was due to the requirement for them to be out working in their fields.

On the evening of 5 March Major Gilmore, accompanied by Major Allen, Third Battalion commander, arrived at Catubig on the steamer San Bernardino which had been borrowed from Warner, Barnes and Co. Sweeney briefed the battalion commanders on his current situation. Everything was quiet in and around the town. A large number of people had come in last Sunday the 1st but left again by the next day. After the briefing, Gilmore gave Sweeney an order dated 3 March, instructing him to take twelve men from his garrison and proceed overland from Catubig to Gandara. The route to be followed started in Poponton, continued on to Matiginao, which had been mentioned in a number of reports of enemy activity, thence to Gandara where the patrol would take a boat down the Gandara River and around the coast to Calbayog. Once at the battalion headquarters, a full report of the trip was to be submitted along with a sketch map. The reason Sweeney was restricted to only twelve men resulted from Gilmore's patrol experience in January and February during which he ascertained that sufficient food was not available in the back country to sustain a large body of soldiers.⁷⁸ It was also felt that better time could be made with a smaller detachment and, at any

rate, reports had indicated that few insurgents were left in the mountains.

Sweeney formed his detachment early on the morning of 7 March. After a final inspection to ensure his men were prepared for their three or four day "hike," the patrol departed. After a full day's march up the Catubig River valley Sweeney reached Poponton where he would spend the night. Next morning the troops were assembled and moved out accompanied by a Visayan guide provided by the town's Presidente. The American lieutenant was uneasy as he regarded Presidente Filici Tuling with suspicion, but since he was at a disadvantage knowing neither the local language nor the trail system he would have to depend on the appointed guide.

Unknown to Sweeney on 8 March was the existence of another small American patrol being sent from Gandara this day to rendezvous with him at Matiginao. This detachment of eleven men led by First Lieutenant Delbert R. Jones, Company G, was to map the trail from Gandara to Matiginao, but as it turned out, accomplished a great deal more.

Three fifteen p.m. on Wednesday the 8th found the Company H patrol about one half hour's distance from Matiginao moving down a stream bed, ten to thirty feet in width, with steep banks on either side. At this point some of the men halted to fill their canteens in the stream. Without any warning a hail of bullets rained down upon the Americans from both banks. Realizing he was in an effective crossfire, he assaulted up the slope on the right side, driving off one group of assailants. Once in the enemy position he found that two men were wounded and Private Webster was missing. Private Mean had taken a round in the left wrist while Private Clancy had a flesh wound over the hip. Not knowing Webster's fate, Sweeney asked for two volunteers to accompany him and make a search under heavy fire from the

insurrectos. Corporal Allport and Private Jordan immediately came forward and with their lieutenant braved the storm as their remaining comrades covered them with their Krag's. Back down into the stream bed the three scrambled only to find Webster laying dead in a pool of his own blood with bullet wounds in the stomach and head. The enemy fire then became so heavy that the rescuers had to leave the body and retreat to the captured enemy position. While retracing their steps the corporal received a bullet in the abdomen, Private Jordan was hit in the right shoulder resulting in an ugly, painful wound; and Sweeney was lucky enough to come back with just a superficial wound to the left thigh.

Back in the enemy's position which he had overrun earlier, the young lieutenant took stock of his situation. He had four men wounded significantly enough to be of little use in the fight, one of them possibly dying, and one man dead in between the lines. His men still had ample ammunition for their rifles, since troops had a practice of putting as many rounds as possible in their haversacks, sometimes at the expense of food, and their cartridge belts held a hundred more when filled. In addition, in the insurgents' horseshoe-shaped trench a cannon was found with a supply of ammunition for it. The problem would be food, water, and communications with the outside world. This was in the days before the compact field radio, and when a detachment went into the jungle it was in reality "detached" from the next higher command. Sweeney decided that, since he had nine effectives still with him, he would be a fool to attempt to dispatch a messenger, especially since he estimated the ambushers to be at the strength of about forty to fifty rifles with at least one more cannon and since his messenger would be unfamiliar with the country.

In this situation the Americans decided to fight it out from their position and attempt to outlast the enemy. During a lull in the fighting, probably caused by the insurgent leaders considering their next move, the wounded had their injuries dressed and bound by the lieutenant. The captured cannon was put into operation by the soldiers who supplemented their fire power with it until the next morning when it ran out of ammunition. At 9 o'clock on Friday morning the enemy, commanded by Rosario, attempted to force the issue. Firing two cannon shots at the Americans from a range of fifty yards, the insurgents assaulted with eighteen riflemen. After four were dropped in a withering response from the American Krag's, the Filipinos retired to their original positions.

The remainder of the battle degenerated into an endurance contest. Every time a wounded man groaned or a man moved a brisk fire would ensue. By noon on Friday the men had exhausted their water, and since the only available source lay under the guns of the enemy no one was sent to replenish the supply at this time. At about 5 a.m. on Saturday the firing ceased but the Americans dared not move from their secure position for fear of being caught in the open, plus the problem of moving the wounded. In the early evening of that day the heavens opened and deluged the Americans with rain. Sweeney directed the men to dig small holes in the ground with their bayonets and attempt to capture some water in their ponchos. But instead of a Godsend it lasted just long enough to drench the soldiers' clothing and add to the misery. Spending a night in the jungle in a wet uniform, especially if movement is curtailed and no fires can be built, is a wretched experience virtually impossible to explain to the layman. Along with the scarcity of rations and water, the abundance of biting insects and crawling



Soldiers of Allen's 3d Battalion
with a captured insurgent cannon

(Allen Papers, Library of Congress)

things, and the stench of decaying dead men, these days would be ones that the survivors would not forget in their lifetimes. Sunday night Sweeney finally let two volunteers crawl out and fill some haversacks with water, which was accomplished without interference.

Lieutenant Jones' party from Company G had, in the meantime, arrived at Matiginao on Saturday afternoon. After waiting for the arrival of Sweeney for the next two days Jones concluded that the H Company patrol must have had their orders rescinded; and, therefore, he prepared to return to Gandara on Tuesday. For some reason he decided to send out one more reconnaissance party, before departing the area, which by accident came across Sweeney's thoroughly exhausted force. The hospital corps man with the G Company patrol did what he could for the injured. Then both parties moved back to Matiginao where native barotas were secured for a trip down the Gandara River and eventually to Calbayog arriving there at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday. Major Gilmore would later describe in a report that "Lieut. Sweeney's detachment from Catubig arrived at Calbayog on the 14th in a rather forlorn state." Corporal Joseph W. Allport who volunteered to recover a fallen fellow soldier died ten days after his wounding, while enroute to the hospital in Manila. It was later established that Rosario had been warned in advance of Sweeney's approach and was able to prepare positions prior to the Americans' arrival.⁷⁹

In response to the ambush Gilmore ordered Company G on 15 March to send out forty men with fifteen days' rations to the ambush area in an attempt to find and destroy Rosario's band. Company H was also directed to obtain an additional fifty soldiers from Captain Cooke, whose F Company had occupied Catarman, and to station a force at Poponton to make contact with

the same guerrillas. Captain Dey and Lieutenant Sterrett of Cooke's company took their force to the south but found nothing.

With the attack on Sweeney near Matiginao the Second Battalion suddenly found its hands full. On 20 March two Spaniards from Gandara reported that area to be swarming with insurgents. A wounded soldier from Lieutenant Seaman's detachment at La Granja arrived at Calbayog on 23 March aboard the Cuco reporting an attack on that town by a party of insurrectos made under cover of darkness in a rain storm. When Gilmore arrived at La Granja at 9 that same night, he was informed of many reports of large bodies of insurgents in the mountains.

If these activities were not sufficient to shake the Second Battalion's complacency, the predawn raid on Calbayog of 26 March would leave no question as to the seriousness of the war on Samar. Nor would there be any misunderstanding of the kind of conflict into which the Americans had been thrust.

Why the officers at Calbayog would allow lax security measures at this time is hard to understand. Possibly it was a case where "wolf" had been called once too often. Then again, since the bolomen attacked just prior to daybreak, that overwhelming sense of wellbeing that tends to overcome sentinels just before sunrise could have been the primary ally of the guerrilla raiders.

In any event an insurgent leader named Iloy held a meeting with a group of other Visayans in a sympathizer's house in a small vista between San Policarpo and Oquendo. At the meeting a plan was made over glasses of vino for an assault on the officer's quarters in Calbayog. Nineteen men had been gathered, all armed with bolos. Before leaving they all took an

oath "to establish the supremacy of the church." Just before 5 a.m. on the morning of 26 March the insurrectos crossed the bridge leading to San Policarpo and moved swiftly into Calbayog avoiding Captain Fair's single roving patrol. Once in town the Filipinos, bent on assassination, split into two groups. About five headed for the Tribunal which housed the battalion headquarters and staff sleeping quarters, the remainder made for the cuartel area where the troop barracks and other officers' quarters were located.

The party racing to the Tribunal to kill Gilmore, who was not even in town this night, had to pass by the post hospital where they encountered the guard, Private Oliver N. Pendergrass of Company E. Before he could sound the alarm one of the bolomen struck him a blow that sliced off the right side of his face and cut into the shoulder blade. Although stricken by this wound and another in the side, he managed to crawl to Captain Fair's quarters and give the alarm. The initial struggle also aroused the patients in the hospital. Private Jordan of H Company, severely wounded near Matiginao on 8 March, and Private David L. Jackson from Company E, who had been assisting at the hospital, secured weapons and fired on the insurgents through the open windows of the hospital. Jordan, whose fractured right shoulder was still healing, was undeterred as he placed his still fouled Krag to his shoulder and sprayed bullets into the street below. Because of the dirty weapon's recoil he rebroke his shoulder, which would bother him for the rest of his life. The work done by the two men left one dead and two wounded insurgents sprawled in the street before the hospital.

One of the assassins was able to get into the Tribunal, however. This man went in search of the officers but unable to find them, although

Lieutenant (Doctor) Dudley Welch was reposing in his darkened room, killed the major's cook, Private Unsinn from Company H, in his sleep. The thud of the assassin's bolo cutting into Unsinn woke the doctor who escaped. He notified Fair who had just formed the bulk of his Company E in a double rank with bayonets fixed and had taken the remaining insurgents under fire. Dr. Welch with Corporal Laird and Private Mesick, both of Company E, quickly returned to the Tribunal to capture the bolo man. They found him skulking in Major Gilmore's bedroom. The soldiers attacked with their fixed bayonets, but the man counterattacked slicing Corporal Laird in the arm. Then skillfully wielding the large knife he struck at Mesick who parried the blow with his rifle, losing the end of his finger for his trouble. This cut also severed the leather rifle sling and chopped half an inch into the weapon's stock. Eventually the Americans' cold steel prevailed, and the Filipino went down permanently.

After Fair organized his forces, the insurgents fled, realizing the surprise was lost and the game was up. The Battalion mustered about one hundred men from Companies E, G and H who were formed into three search parties under Captain Fair and Lieutenants Sweeney and Phillips. These parties cleared the town of guerrillas, arresting several. In the ensuing days a number of other participants were rounded up after the capture of the band's muster roll. In all, eight insurgents were killed or died of wounds, three were wounded and six were captured. U.S. losses were one killed, a second died of his wounds and two others were wounded. That this attack provided an object lesson to the Americans can be seen from a comment made by Gilmore in his report on the affair in which he stated, "we were not fighting civilized beings, but assassins who would murder one in his

bed at night."⁸⁰ With these realities in mind the Americans reacted in the inevitable manner. Said Lieutenant Wilson in a letter home written on the 26th from Laguan:

Sergeant Graham is out with 25 men now in search of Captain Aubuque with orders to take no prisoners. In fact such orders are understood generally.⁸¹

Catubig

When Dey and Gilmore decided to station troops at Catubig back in late February, they realized that the garrison was being put out on a limb. Overland communication was difficult and slow, and use of waterways was limited by the shortage of suitable water craft to transport men and supplies. Most steamers used by the Forty-third in Samar were on loan from the business concerns located on the island or were privately owned. The battalion commander displayed concern when he instructed Captain Dey to visit the garrison stationed there personally once or twice weekly. By mid April the Catubig garrison was down to thirty-one men commanded by Sergeants William J. Hall and Dustin L. George due to the absence of Sweeney's detachment and evacuation of sick men. Because of the deteriorating situation Major Gilmore had decided to close out the station and bring the thirty-one men back to Laguan.⁸² With the increasing incidence of attacks on American garrisons on Samar by large bodies of Lukban's men it was doubtful whether small garrisons were capable of holding out. That Dey was aware of Gilmore's decision in sufficient time to react is questionable. There is no mention of any order to withdraw the Catubig garrison in Dey's reports nor is there any evidence in the Regimental records of any such order.

In accordance with his standing orders from battalion, Captain Dey paid a visit to Catubig on Saturday 14 April. Sergeant George, the acting

commander, reported everything quiet in the area. The detachment was still quartered in the convent located between the church and a high hill.

In the mountains of north central Samar is the town of San José. The town served General Lukban as his headquarters at this time. In late March an American captive was brought here after a brutal march which had lasted about fifteen or so days. The prisoner was Sergeant Doe of Company I who had survived capture along with Corporal Allen when both were taken near Borongan on the east coast of Samar in mid March. The two were the first Americans taken prisoner by Lukban's forces and, therefore, were quite a curiosity. Sergeant Doe was brought to San José while Allen had been left at a camp at San Julian because of the bad condition of his feet. While at San José, Doe met Lukban whom he described as forty-six years old and about the normal height for a Tagalog. He was dressed in linen drawers tied about the ankles and a cotton shirt and was bareheaded and footed. With Lukban were a group of officers reported by the Sergeant to be Colonel Abuque, Captains Surano and Dodo, and Second Teniente Acedillo. The day after meeting the guerrilla officers and their leader, Lukban assembled a body of men, gave them a hearty pep talk, and then sent them off under Acedillo. Doe counted them from his place of imprisonment and estimated the force to consist of 193 riflemen armed with Mausers, Remingtons, and eleven or twelve Krag. Supplementing this party was a force of over five hundred bolomen. The men wore no uniform but were similarly dressed in the native garb made of hemp fiber. Lukban departed the next day and was gone for about two weeks.⁸³ They were all headed for the town of Catubig.

At daybreak on 15 April, Easter Sunday, the battle began. The first shots rung out from the hill behind the convent at 5:30. The Americans

immediately took cover in the convent and fired back. Soon the entire town resounded with the rifle reports of the insurgents and soldiers. Initially, there were no casualties among the men of the garrison. Throughout Sunday the battle raged with no apparent advantage going to either foe. The shooting was kept up during the night but only at a reduced volume. At 5 the next morning heavy fire was resumed by the Filipinos. Cannon fire commenced three hours later from the hill to the right of the barracks. Using a load of nails, chain fragments, and iron scraps the insurrectos were attempting to reduce the convent to rubble. This attempt resulted instead in a hurricane of Krag bullets which silenced the gun after two volleys from the besieged Americans. The heavy rifle fire from the insurgents slackened after midnight only to resume with full fury at 9 a.m. on Tuesday. The cannon which had repositioned during the night was put into action again with the same results as before.

By Tuesday morning the situation had deteriorated drastically for the men of the company. The enemy had managed to get into the church only five yards from the convent, and the fire of their riflemen was making the American position untenable. Insurrectos in the church were also creating anxiety by attempting to throw blazing bundles of hemp soaked in kerosene against the convent. Up to this time the soldiers had survived almost unscathed except for Private Lee who had a bullet wound in his left arm.

Sergeant George realized that continued enemy occupation of the church would eventually spell disaster to his small command. Calling for volunteers George assembled ten men for a counterattack against the Filipino position. Bursting out of the convent at a dead run under tremendous fire from all sides, the troops gained entry to the church. Storming in they

found between seventy-five and one hundred insurgents inside. Quick calculation by the sergeant convinced him that they had little chance of succeeding in their foray; so the soldiers emptied their magazines into the mass of Filipinos, causing a certain amount of slaughter, and then fell back to the convent. Returning through the same gauntlet a second time, they surprisingly made it back to shelter with no casualties.

At about this time the foe had finally managed to set fire to the American position. The men kept their fire up even through the heat and choking smoke of the blaze. Sergeant George began to prepare his men for an attempt to break out through their besiegers. Even though the battle was in its third day there were still seven to eight thousand rounds of .30 caliber ammunition on hand. This was distributed to the men, each putting his share into his haversack. All other quartermaster equipment was thrown into the blaze. When the building was burning well enough, a hole was cut in the floor and the men dropped through it into the basement. From here the soldiers attempted to make their way down the street past the church. The enemy fire here was so severe that the detachment turned down another street towards the river but again was turned back by insurgents entrenched in a house. Out in the open with bullets snapping past them, the breakout degenerated into a panic. Fifteen of the men ran for a boat house on the river hoping to seize a boat and attempt to cross. All were killed in this try. The second group with Sergeant Hall and Corporal Carson made their way to a small grassy knoll and prepared to defend.

By now Sergeant Hall had been hit, so command of the survivors went to Anthony Carson. Carson's detachment numbered sixteen counting himself. He posted guards and ordered the others to dig a trench using their

bayonets. Once the position was hacked out of the earth it was just a matter of holding out as long as he could with the remaining men. Tuesday night came and went, and the fight continued into Wednesday under the searing tropical sun. The Filipinos had made several attempts to set the grass ablaze but had been driven back leaving the field littered with dead and wounded. As darkness fell that night the men breathed a sigh of relief. Besides being able to move around a little under cover of the night, they realized that they had survived another day. But could they hold out much longer without additional food, water or ammunition?

While this lonely struggle was going on in the jungle, actions were taking place elsewhere which would lead to Carson's salvation. Sweeney returned to Laguan on 18 April with the revitalized survivors of his March ordeal in the mountains. Since the ambush they had remained at Calbayog until the wounds were healed and transportation was available. Now, Captain Dey decided, was the time to send Lieutenant Sweeney back to his command at Catubig. The steamer Lao-ang departed Laguan with the Lieutenant and his detachment, composed of seven men from Company H and ten men on loan from F Company, at 7:30 in the morning of 19 April. One mile from the objective the Lao-ang's progress was stopped by a barrier of felled trees lashed together across the river. Security elements were landed on both banks while the remainder of the party assaulted the obstacle with axes. During the removal of the blockade the men found that another large pre-cut tree had been rigged to fall when a boat made contact with a rope attached to it and secured on the opposite bank. This booby trap was disarmed. Sweeney also found four nipa houses on the river bank with a supply of over a hundred pounds of beef which was thrown into the river and one hundred

fifty pounds of rice which he confiscated. Then the buildings were burned. With these matters disposed of the detachment recommenced their boat trip.

The Americans' fears were confirmed when, still a quarter mile below Catubig, they detected the sounds of battle. It was now apparent that the routine mission of reinforcing the garrison had evolved into one of rescue. The arrival at the town was greeted with a storm of bullets splintering the steamer's wooden hull and clanging off the metal of its power plant. Boats were lowered and the tricky business of disembarking began. In spite of the cover provided by the detachment's Krag, Corporal White, Company F, took a round in the left side and Private Farron of Company H received a wound in his right calf while clambering into the boats. After getting the wounded back aboard the Lao-ang, the relief force made its way to the river bank. Having already located the beleaguered garrison by shouting from the steamer, Sweeney's men sprinted across seventy five years of bullet-swept open ground bent low over their weapons. During the rush, another H Company man, Private Clancy, went down with a wound in his right instep. The rescuers now down to thirteen effectives reached the vicinity of the entrenched Carson without further losses. Sweeney decided not to join Carson because he would lose effective observation over the enemy positions in the tall grass. Instead he sent two men to Carson's position where they assisted in burying his dead, Privates Pomelow and Loose, in the trenches and brought back the thirteen survivors. The sight that met the relief party's eyes was savage. Part of the town, including the convent, was a smoldering ruin while several other buildings were still blazing. The streets were choked with insurgent dead which Sweeney estimated to be about two hundred while several others bobbed about in the currents of the Catubig River. The Americans fought

their way back to the river bank and reembarked, leaving the town to the victorious insurgents and the dead. The return was uneventful except where the enemy had attempted to reerect their obstacle which was so flimsily constructed that it disintegrated upon contact with the steamer.⁸⁴

Lukban, who claimed to have personally commanded the insurgent force, captured twenty five of the American rifles along with 12,000 rounds at Catubig.⁸⁵ A more grisly incident was the disinterment and mutilation beyond recognition of the bodies of Loose and Pomelow by the enraged guerrillas. Lukban had directed that American dead be dug up since he claimed that sometimes their weapons and ammunition were buried with their remains.⁸⁶ The added butchery was probably done as a matter of personal taste by some of the bolomen. Corporal Anthony J. Carson was recommended for the Medal of Honor which was awarded to him in 1906.⁸⁷

Because of the heavy losses sustained by Company H and the surge in enemy activity on the north coast of Samar, Gilmore began to consolidate. On 28 April he sent his adjutant, Lieutenant Seaman to Catarman with orders for Captain Cooke to move his Company F to Laguan as soon as possible. Captain Dey had already received twenty men from E Company at Calbayog but the battalion commander there realized that his weakened garrison was not immune to a foray by Lukban.

F Company's commander received his orders to move from Catarman the next day. On 30 April he sent Seaman in a small steamer to Laguan for the larger vessel, the Lao-ang, which he would borrow to move his unit. At 9:30 that night his outposts were driven in by the insurgents. The next day Company F counterattacked and overran the guerrilla trenches. By the end of the day on 1 May, he had scattered the enemy force burying 117 in their



Second Battalion Officers at Laguan, Samar
 1st Lt. Seaman was Bn. Adjutant
 Capt. Cooke and 1st Lt. Sterrett were from
 Company E

own trenches. On the 3rd, most of F Company boarded the steamer San Bernar-
dino and traveled to Laguan, coming under Captain Dey's command. On the
4th Catarman was abandoned to the insurgents.

Sunday morning before dawn, 6 May, Major Gilmore, who had arrived
on Friday, departed Laguan with one hundred men including thirty five from
Company H under Captain Dey. The force encountered shacks of an enemy
outpost, evidently meant for keeping an eye on the activity of the U.S.
troops at Laguan one mile distant. About three miles further down the
trail to Pambujan, the objective of this patrol, was a bridge crossing a
sixty yard wide river. The center of this bridge had been removed for a
length of about thirty feet. While the column waited for about an hour,
some of the men were put to work patching the gap. Pambujan, another north
coast town, was finally reached at 10 in the morning. The town was found
abandoned except for about five men who rushed from one of the houses and
melted into the surrounding forest and two boys. The two youngsters were
questioned with unproductive results. Because of the heat several of the
soldiers had been overcome, so Gilmore rested the patrol until 3 o'clock
that afternoon.

About three miles from the town, as the patrol retraced its route,
two insurgents were sighted and fired upon. One of them was hit. It was
later learned that they were scouts sent to observe the Americans. The
trail along which they moved was typical of the jungle routes on Samar,
narrow and bordered on both sides by dense underbrush and high grass.
Eventually Gilmore's point came upon the bridge repaired earlier that
morning.

A cold sweat came over the men at the front of the file when they
saw the bridge had again been rendered unusable. About the same time the

security men spotted a man partially hidden in the underbrush and immediately opened fire on him. Before the sound of these initial shots faded, Major Gilmore who was located in the middle of the file saw several others in the dense growth to the right of the path and opened fire on them with his Colt. Suddenly the thick foliage was alive with bolomen who until now had lain hidden. The men blazed away at the enemy driving them away. A group of enemy riflemen observed on the other side of the damaged bridge were also taken under fire and scattered. After it appeared that the insurrectos had been routed, a careful search was made for others. Periodically a soldier would be surprised as a hidden boloman would leap out of his concealed position and attack the man who had virtually stepped on him. Twelve of the thirteen dead bolomen counted were killed within five feet of the trail. Gilmore later realized that the enemy plan was to fire on his point from across the river, and, when the Americans had deployed, the slashing bolomen would fall on their rear. In a close quarters fight it was understood that the bolo-wielding Visayan was more than equal to his American rifle-equipped foe. As it was, the only American casualty was a man from F Company who had been slashed in the lower leg. The tired group closed in to Laguan at eight that night without any more enemy contact.⁸⁸

With a rest of only two days the battalion commander, this time accompanied by Lieutenants Wilson and Sweeney of Company H and Lieutenants Sterrett and Seaman set out again on 8 May with a patrol of about one hundred men from Companies H, E and F. Besides the two lieutenants, H Company provided forty troops. The Lao-ang was again borrowed from its owner, a Spanish merchant in Laguan named Thomas Oria, and the expedition set out for Catubig. There were indications along the river that the

insurgents were attempting to block its access to the Americans. Small native barotas loaded with stones had been sunk, and several rope and twisted vine barriers were encountered. An insignificant body of guerrilla troops who were occupying the town when Gilmore arrived took to their heels causing no problems. The enemy had cleaned up the battlefield pretty well but the soldiers discovered the town full of stores. In addition to re-burying the mutilated bodies of Loose and Pomelow, the town, or what remained following the fight in April, was put to the torch. On the trip back down the Catubig River, stops were made to destroy caches of insurgent supplies and to incinerate the towns of Bayog and Bigo. The only American casualty of the trip was an F Company private who fell into a mantrap receiving a puncture wound in the hand. Throughout the remainder of May and most of June 1900, Company H in conjunction with Company F continued patrolling through the small towns on Samar's north coast razing San Miguel, the insurgent headquarters for the region, and destroying hidden rice and palay supplies. Major Allen had written in a letter to his wife on 20 April, "these natives have mistaken a mild manner for weakness and now they are to be disillusioned."⁸⁹ The army was now to turn the screw.

Soldier Life in Samar

The men were worked hard during their occupation of Samar. But beside the constant patrolling and infrequent but deadly encounters with the insurrectos there was another side to the soldiers' lives.

As is usual in army life, most of the soldiers' duty time was spent in mundane and uninspiring activities. Since the health of both the command and the native inhabitants of every town occupied depended on sanitation, the soldiers' first task was frequently an area clean-up. A temporary

presidente's first task after being appointed by the local U.S. commander was to get his realm "thoroughly policed and lighted."⁹⁰ The bewildered townspeople, personally clean as a general rule, were pressed into service until the job was done. Sometimes, as already noted in the case of Calbayog, a street cleaning department was established to keep the towns sanitary.

Passive health measures were not the only actions taken to keep the command physically fit. Prior to departure from the United States all men received inoculations at Fort Ethan Allen.⁹¹ And to insure continuation of medical services Acting Assistant Surgeon John F. Leeper and Private William L. Gist, Hospital Corps, were assigned to Laguan to set up the hospital early in May 1900.⁹² Leeper was not a commissioned officer but a civilian physician hired by the Medical Department, as were a large number, by contract. Acting Assistant Surgeons were entitled to the same respect and obedience from the enlisted men as an officer and were authorized to wear the rank of a first lieutenant except that straps and ornaments were to be in silver instead of gold.⁹³ John Leeper remained with Company H until its departure from the Philippines. The doctor treated those Filipinos to which he had access as well as the soldiers.

Of course, pills and shots alone do not maintain a man's well being. Food was another area of concern for the company officers, especially Second Lieutenant Wilson who was on orders as the post commissary of Calbayog and later of Laguan, the sort of honor usually bestowed on the junior-most lieutenant. It appears that most of the army rations consumed by the troops were shipped to the Philippines from outside the theater. An Inspector General's report filed in 1899 indicated that cold storage ships arriving in Manila brought Australian beef and U.S. grown potatoes and onions.

Roasted and ground coffee was procured in Manila. Lieutenant Wilson, in a letter dated 16 February 1900, recounts the arrival of a ship at Calbayog bearing two months rations and sales to officers, a cargo totalling 190,000 pounds. In a letter dated 28 July 1900 a Regular Army soldier stationed with the Sixth U.S. Infantry on the island of Panay described meals he ate on 27 July.

Friday
Breakfast

Slum (Beef stew), oatmeal & milk, bread, coffee

Dinner

Steak & gravy, peas, stewed onions, bread, coffee

Supper

Rice, milk, prunes, bread, coffee.⁹⁴

It is risky to assume the soldiers' meals on Panay were the same as those on Samar. However, Holston's menu so closely resembles the meals planned for the Forty-third troop mess aboard the Meade that it is probably safe in this case to make this presumption.⁹⁵ Moreover, since Panay was also in the Department of Visaysa, it is logical to conclude that they were shipped the same rations from Manila.

Lest we forget, there is also food for the soul, pay, mail and recreation. The Private's pay in 1900 had not changed much from the days of the Indian wars in the west. Second Class Privates drew \$15.60 a month and a Sergeant earned \$40.80.⁹⁶ Out of this amount 12 1/2¢ was taken each month to support the Soldiers' Home. Lieutenant Wilson stated that his monthly earnings were \$116 3/4. Pay day was once every two months, the actual day being determined by the arrival of the Paymaster.⁹⁷ The unit musters held at the end of every month were, therefore, more a matter of

accounting for personnel and reintroducing the soldiers to a little "spit and polish" reminding them that they were still in the army.

Unit records of the Regiment, Battalion and Company do not reflect any serious disciplinary problems in H Company. Private Hart told Corporal Allport to "go to hell" on 31 January which cost him one month's pay. A similar invitation to another N.C.O. at Fort Ethan Allen back in October got Private Noeil five days' confinement at hard labor and a fine of \$5.00. One letter from Captain Dey to Major Gilmore exists mentioning an "attack" by Private Cunniff against Lieutenant Wilson which was being addressed as to possible disciplinary action. There is record of several cases of dereliction on guard duty such as "slouching on post" and "sitting down while on guard," but other than these, most of the other offenses found related to minor infractions of the military code. The 1901 report of the Inspector General of the Army states:

In the Philippines the commands are so scattered and the officers so few in number and burdened with innumerable duties that the conditions are not favorable to a high standard of discipline, and the reports show a decided falling off in the observance of regulations regarding dress, appearance, and saluting. In other respects the discipline is unquestioned.⁹⁸

This statement, although dealing in general with America's Philippine army, is true for Company H as well.

The Inspector General was very accurate in his remarks about the soldiers' appearance and dress. The soldiers boarding the transport Kilpatrick in May 1901 would look very different from those arriving in Manila on the Meade almost a year and a half before. As early after arrival on Luzon as 11 January, Colonel Murray published an order



Company H Soldiers break
for lunch on the trail
between Jaro and Carigara

authorizing outposts to wear the blue flannel shirt, buttoned up, between retreat and reveille.⁹⁹ By February duty uniform was being described as campaign hats, khaki trousers, tan shoes and leggins. Blue shirts were to be worn buttoned up, sleeves down and no handkerchieves around the men's necks.¹⁰⁰ By April the uniform regulations were further relaxed to permit men off duty to wear or not wear the canvas leggins "at the pleasure of the wearer."¹⁰¹ One wonders whether the soldiers were following orders or if orders regarding uniforms were attempting to keep abreast of the habits of the soldier. Without going into more detail on the matter of uniforms, since the accompanying photographs tell the story better than words, let it only be pointed out that the officers and soldiers clad themselves as comfortably as possible within the limitations of army issue.

There were some problems with the personal equipment issued to the troops. The brown russet shoes worn by the men were not up to the demands of service in the Philippines. Commenting on the footwear problem, Colonel Garlington, Inspector General in Manila, pointed out that, "for field service, particularly in the mountains, the shoes are a failure; soles are too thin and soft, wear out rapidly, and are easily torn from uppers."¹⁰² Major Allen, the Third Battalion commander, commented on the situation in an official letter dated 6 April 1900, reporting that one patrol out for eleven days returned without shoes because they wore out. Samar was a tough proving ground for shoes. Another cause of foot trouble at Laguan was a rash of ulcerated feet brought on by a lack of socks. Gilmore's battalion had sent out several requisitions for a resupply, but between their departure from Manila in January and 18 May none had arrived.

Another item of issue which gave the soldier some cause for concern was the blue flannel shirt, but not because of its discomfort in hot climate.

The shirt had been in the army inventory since 1883. Apparently, the men preferred it to the khaki blouse because of its lighter weight and the fact that it was less restrictive to movement. What worried the army, said the Inspector General's Department, was the dark blue color which acted as a good aiming point for enemy riflemen. Experience from the Philippine Insurrection would eventually lead to the development of a khaki flannel shirt of the same design, but the Forty-third would not benefit from the change as it came too late.

Another thing which came too late, at least as far as the soldiers were concerned, was mail. The mail arrived at Laguan by steamer from Manila via Calbayog or sometimes Tacloban, Leyte, about once or twice a month. When a soldier did get mail it came in bunches. Lieutenant Wilson tells of receiving six at one time on 15 March.¹⁰³ Pilferage of packages in the postal system is mentioned in another letter written by Wilson who recommends that anything of value be sent by registered mail.¹⁰⁴

Entertainment for the soldiers on Samar must have been very difficult to find. Prior to leaving Vermont, Mrs. Murray, the Colonel's wife, collected reading matter from Essex Junction, Burlington and Winooski, Vermont for the ocean trip. Because of this drive there must have been considerable material available for the man who enjoyed reading. There is not any evidence, either in official records or letters, that the soldiers fraternized with the local females. But it is hardly likely that the Americans did not avail themselves of the ladies' charms from time to time. The lack of official references to these contacts is probably due to the fact that, at least with Company H, no problems arose requiring disciplinary action or investigation.



NCOs relaxing in Laguan, Samar

On the other hand, drinking, sometimes to excess, is recorded in both personal letters and official documents. This means of entertainment is documented in reports of unit summary court procedures. Corporal Crozier was fined and reduced to private for being drunk and disorderly in the streets of Calbayog just two days following the company's landing in Samar. The same man showed up at drill on 13 February in a similar condition. Private Johnson of E Company who wandered off in early February after over-indulging in some local vino was mentioned earlier. Alcoholic beverages produced in the U.S. as well as locally made products were available to members of the company. A problem situation regarding alcoholism is evidenced by a company directive published in Barugo, Leyte on 3 November 1900 forbidding the sale to soldiers of whiskey, vino, and tuba.¹⁰⁵

Officers of the company engaged in more refined kinds of entertainment. The larger towns of Leyte and Samar such as the company's posts at Laguan and later at Barugo normally contained families of Europeans working for commercial interests such as Warner, Barnes and Co. Frequently the officers would be invited to their homes and treated with old world courtesy. Even with the officers responding to their hospitality by subjecting them to renditions of "After the Ball," the hosts and hostesses seemed to genuinely enjoy these social occasions as much as Captain Dey and his subordinates.¹⁰⁶

But times of frivolity were rare especially on Samar where the company was virtually fighting for its life in the spring of 1900. Besides the continual patrolling, or "hikes" as they were often referred to by both officers and men, and the fatigue details already addressed, there were other routine duties. Guard duty was the major garrison duty for all ranks,

the men as sentinels, the NCOs as NCOs of the guard, and officers as officers of the day. Even in a hostile environment there is hardly anything that matches sentry duty for true boredom. A two hour tour of guard duty is an eternity. It is lonely and it is dull. A brief summary of Summary Court reports between the time the company embarked on board the Meade on 14 December until the company departed for Laguan on 20 February include eight instances of misconduct on guard. This includes one involving Private Slack who, while he was on guard on 5 December 1899, "Suffered Private Weiss to enter hospital where a contagious disease was confined." Eight Summary courts, which were related to infractions of regulations while on guard, out of thirty constitute a significant percentage.¹⁰⁷ Being attacked by both the Filipinos and U.S. Army Regulations proved to be very uncomfortable to the guard. The officer, at least, was able to do more than just walk his post in a military manner, keeping always on the alert. He could find distraction in such pursuits as checking roll-call at assembly for company parade, taking the names of late-comers, inspecting company meals and inspecting the men's and officers' sinks and garbage dumps twice daily.¹⁰⁸ Little wonder that few men complained when selected for a patrol.

This, then, was what the men of Company H experienced in the Philippines. They were exposed to many hardships caused by severe weather and unsanitary conditions. The equipment issued was deficient in many respects but, generally speaking, it was both functional and well suited to the guerrilla war fought on Samar and Leyte. Recreational activities lacked variety but these men lived at a time when pleasures were relatively simple. Medical facilities were rudimentary by today's standards, but in

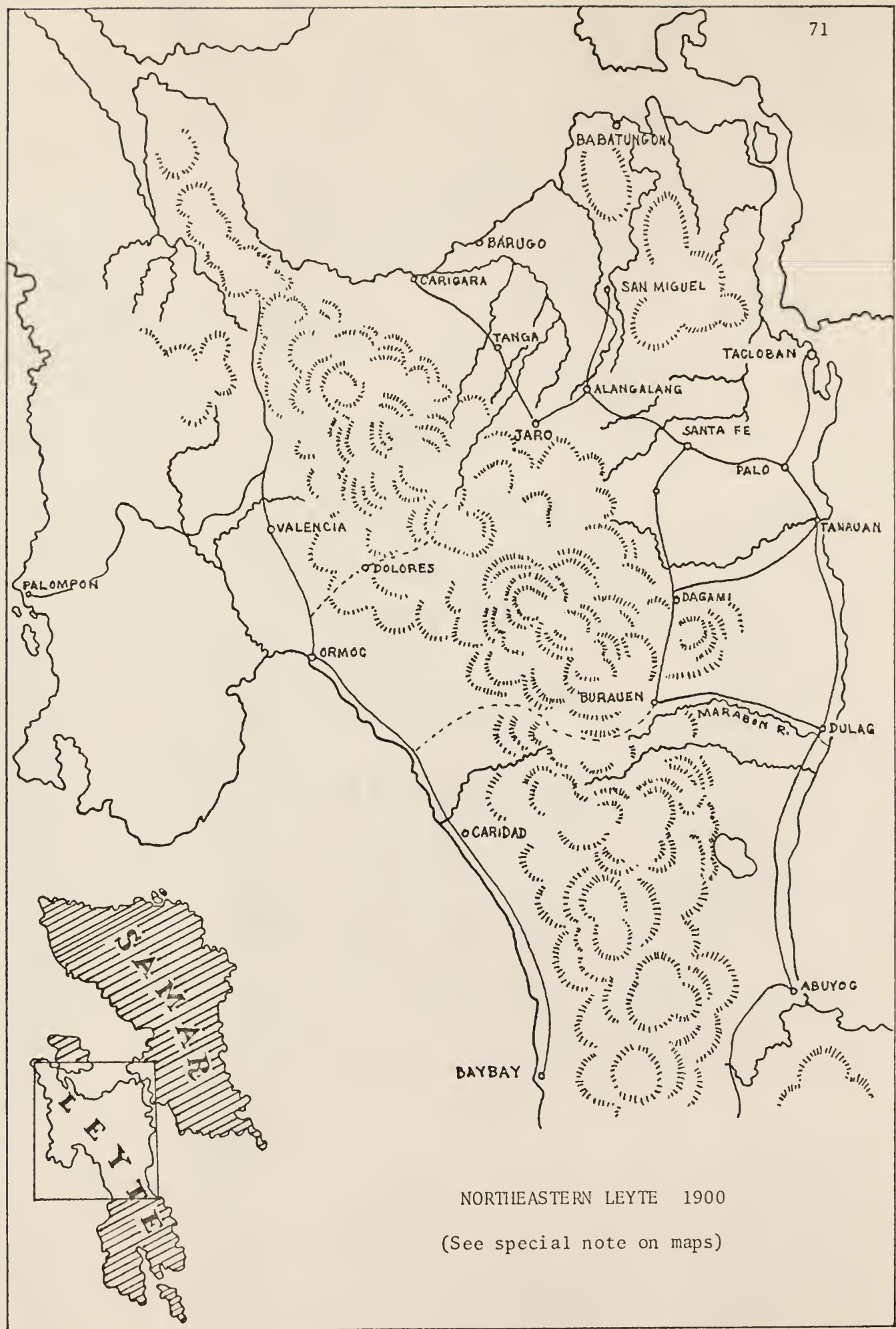
comparison to earlier American wars were both plentiful and effective. And finally, the rations consumed by the men of Company H were not especially imaginative and supply of them somewhat irregular but sufficient to maintain the men's strength and ability to conduct combat operations for a year and a half. With this in mind, a return to the odyssey of H Company Forty-third Infantry, U.S.V. is in order.

PART III

The Forty-third Consolidates on Leyte

May and June were months of constant patrolling in the north coast and the island of Laguan. The only real event of this period was the arrival on 13 June of the U.S. gunboat Marietta. After anchoring in the harbor the next morning at 7 o'clock, the ship's captain and several of his officers paid a call on Captains Dey and Cooke. Later that day the two volunteer captains went aboard the navy vessel after which it sailed to a position off the beaches of Catarman where it lobbed some shells into insurgent trenches. The Marietta returned to Laguan the following afternoon and disembarked Dey and Cooke who had just witnessed a pleasant way of fighting a war. The gunboat departed for Cebu the 16th.¹⁰⁹ At 5:30 p.m. 26 June a steam launch from the U.S.A.T. Pennsylvania, which was laying off the Laguan point, arrived with Major Allen and some other officers. Allen had orders for Dey and Cooke to prepare their companies for departure at once. Both units embarked and the Pennsylvania left for Calbayog the following day. Company H transferred to the steamer Elcano at Calbayog with the Second Battalion and were landed on the north coast of Leyte at the town of Barugo on 2 July 1900, relieving a detachment commanded by Lieutenant Morris of Company I.¹¹⁰

This move was ordered by Brigadier General R. P. Hughes, past Provost Marshal of Manila and recently assigned commander of the Department of the Visayas. The decision was made due in great part to the beating taken by Company H at Catubig. Hughes had concluded that the Forty-third had bitten off more than it could chew in attempting pacification of both



NORTHEASTERN LEYTE 1900

(See special note on maps)

Samar and Leyte, which constituted the 1st District of the Department of the Visayas.¹¹¹ He, therefore, ordered concentration of the Regiment on Leyte, and Samar was transferred temporarily to the Department of Southern Luzon as its 4th District.¹¹² Samar was garrisoned after the Second and Third Battalions' departure by six companies of the Twenty-ninth Infantry Regiment, U.S.V. which went into a strict defensive attitude at Catbalogan and Laguan.¹¹³ With the arrival of the last unit from Samar the U.S. force in the 1st District totalled twelve companies of the Forty-third and Companies A and D of the Forty-fourth Regiments of Infantry, U.S.V., all under command of Colonel Murray at Tacloban.¹¹⁴

Murray organized Leyte into three Subdistricts, each under one of his Majors. Andrews, who had been on Leyte the entire time, commanded the First Subdistrict while Allen and Gilmore were placed in charge of the Second and Third respectively. Later in December when Lincoln Andrews was evacuated from the Philippine Islands for medical reasons, Allen became commander of the First and Second Subdistricts which comprised the eastern half of Leyte.¹¹⁵ The battalion organization was totally disrupted by this set up, with Company H coming under Andrews' First Subdistrict. Even more damaging to unit integrity was the assignment of officers of one company to another such as the temporary assignment of Lieutenant Wilson and the more permanent assignment of Joseph Sweeney to Company B. Although Captain Dey and the company remained stationed at Barugo until the Regiment's departure for the United States in the summer of 1901, there was a constant flow of company members from one company station to another. This situation complicates the study of Company H activities on Leyte.

The Situation in Leyte in July 1900

When Murray arrived in Leyte in January, the Americans had to drive General Moxica's insurgent troops out of Tacloban after a skirmish in the streets.¹¹⁶ In the year that Leyte's insurrecto leader had to prepare for the arrival of the Americans, he had organized his forces into three infantry companies, an artillery company, one section each of bolomen, flying guerrillas and marine infantry and a superior headquarters. A captured muster roll dated 1 January 1900 showed the command's strength as twenty nine officers and 467 men.¹¹⁷ The figures of this organization are misleading since, subsequent to publication of the muster roll, the regular officers were authorized to raise bolero companies greatly increasing its size and fighting capacity.

On 2 March 1900 Moxica received instructions in a letter from the Aguinaldo government which are interesting in that it describes techniques to be used against the Americans and some revealing perceptions held by the insurgents about their enemy. Guerrillas were told to fight the Americans from a standing position as they fired low and it is better to be hit in the leg than through the trunk or head. The poorly trained soldier shoots high, the properly instructed soldier aims low to take advantage of ricochets. Maximum ranges of forty to fifty meters were encouraged for use when engaging the enemy with rifles. Men were to recover weapons and ammunition from friendly casualties but leave the wounded where they fell, an indicator that men were easier to replace than rifles. Bolomen were to be used to attack unarmed U.S. soldiers. Natives would be placed in occupied towns to be "friends" but to spy on the Americans. And, in general, the insurgent command on Leyte was to adopt guerrilla tactics. In addition,

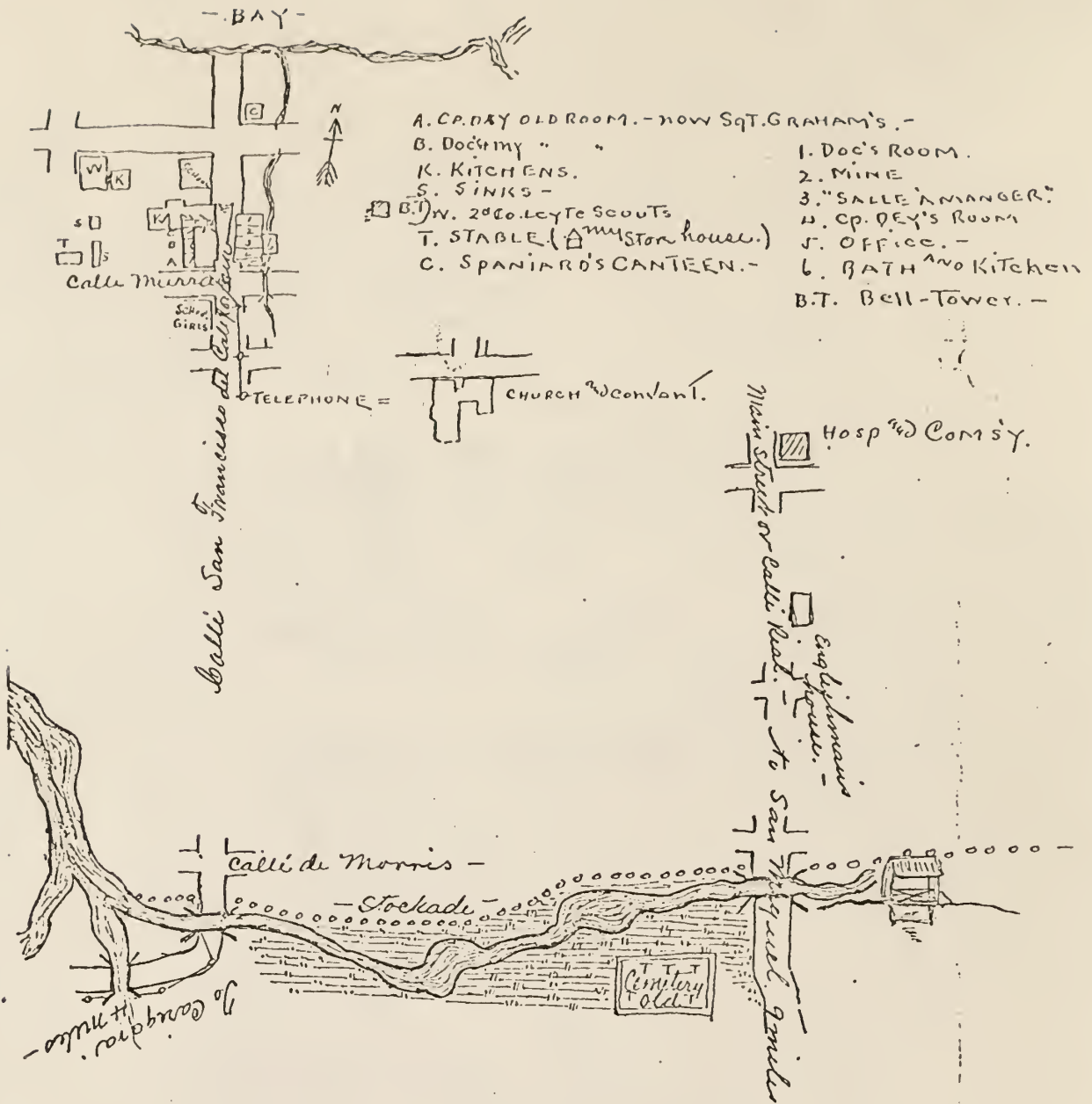
Filipino women should be used as couriers since the Americans never search women. Finally, the instructions regarding friendly wounded were based on the contention by the Filipinos that the U.S. soldiers take good care of wounded insurgents.¹¹⁸

Moxica's subordinates, as in most guerrilla conflicts, expended as much effort attacking their fellow Visayans as they did the Americans. The term used for their "home grown" enemies was "Americanistas." On 20 May 1900 a letter was published over the signature of Ambrocio Moxica y Rodrins, Brigadier General, Chief of Operations and Politico-Military Governor of the Province of Leyte, listing military crimes. One of the crimes was the entering of Filipinos into enemy service. That list does not show mandatory penalties but in another letter dated 17 August Honesto Ruiz, commander of the Second Company, reports to Moxica that he ordered "all real Americanistas" such as police and volunteers put to death.¹¹⁹ The record, in fact, shows that these measures were put into effect.¹²⁰

The Leyte guerrilla that fought the Americans was as savage a combatant as was his brother on Samar. Instances of badly wounded bolomen aggressively attacking soldiers of the Forty-third are recorded in official reports.¹²¹ However, whether it was the pressure applied by an entire U.S. regiment reinforced with two additional companies, ineptness of the insurgent leadership or the lack of local support, the guerrilla war in Leyte somehow never took on the deadly fierceness of that on Samar. There would be no "Catubigs" on the Island of Leyte.

Company H on Leyte, 2 July 1900 to 22 May 1901

After their arrival at Barugo the company took up quarters in the police station on the street called Calle San Francisco del California. The



Map of Barugo, Leyte
 From Lieutenant Wilson's Letter
 of 7 December 1900



Barugo Street Scene.

Officers' quarters seen on the left side of the
street across from the troop barracks

men set up their barracks upstairs and the officers, including Doctor Leeper, on the ground floor. The building was of wood with a nipa thatched roof. The officers would move to other quarters just across the street from the troops in a nipa building in November or December.¹²² But once set up the company had work to do; there was still a guerrilla war being fought on the island.

A patrol of fifteen men was sent to Carigara and back on 4 and 5 July. About the same time another patrol of twelve men under Sergeant Francis was dispatched to provide protection for Lieutenant Wallace and his men who were repairing a break in the telegraph wire.

First Lieutenant Charles S. Wallace, a signal corps officer, was Murray's signal officer for the island. The signal corps lieutenant performed yeoman service on Leyte in establishing wire communications and then constantly repairing it as the lines became favorite targets of the enemy.¹²³ To assist him, he had the support of about 23 NCOs and men from Company H, Signal Corps, U.S.A. who also specialized in performing miracles, emplacing poles, digging the holes with bayonets sometimes, stringing the wire and then attempting to maintain the system. On 1 July 1900 three garrisons were connected by wire. A year later eighteen garrisons had either telephone or telegraphic communications or both. On 10 July 1900, Barugo's signal station, equipped with a telephone, was opened. Many of the problems which developed in Samar could have been overcome or alleviated had there been such a system in existence there.

In the field of civil affairs, Captain Dey was blessed with a functioning municipal government at Barugo. Besides the town council, with Vedastro Adrales as Alcalde, there existed a police force of at least twenty

men. Initially the police went unarmed except when loaned soldiers' weapons which was a bad solution to the problem. Captain Dey remedied the situation on 28 September by issuing .45 caliber revolvers to the native police as replacements for their bolos.¹²⁴

Captain Dey was quick to seize upon the idea of using the town constables in anti-insurgent operations. By 9 July, it is recorded, some native police accompanied a patrol led by Sergeant James Francis which was to check a report of the murder of an old man.¹²⁵ Following this time it is difficult to find any operation that was not accompanied by native police or later by Filipino scouts. The concept of joint American-Filipino anti-guerrilla forays was mutually beneficial to both sides. Not only did it offer the Americans reliable guides who spoke the language and knew the local people, but it gave the native police added prestige and an opportunity to learn military skills which would prove useful in law enforcement. The work with local police was to lead to the formation of four companies of Leyte Scouts, a concept found very successful on Luzon with the Macabebe Scouts.¹²⁶

Doctor Leeper established a hospital which provided medical and health services for both soldiers and civilians at Barugo. Because of his treatment of the local population Leeper asked in July that the company requisition certain medicines in lieu of bandages which were evidently plentiful.¹²⁷ Of course, the hospital at Barugo, which serviced the entire north coast of Leyte, was not primarily there as a civil affairs project. In spite of the sanitation measures taken by the company officers and NCOs there were always sick men. A host of illnesses from diarrhea to smallpox was to strike Barugo in the year it was occupied by Company H. Leeper and



A. Surg. Jno. F. Leeper ^{3rd} 2^o LT. W. H. Wilson, 43rd I.
 - Calle Real, Carigara Leyte. Oct. 1900 -

The Doctor and the Lieutenant

at Carigara

his two hospital corps men reacted with vigor to the smallpox epidemic which developed in the town in January 1901. The surgeon got Captain Dey to publish Special Order #2 on 17 January listing protective measures to be taken by the soldiers. Directives included personal sanitary actions and prohibitions against entering or loitering around native "shack" houses or stores. Failure to comply with this order resulted in immediate confinement plus the preferring of charges of disobedience of orders against the malefactor.¹²⁸ And then in March 1901, after several days of feeling ill, Leeper's assistant hospital steward died of what was later discovered to be a self-inflicted overdose of morphine. Apparently, the easy access to the drug in the hospital led Clare Trumbull to become addicted and then, probably by mistake, to overdose himself.¹²⁹ He was buried in the Barugo church cemetery joining five other soldiers from Companies L and B.

Schools were another area of nation building in which the company became active. In Barugo there were established a school for boys and a girls' school. The four teachers working in the schools were paid by the army. Whether or not any of the officers or men of the company actually taught the school children could not be ascertained from records available except for one of Lieutenant Wilson's letters in which he states that Sergeant Doe when in captivity on Samar taught school for the children of the insurgents.¹³⁰ Captain Dey, however, did help out by procuring teaching materials for the schools from Mr. Atkinson, the General Superintendent of Education in Manila. Supplies such as Barnes History of the United States (in Spanish), Baldwin's First Year and Second Year English Readers, McGuffey's English Reading charts, Barnes Vertical Writing Copy Books, pens, pencils, paper, slates and so forth were listed as being available in

Manila for requisition.¹³¹ In a letter from Dey to Atkinson dated 16 December, the captain mentions the receipt of some items but gross shortages of others.¹³² Some may question the appropriateness of U.S. histories and English language materials. That the Philippines was now a territory of the United States would appear to answer that query. The Americans found that the school children were apt pupils and learned rapidly. By January 1901, Major Allen reported that 500 boys and girls were attending classes in Barugo with 300 more awaiting space.¹³³ Although the officers and men did find themselves involved in civil affairs their main purpose in the Philippine Islands was to secure them, and that meant military operations.

As was pointed out earlier, the dispatching of patrols was begun only two days after the company's arrival at Barugo. The west coast, in Major Gilmore's sub-district proved to be the major area of guerrilla activity. That area was mountainous and heavily forested and, therefore, conducive to irregular warfare. Insurgent bands also operated in the First Sub-District and these involved Company H. The normal method used was the patrol of the kind which would be called "search and destroy" by the U.S. army in the 1960's. Typical of these operations was one under the leadership of Lieutenant Wilson which began 18 January. Taking six H Company men plus fifteen Leyte scouts, of whom more will be written later, he set out for Jaro. At midday a break was called and, after security was posted, the men dug into their haversacks for a feast of salmon, which the soldiers labeled "goldfish," and bread. The dusty men plodded into Jaro, a thirteen mile march, at about 2 o'clock that afternoon. After dismissing the men, Wilson indulged himself by pouring a few buckets of water down his back. Before departing Jaro at 3 the next afternoon he picked up five recruits

for his company of scouts. Two hours from Jaro the patrol arrived in Alangalang along with a party of troops under Lieutenant Lindsey who had joined forces at the former town. Eleven more recruits were taken on at Alangalang, bringing the strength of Wilson's Second Company of Leyte Scouts up to eighty-seven. At 7 a.m. on 21 January they set out for Palo, thirteen miles distant. About half way to that town, near a place called Sante Fe, a man was sighted cutting down one of Lieutenant Wallace's telegraph poles. The man was swiftly dispatched. After a stop-over in Palo the patrol continued up the coast to Tacloban, the headquarters of Regiment and the First District of the Department of the Visayas. Reporting the arrival of his men to the Regiment's adjutant, Captain Tilton, Wilson was informed that he and his troops were quarantined along with everyone else at Tacloban. A native had developed a case of smallpox prior to their arrival. While in Tacloban, the lieutenant had a chance to observe one of the army's anti-guerrilla policies being put into effect. On 29 January seventy-five captured insurgent leaders, officers and civil officials, were put aboard ships for deportation to Guam and other ports, accompanied by much sobbing and wailing amongst their relatives who had come to witness their exile.

The patrol's period of confinement ended on 7 February and the patrol marched an uneventful forty-two miles back to Barugo arriving there on the 9th. As noted, this "hike" was typical of the patrolling in the northeastern subdistrict of Leyte. One and a half months earlier an operation in this part of the island was undertaken by Lieutenants Swann and Leaf with thirty men from Companies A, K and L, four native police from Tanauan and nine prisoners which ended quite differently.

Six days after their departure from Tanauan they were skillfully

ambushed on the beach near the village of Sabong between Babatungon and Barugo by a band of insurgents led by Captain Domingo Umbria. Two men from L Company were killed instantly in the murderous crossfire. Five others went down with wounds of varying seriousness, including Second Lieutenant Leaf. The fight lasted about thirty minutes. For the next six and a half hours Swann struggled to get his wounded the last eight miles to Barugo. The wounded were eventually transported to the H Company post in a makeshift catamaran. Because of the communications system which had been established on Leyte, word of the ambush was rapidly disseminated. The notification brought Doctor Shattuck in from Jaro along with Captain Dey, and Major (Doctor) Combe the surgeon from Tacloban in to assist Leeper with the wounded. That night, under the flickering lamps of the hospital, the doctors struggled to save the five wounded. Private Higgins died that night from Remington bullets through the chest and side. Private Carr succumbed from a Remington round in the back two days later on 16 December. Louis H. Leaf whose right leg had been shattered from a bullet was saved only by an amputation above the knee.¹³⁴

For the next week the territory in the area of the ambush was swept by patrols. Captain Dey sent Wilson out with ten Americans and ten scouts on 16 December. Lieutenant Morris, Allen's adjutant, brought twenty-nine soldiers from Palo to Barugo on the 16th and departed two days later for San Miguel in search of the insurgent band. A detachment from Alangalang led by Lieutenant Lindsey patrolled through the abandoned San Miguel to Babatungon reaching that town on 16 December with twenty-two Americans from Companies B, F and H, and two native soldiers. Shortly after he got there Lindsey met Captain Dey who came from Barugo aboard the steamer San

Bernardino with Lieutenant Swann and some troops from Companies H and L. Since Swann strongly suspected that the officials of that town had a hand in the ambush of his force, Captain Dey arrested them and brought them back to Barugo on his return.¹³⁵ Although the area was thoroughly searched, very little was found. Umbria and his men had fled.

The Americans must have felt a deep sense of disappointment in being unable to exact retribution from the guerrillas. Little did they know, however, that this was to be the last major encounter with the insurgents on the north coast of Leyte. From this time on the area became too hot for any sizeable guerrilla force to operate. Besides the saturation patrolling of infantrymen which kept the enemy on the move, the Forty-third employed two more options in which Company H became involved.

The first of these variations began with the introduction of forty American horses and forty sets of cavalry equipment into Leyte in July 1900. Colonel Murray determined that two detachments of mounted infantry would be formed. One detachment would be organized at Dagami, the second at Jaro in the First Subdistrict. Second Lieutenant Charles C. Estes became the first detachment commander at Jaro. On 15 December Lieutenant Sweeney who had been on duty with Company B as post commissary assumed command of this mounted infantry detachment. The stated purpose of these organizations was for them to perform scouting activities and similar work. The mounted soldiers soon became the kings of the road since they could respond rapidly to reports of enemy activity in the area. Once on the scene of action the men could dismount and perform their mission as infantrymen if the ground proved unsuited to mounted movement. With Jaro situated in a central position relative to the road network in the First Subdistrict, Sweeney's



1st Lieutenant Joseph T. Sweeney
as commander of mounted
infantry at Jaro, Leyte

detachment was well placed to perform tasks of scouting and frequent escort duty between towns. Between Sweeney's assumption of command and 8 May, five months, the horse soldiers fought in eleven recorded actions.¹³⁶

The second option has already been mentioned briefly. The formation of the Leyte Scouts resulted from the success of similar native units on other islands. Official organization of native scouts began in 19 July 1900 in the Department of the Visayas.¹³⁷ Regiment published General Order No. 4 on 17 August 1900 authorizing the raising of a Native Company to be recruited from the towns of Barugo, Carigara, Jaro and Palo. This was the second such company raised in Leyte and its headquarters would be at Barugo. The unit was to consist of a first sergeant, five sergeants, twelve corporals and eighty two privates and placed under command of Lieutenant Wilson. Commanders of the previously named towns were responsible for recruitment and initial training of the men. The scouts were issued American uniforms and equipment. During the early stage of the company's existence the troops drew the old Springfield rifles. Krags were not given to the Second Company of Leyte Scouts until 9 April 1901.¹³⁸ The scouts were paid in Mexican coin beginning at \$15 (Mexican) per month with another \$3 for clothing.¹³⁹

On 1 September Wilson enlisted his first twenty-six men. He selected Manuel Ponferrada, who had been a thrice-decorated soldier in the Spanish army, as the company's first sergeant. Two other sergeants and two corporals were also designated in this original group. Two hours were spent each day on training which included "school of the soldier, firing manual and extended order." Since Wilson later discovered the men to be brave but poor marksmen he began to conduct target practice twice weekly.¹⁴⁰



2d Lieutenant William Henry Wilson

poses by the Bell Tower

in Barugo, Leyte.

Notice the nonregulation

pistol belt and leggins

The original concept in the use of the scouts was to have them accompany every American patrol. As with the native police this proved to benefit both the American and the Filipino soldiers. As early as 12 September the Leyte Scouts were participating in operations, the first being with First Sergeant Graham to Tanga. On this outing a group of insurgents was encountered and put to flight leaving behind one killed and two wounded. From this date onward the scouts were constantly active in the field. To ensure that a proper rapport was built between the two races of soldiers, Murray directed that "Every effort will be made to promote good feeling and cordial relations between American troops and native troops."¹⁴¹ By the time the Forty-third left Leyte there would be a battalion of four companies of Leyte Scouts.

The War Winds Down on Leyte

It was previously stated that the major enemy activities were occurring on the west coast of Leyte during this time frame. Gilmore had five companies of troops from the Forty-third and Forty-fourth Regiments operating in his Third Subdistrict. Although there were insurgent attacks in the First and Second Subdistricts most were more akin to banditry than military activity. Moxica attempted to keep the fight up but he was to prove himself to be no Lukban.¹⁴² Leyte's guerrilla leader was also having difficulties controlling his subordinates. Jorge and Catilino Capili controlled two guerrilla units that never seemed to be under Moxica's command. Jorge Capili had gained a bad reputation as a bully and murderer after an incident in August 1900.¹⁴³ This lack of rigid structure is both the strength and weakness of the guerrilla army.

Colonel Murray commenced his concerted effort to drive Moxica into surrender once he had consolidated his positions on Leyte. Major Allen captured one of Moxica's headquarters on the Upper Marabon River in August. On 18 September Captain John L. Ketcham caught a party of insurgents in an ambush, killing Francisco Flordeliz, Moxica's second in command, near Hilongas on the west coast. Large bodies of guerrillas were scattered at Dolores and Valencia in September and November respectively. On 9 April Major Gilmore overran Moxica's cuartel at Caridad, capturing some cannon and incriminating documents. By 1 April the insurgent leader was kept on the move by the incessant pressure.¹⁴⁴

In the meantime, while Murray's offensive was going on, General Funston captured Emilio Aguinaldo on 23 March in a classic raid in Luzon's Benguet Mountains.¹⁴⁵ At about the same time surrenders of major insurgent units started on Leyte. The first to be recorded was the capitulation of Commandante Leon Brillo with forty-four officers and men at Tacloban on 8 March. The next day Moxica wrote a letter in reply to one he had received earlier from Major Gilmore. In his letter he stated that he would not surrender until ordered to do so by the chief of the Filipino army. Until that time his forces, he said, would fight on until the Americans gave up the idea of retaining the archipelago.¹⁴⁶ On 12 March a major indicator of the fast approaching collapse of insurrecto resistance occurred. On that day Captain Gregorio Almadrones with forty-six bolomen turned themselves in to Colonel Murray at Tacloban. With them they brought the image of "Santo Niño," a significant religious relic worshipped by the Catholics of Leyte. The symbol was removed from Tacloban in January 1900 when the Americans landed and was taken into the mountains. With the return of Tacloban's

special patron, the people of the island realized the major fighting was ending.

Among the other factors contributing to the changing mood of the people was the presence on Leyte of representatives of the Filipino Federal Party. This political group was formed in late 1900 by a group of prominent Filipinos who, if not especially enamored with the idea, at least accepted annexation of the Philippine Islands by the U.S. Señor Agustin Bañez, the party's representative sent to Leyte, travelled around the island speaking to villagers and insurgents, updating them on the current situation in the rest of the archipelago. Colonel Murray gave Bañez much of the credit for modifying the native sentiment toward the Americans.¹⁴⁷

Another indication pointing to the end of the Regiment's combat mission was General Order No. 12, which was published by the Headquarters of the First District in March. Colonel Murray, anticipating the return of his regiment to the U.S., was evidently well aware that its military appearance had declined somewhat since the arrival in Manila. The order directed the company commanders to emphasize drills and ceremonies in training so that when it was assembled it could present "a military appearance commensurate with its field record."¹⁴⁸ Murray had no intention of having his men disembark at San Francisco with the appearance of jungle bandits.

Finally on 8 or 9 May Moxica received his orders from General Trias on Luzon instructing him to surrender his command to the Americans. On the evening of 18 May the insurgent General arrived at Baybay, escorted by Captain Fair and capitulated to Major Gilmore. The following day, a Sunday, he took the oath of allegiance after the morning church service. With this

ceremony the insurgency on Leyte was, in effect, ended. There were several bands still out such as those of the notorious Jorge and Catilino Capili which would continue sporadic attacks for a time, but they could be dealt with without much trouble. And, on 3 August, Lukban published a proclamation reassuming command of the island, which exhorted the people to fight on.¹⁴⁹ Few people on Leyte paid any attention to the proclamation, however. By 26 May forty-seven officers and 1,368 men had turned themselves in and had taken the oath.

The time for the Forty-third's departure for the United States was rapidly approaching. It was a period for tying up loose ends. Personnel changes were being made, property needed to be accounted for, and plans for relinquishing various commands needed to be thought out.

Some of the officers and men would be remaining in the Philippines. Major Henry T. Allen was appointed by the Philippine Commission to be the Governor of Leyte on 22 April. Four of the Regiment's NCOs would be taking command of the companies of scouts. Lieutenant Wilson was relieved of his duties as commander of Company B, Leyte Scouts by Sergeant Noah Overly from Company F on 18 May.¹⁵⁰ Corporals Gantt and Corkum of Company H had applied for positions with the metropolitan police force of Manila and had been accepted. Their orders were received in February but they were not discharged to assume these jobs until 23 March.¹⁵¹ Corporal Kennedy, Cook Connors, Musician Sweeney and Private Percival all submitted their requests for discharge in order to engage in business in the Philippines. They too would be remaining when the Forty-third left.

On 22 May the U.S.A.T. Kilpatrick arrived off Carigara where Companies B and H had been assembled. Lieutenant Wilson and a detachment had



Company H soldiers pose for a
snapshot in front of the officers' quarters
in Barugo, Leyte

been left at Barugo until they could be relieved. As the Regulars disembarked the men of the two volunteer companies loaded on board. From Carigara the ship sailed down the west coast relieving and discharging troops, then up the east coast and into Tacloban's harbor on 29 May.¹⁵² Captain Dey's last monthly report was dated 26 May and notes street improvements in Barugo, new sidewalks of coral, drainage ditches, progress of the civil government, good attendance at the schools and a bridge on the road to Tanga being completed.¹⁵³ Regimental headquarters and the other detachments which had been left behind initially embarked on 31 May 1901. The forces relieving the twelve companies of the Forty-third and two of the Forty-fourth consisted of six companies of the Eleventh U.S. Infantry and two from the First U.S. Infantry.¹⁵⁴ General R. P. Hughes, Commander of the Department of the Visayas sent a letter to Murray on 16 May commending his Regiments' service.

We feel in parting with the Forty-third Infantry that we are losing one of the brightest ornaments we have. It is hoped that our countrymen on the other side of the globe may eventually learn about and have a veritable appreciation of the valuable services your command has rendered to our Government in the Philippines.¹⁵⁵

The Forty-third Makes Its Exit

After departing Tacloban on 1 June the Kilpatrick made its way to Manila where it anchored until the 5th. At noon that day the vessel sailed for San Francisco with 37 officers and 1,000 men from the Forty-third on board.¹⁵⁶ Of course, there was yet another list of calls published for observance during the voyage across the Pacific. The day was scheduled to start at 5:30 a.m. and end at 9:30 p.m. Mess hours were staggered and



The U.S. Army Transport Kilpatrick

troops were fed from two mess halls.¹⁵⁷ To ensure that the vessel was kept in a sanitary condition Lieutenant Sweeney was appointed as assistant to the police officer along with officers from other companies.

Lieutenant Wilson writes of the trip that it was "a most lovely trip, calm, fast and pleasant for us all." He also remarked that there was plenty of work to keep their "minds and hands from getting rusty."¹⁵⁸ This pleasant cruise ended on 27 June as the Kilpatrick glided into San Francisco Bay. The Regiment was moved to the Presidio at San Francisco and quartered in a tent camp called "Model Camp." Here the Regiment would remain for the last nine days of its short existence. On 5 July 1901 the Forty-third Regiment of Infantry U.S. Volunteers became a part of history.

PART IV

The Volunteer Army at War

What can be deduced from this brief study of a U.S. volunteer company at the dawn of the twentieth century? Using Company H as a vehicle, there are several areas in which conclusions can be reached. Volunteer units can be recruited. The men can respond effectively to training in a short period of time. They can be placed in a very strange environment and become accustomed to the terrain and enemy tactics. Disciplinary problems do not appear to be excessive in these formations. And finally the men of this company proved their fortitude on numerous occasions and also appeared to react with great flexibility to the introduction of new concepts such as civic action and the training and employment of indigenous soldiers.

The recruiting process is probably the key to the organization of military units, both good and bad. Only a fool truly believes that society's outcasts can be turned into effective soldiers any more than they can be turned into good parking lot attendants or policemen. Sending officers out from the unit to recruit their own men was fortuitous for Company H. By no means was the recruiting one hundred per cent successful. For instance, the company had eight deserters before it sailed from Brooklyn. In addition, it had its share of minor disciplinary problems. However, it is hard to believe that better recruiters could be found to select men for their units than the Regiments' company officers. The experience of Lieutenant Wilson while recruiting in Maine indicates the care with which recruits were selected.

The men who volunteered in Company H had little time to train. There is no evidence that indicates that any of the men other than the officers and a few NCOs had any prior service. The amount of time the company had in which to receive fruitful military instruction was at a maximum of six weeks. In spite of the time deficiency, the men arrived in the Philippine Islands in good physical condition and pretty well able to hit targets at which they aimed. Besides the combat training it is also apparent from the relatively low rate of incapacitating illnesses, although there were some cases, that the men's training in hygiene and disease control was properly grasped.

The evidence of low sick rates also shows that these men could adapt to unaccustomed environments. One must recall that on their departure from Vermont the temperature gauges were at freezing, and upon the arrival of the Meade at Manila the weather was sultry. Their marches north of Manila reflect their physical ability to adapt. The battles on the jungle trails proved their mental adaptability to be capable of fighting in the hell of Samar. Only one man in the company, Corporal Goves, became mentally unbalanced and had to be evacuated to the U.S.

In general, the troops had few disciplinary problems. Private Keough appears to have had a gargantuan drinking problem as did Private Crozier, but these men seem to be the exception to the rule. When regular officers think about volunteer units their greatest area for concern is lack of discipline, but a study of this company fails to support this perception. Judged against the author's eighteen years of experience as an infantry officer, the company appears to be a relatively well behaved group of soldiers.

More important than the attribute of discipline in a soldier is his bravery on the battlefield. A number of examples have been presented here to prove the point of steadfastness in adversity. Catubig was a battle lost. However, there were no Americans taken prisoner. In fact, there is no evidence that any of the soldiers seriously considered throwing in their hands. Wilson's ambush near Napora in February 1900 where his men fought with drill field precision against hidden riflemen reinforces the fact. Guts and discipline are not the only characteristics of reliable soldiers. The ability to think is occasionally called upon. This aptitude was sorely tested on Leyte and Samar. Soldiers were forced to use their skills in nation building activities in numerous occasions, especially on Leyte where the situation permitted it. Roads were built, bridges constructed, irrigation canals dug and municipal sanitation improved. The successful experiments of Leyte with the detachments of native scouts showed that these American soldiers could work effectively with soldiers from a completely different cultural background.

When taken together, the above factors prove that volunteer units are capable of accomplishing complex military missions. The proper mixture of conditions is required, however. America was still in its innocence and held to a different set of values. A work ethic existed at that time which has weakened considerably in the past seventy years. Therefore, the volunteers did not join to get something for nothing, and their attitude in the Philippines demonstrated this. They were willing to strain if the job required it. Also, the system of recruiting by units eliminated a large percentage of hard-core bums that appeared before the recruiter's desk.

In conclusion it should be said that Company H, Forty-third Regiment of Infantry U.S. Volunteers was no elite unit. It had its weaknesses. But



Barugo

Soldiers of Company H and, on the right of
the formation, Leyte Scouts, prior to a
patrol led by Lieutenant Wilson

it performed its job in the Philippines. Captain John R. M. Taylor in his compilation of Insurgent records states it concisely:

They were neither monsters nor saints; they were good examples of their time and period, ¹⁵⁹ young men taken from the world of young men.

NOTES

¹Frederic Augustus Weed, The Origins of the Philippine Insurrection Against the United States, p. 107.

²John R. M. Taylor, The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States: A Compilation of Documents with Notes and Introduction, II, 93.

³Salvador P. Lopez, "Chapter 1," The United States and the Philippines, p. 12.

⁴Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 2, 56th Congress, 2d Session, p. 200.

⁵Colonel William T. Sexton, Soldiers in the Philippines: A History of the Insurrection, p. 62; and Colonel Philip M. Shockley, The Krag-Jorgensen Rifle in the Service, p. 36.

⁶Lopez, op. cit., pp. 11-14.

⁷Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 2, op. cit., 206.

⁸James A. LeRoy, The Americans in the Philippines: A History of the Conquest and First Years of Occupation with an Introductory Account of the Spanish Rule, I, 49.

⁹Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 1, 56th Congress, 1st Session, p. 369.

¹⁰Sexton, op. cit., p. 3.

¹¹Russell F. Weigley, U.S. Army Military History, Research Collection: Special Bibliographic Series Number 9, p. v.

¹²Robert L. Beisner, Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialists 1898-1900, pp. 95-96.

¹³Taylor, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 194.

¹⁴Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 2, 56th Congress, 1st Session, p. 416.

¹⁵Company H Description and Clothing Book, National Archives, Record Group (R.G.) 94.

¹⁶Letters Sent, 43d Regiment, R.G. 94, 24 August 1899.

- ¹⁷Register of Graduates, USMA, 1970, Class of 1874.
- ¹⁸Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 1, op. cit., p. 416.
- ¹⁹"Forty-Third's Bad Luck," New York Sun, 15 Nov. 1899. This article and those which are referred to later are from the collection of papers of Major-General William H. Wilson and are located in a scrap book, having been clipped from their respective newspapers. Some are not dated and the newspaper of origin is sometimes not indicated, but since the scrapbook was prepared during the period in question and pertains to the 43d Regiment, it is logical to accept their validity and appropriateness as sources of information.
- ²⁰Company H, Description and Clothing Book, op. cit.
- ²¹Company H, Muster Out Book, R.G. 94.
- ²²Newspaper article, Augusta Maine, 15 Sept. 1899.
- ²³Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 1, op. cit., p. 413.
- ²⁴"Four Recruits Saturday," newspaper article, newspaper unknown.
- ²⁵Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 1, 55th Congress, 3d Session, p. 509.
- ²⁶Army and Navy Journal, 7 Oct. 1899.
- ²⁷Company H Organizational Roll, R.G. 94, 4 Nov. 1899.
- ²⁸"Organizing a Regiment: Forty-Third Infantry in Quarters Vacated by 3d Cavalry," Burlington Daily Free Press, p. 6, 6 Oct. 1899.
- ²⁹Orders Book, 43d Regiment, R.G. 94, G.O #12, 7 Sept. 1899.
- ³⁰William Henry Wilson, Letter to his Mother, 7 Oct. 1899.
- ³¹W. H. Wilson, Letter to his Mother, 22 Oct. 1899.
- ³²Firing Regulations for Small Arms for the United States Army, p. 75.
- ³³Shockley, op. cit., pp. 8 and 26.
- ³⁴W. H. Wilson, op. cit.
- ³⁵Letters Sent and Indorsements, 43d Regiment, 25 Sept. 1899.
- ³⁶"Soldiers in Court," Burlington Daily Free Press, p. 5, 14 Nov. 1899.

³⁷"Jail Free of Soldiers," *ibid.*

³⁸"Fort Ethan Allen Notes," Burlington Daily Free Press, p. 5, 10 Nov. 1899. Telegrams Sent 43d Regiment, U.S.V., R.G. 94, 10 Nov. 1899.

³⁹Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

⁴⁰Henry T. Allen, Letter, Allen to Wife, Jeannie, 1 Dec. 1899.

⁴¹W. F. Beyer & O. F. Keydel, eds., Deeds of Valor from Records in the Archives of the United States Government, II, 466.

⁴²Taylor, Vol. II, *op. cit.*, p. 438.

⁴³"Regiment Going Today," Burlington Daily Free Press, p. 1, 13 Nov. 1899.

⁴⁴Col. Arthur Murray, Doc. #295068/c, R.G. 94.

⁴⁵"Forty-Thirds Bad Luck," *op. cit.*

⁴⁶Lopez, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁴⁷Newspaper article, New York Telegram, 16 Nov. 1899.

⁴⁸Company H, Muster Out Roll, *op. cit.*

⁴⁹Reports of the Chiefs of Bureaus, 56th Congress, 2d Session, pp. 171-176.

⁵⁰Company H, Orders Book, R.G. 94, 16 Nov. 1899.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 20 Dec. 1899.

⁵²H. T. Allen, Letter, Allen to Wife, 1 Dec. 1899.

⁵³Allen, Letter, Allen to Wife, 3 Dec. 1899.

⁵⁴Col. Arthur Murray, "Succinct History of the 43d Regiment of Infantry, United States Volunteers," R.G. 94.

⁵⁵Allen, Letter, Allen to Wife, 17 Dec. 1899.

⁵⁶W. H. Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his family, 17 Jan. 1900.

⁵⁷Allen, Letter, Allen to Son, Harry, 6 Jan. 1900.

⁵⁸Company H, Returns, Jan. 1900, R.G. 94.

⁵⁹Wilson, *op. cit.*

⁶⁰Allen, Letter, Allen to Wife, 16 Jan. 1900.

⁶¹Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 1, 56th Congress, 2d Session, p. 17.

⁶²LeRoy, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 169.

⁶³Taylor, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 432-444.

⁶⁴Beyer, op. cit., p. 470.

⁶⁵LeRoy, op. cit., p. 185.

⁶⁶Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

⁶⁷Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his family, 29 Jan. 1900.

⁶⁸Maj. J. C. Gilmore, Report 29 Jan. 1900, Doc. #351309, R.G. 94.

⁶⁹Gilmore, Report 14 Feb. 1900, *ibid*.

⁷⁰Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his family, 7 Feb. 1900.

⁷¹Col. Arthur Murray, "Proclamation American," dated 3 Feb. 1900 in Allen Papers.

⁷²Taylor, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 636-638.

⁷³Gilmore, Report 3 Mar. 1900, op. cit.

⁷⁴Company H, Company Orders Book, 7 Sept. 1899-14 Nov. 1900, Ord. #15, 19 Feb. 1900.

⁷⁵Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Report of the War Department 1901, pt. 2, p. 139.

⁷⁶Taylor, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 653-660. The American's spelling of insurgent officer's name is probably incorrect as he is probably Captain Narcisco Abuque recorded as one of Lukban's officers.

⁷⁷Gilmore, op. cit. One of the problems in this war as with our late war in Vietnam was not the lack of information but the volume, much of it contradictory and, therefore, subject to interpretation, frequently incorrect.

⁷⁸Gilmore, Report 15 Feb. 1900, op. cit.

⁷⁹Allen, Letter, Allen to Wife, 14 Mar. 1900, Official Letters, Subdistrict of Samar 10 Mar.-30 Nov. 1900, R.G. 94.

⁸⁰Gilmore, Report 4 April 1900, op. cit.

⁸¹Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his family, 26 Mar. 1900.

- ⁸² Gilmore, Report 6 July 1900, op. cit.
- ⁸³ Sergeant Doe, Statement in Allen Papers.
- ⁸⁴ Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Report of the War Department 1900, Pt. 5, pp. 231-234 and 243-247.
- ⁸⁵ Taylor, Vol. V, op. cit., pp. 653-660. Company H Letters Sent 9 Oct. 1899-3 July 1901, 9 Feb. 1900, R.G. 94.
- ⁸⁶ Taylor, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 430.
- ⁸⁷ The Medal of Honor of the United States, p. 247.
- ⁸⁸ Gilmore, Report 18 May 1900, op. cit.
- ⁸⁹ Allen, Letter, Allen to Wife, 20 April 1900.
- ⁹⁰ Gilmore, Report 14 Feb. 1900, op. cit.
- ⁹¹ Allen, Letter, Allen to Wife, 25 Nov. 1899.
- ⁹² Second Battalion Orders Book, 12 Jan. 1900-14 May 1901, R.G. 94, Orders #40, 28 Apr. 1900.
- ⁹³ Manual for the Medical Department, pp. 17-18.
- ⁹⁴ Harry Holston, Letter, Holston to his parents, 28 Jul. 1900.
- ⁹⁵ "Regiment Going Today: the 43d Will Start for New York This Evening," op. cit.
- ⁹⁶ Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army, pt. 1, 55th Congress, 3d Session, p. 523.
- ⁹⁷ Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his family, 29 Jan. 1900.
- ⁹⁸ Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Pt. 1, Report of the War Department 1901, p. 142.
- ⁹⁹ Company H, Orders Book, op. cit., G.O. #5, 11 Jan. 1900.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ibid., Orders #10, 6 Feb. 1900.
- ¹⁰¹ Second Battalion Orders Book, op. cit., Orders #34, 10 Apr. 1900.
- ¹⁰² Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, op. cit., p. 151.
- ¹⁰³ Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his Father, 17 Mar. 1900.
- ¹⁰⁴ Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his family, 26 Mar. 1900.

- ¹⁰⁵Company H, Orders Book, op. cit., Company Ord #16, 3 Nov. 1900.
- ¹⁰⁶Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his parents, 29 Jan. 1900.
- ¹⁰⁷Record of Summary Court, 43d Regt. 19 Sept. 1899-24 June 1901, and Record of Summary Court, 2d Battalion, 43d Inf. 29 Jan. 1900-29 Apr. 1901.
- ¹⁰⁸General Orders Book, 43d Regt. 7 Sept. 1899-30 June 1901, R.G. 94, G.O. #6, 13 Jan. 1900.
- ¹⁰⁹Company H, Returns, op. cit., May and June 1900.
- ¹¹⁰Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Vol. 8, 56th Congress, 2d Session, pp. 341-342.
- ¹¹¹Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Vol. 6, Ibid., pp. 247-248.
- ¹¹²Ibid., p. 48.
- ¹¹³Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Vol. 8, op. cit.; and LeRoy, op. cit., p. 189.
- ¹¹⁴Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, Report of the War Department 1901, p. 85.
- ¹¹⁵General Orders Book, op. cit., G.O. #33, 5 Dec. 1900.
- ¹¹⁶LeRoy, op. cit., p. 170.
- ¹¹⁷Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, op. cit., p. 24.
- ¹¹⁸Taylor, Vol. V, op. cit., pp. 727-736.
- ¹¹⁹Ibid., pp. 741-745.
- ¹²⁰Ibid., p. 746; *ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 440-441. Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, op. cit., pp. 15-16; Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, Vol. 15, 57th Congress, 1st Session, p. 331.
- ¹²¹Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, Report of the War Department, 1901, pp. 40-55.
- ¹²²Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his family, 7 Dec. 1900.
- ¹²³Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 7, op. cit., p. 450.
- ¹²⁴Company H, Letters Sent 9 Oct. 1899-3 Jul 1901, op. cit., 19 Oct. 1900.

- ¹²⁵Company H, Returns, op. cit., July 1900.
- ¹²⁶Beyer, op. cit., pp. 466-469.
- ¹²⁷Company H, Letters Received 22 Oct. 1899-30 Jun 1901, R.G. 94, 26 July 1900.
- ¹²⁸Company H, Orders Book 4 Dec. 1900-24 Jun 1901, R.G. 94, 17 Jan. 1901.
- ¹²⁹Company H, Letters Received, op. cit., 28 Mar. 1901.
- ¹³⁰Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his Parents, 12 Nov. 1900.
- ¹³¹Orders Book 43d Regt., 20 Sept. 1900-5 July 1900, R.G. 94, 25 Sept. 1900.
- ¹³²Company H, Letters Sent, op. cit., 30 Dec. 1900.
- ¹³³Report of the Lieutenant General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, op. cit., p. 86.
- ¹³⁴Ibid., pp. 107-110.
- ¹³⁵Ibid., p. 110.
- ¹³⁶Company H, Muster Out Book, op. cit.
- ¹³⁷Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, op. cit., p. 6.
- ¹³⁸Ibid., p. 198.
- ¹³⁹General Orders Book, 43d Regt., op. cit., G.O. #14, 17 Aug. 1900.
- ¹⁴⁰Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, op. cit., p. 43.
- ¹⁴¹General Orders Book, 43d Regt., op. cit., G.O. #7, 6 Apr. 1900.
- ¹⁴²Taylor, Vol. V, op. cit., pp. 748-749.
- ¹⁴³Ibid., p. 746.
- ¹⁴⁴Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, op. cit., p. 226.
- ¹⁴⁵Lopez, op. cit., p. 14; Sexton, op. cit., p. 221; Beyer, op. cit., pp. 466-469.
- ¹⁴⁶Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4, op. cit., p. 201.

- 147 Ibid., p. 161.
- 148 Company H, Orders Book, op. cit., G.O. #12, 13 Mar. 1901.
- 149 Taylor, op. cit., pp. 748-749.
- 150 General Orders Book, 43d Regt., op. cit., G.O. #12, 17 May 1901.
Company H, Letters Received, op. cit., 18 May 1901.
- 151 Company H, Orders Book, op. cit., S.O. #3, 11 Feb. 1901 and
S.O. #7, 23 Mar. 1901.
- 152 Company H, Returns, op. cit., May 1901.
- 153 Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 4,
op. cit., p. 237.
- 154 Ibid., p. 6.
- 155 Ibid., pp. 224-225.
- 156 Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 1,
op. cit., p. 29.
- 157 Company H, Orders Book, op. cit., G.O. #29, 1 June 1901.
- 158 Wilson, Letter, Wilson to his Father, 26 June 1901.
- 159 Taylor, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 305.

Special Notes on the Maps Used

- Samar: The map is a composition of data from three sources and has been further modified by eliminating many of the villages which existed at the time but are not made mention of in the text of this paper. Robert S. Hendry (ed.), Atlas of the Philippines, maps 39 and 40; U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, Atlas of the Philippine Islands, Maps 18 and 19; John H. Evens, 1st Lt. 43d Inf. U.S.V., Topographical Officer, Report of the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army, pt. 5, Report of the War Department 1900, facing p. 56.
- Leyte: The map was a similar mixture of maps using the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey atlas plus: Col. Vincent J. Esposito, The West Point Atlas of American Wars, Vol. II, map 145.

Special Notes on Photographs Used

Except for those photographs noted, all those used in this paper are from the collection of papers left by Major General William Henry Wilson, USA.

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CIVILIZING 'EM WITH A KRAG
THE STORY OF A COMPANY OF U.S. VOLUNTEERS
IN THE PHILIPPINE INSURRECTION

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

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Shortly before the United States Army celebrated its two hundredth birthday in 1975, a change was made in its method of personnel procurement. Beginning with America's entrance into World War I in 1917, the army had been dependent upon a system of conscription to fill its wartime ranks. The drafting of men into the armed forces was ended on 1 July 1973; the Army had gone "all-volunteer." For those associated with the army the years since have been ones of negative reaction in the ranks of the company grade officers and noncommissioned officers. These are the people who have to deal on a daily basis with the enlisted service member and they were worried. Many of the volunteers who served in Vietnam and Germany proved to be a disgrace to their uniform and country. To those involved in the disciplinary system in Vietnam, it was plain that the problem children were usually those with an RA serial number, an enlistee, not with the US prefix, the draftee. Therefore, with the advent of the all-volunteer army it is not surprising that prophets of doom abounded.

When was the last conflict of major proportions which was fought with volunteers entirely? Possibly the Mexican punitive Expedition in 1916. But then that was not really a major conflict since it lasted less than a year and employed primarily the existing small Regular Army as a maneuver force.

About seventeen years prior to the punitive expedition, a conflict began in a land seven thousand miles from the U.S. which eventually involved 126,468 American soldiers and lasted for three years. It was a savage conflict which began on the night of 4 February 1899 as a skirmish between patrols of the American and Filipino Insurgent forces outside of Manila in

the Philippine Islands. The war was initially conducted as open warfare using sizeable organized military units. By November 1899 the leader of the insurgents, Emilio Aguinaldo, proclaimed a guerrilla war. It was a dirty war fought in the damp jungle mountains and dense grasslands. Little quarter was asked for or given on either side. It was a war fought by the U.S. army entirely with volunteer soldiers, both regulars and men of the so-called state and U.S. volunteer organizations.

In this thesis the author has selected a volunteer company, specifically Company H, Forty-third Regiment of Infantry, U.S. Volunteers. Aside from reasons of personal interest, this unit contained a good cross section of American men because of the variety of localities from which men were recruited. In addition the company soldiered on two islands in the Visayas, Samar and Leyte, under command of their Regimental officers only, with little or no interference from higher headquarters, providing a most unusual laboratory in which to study.

The company was organized at Fort Ethan Allen, Vermont on 8 October 1899 and underwent training until 13 November. On that day the Regiment entrained for Brooklyn for an ocean voyage to the Philippine Islands via the Suez Canal. After their arrival in Manila on 1 January 1900, the Regiment remained for only a short period before receiving orders to take part in General Kobbé's hemp port expedition in mid January. Company H as part of the Second Battalion landed at Calbayog, Samar on 26 January and was blooded in the mountains and river valleys of the island. Heavy losses were sustained by a detachment of the company at Catubig in April and another heroic fight occurred in the mountains near Matiginao in March 1900. In both these battles and in others, the company showed it was capable of executing its combat mission under grueling circumstances.

Later when the Regiment consolidated on the Island of Leyte after July 1900, the company found itself engaged in the chore of nation building. Instead of constantly fighting, the men were put to work helping the Filipinos in civic actions such as health and medical assistance, road building and establishing law and order for the security of the people. Some members of the company were also tasked in the organization, training and leading in combat of an indigenous armed force called the Leyte Scouts.

The study, using examples, proves that under the proper conditions volunteer soldiers and units are more than capable of filling the role of combat units. To find the examples for the thesis, government records at the National Archives were studied as well as the Annual Reports of the War Department and House and Senate documents. To add to a feel for the environment in which all this happened, Taylor's Compilation of Captured Insurgent Documents proved to be something that no student of the Philippine Insurrection could ignore. And finally newspaper articles, private correspondence, especially those of Lieutenant William Henry Wilson, in the author's personal collection, and of Major Henry T. Allen, kept at the Library of Congress, provide the flesh covering the skeleton of official documents.