

THE PART UTAH PLAYED

Mrs. Richard W. Young, wife of Major Young of Battery A, Utah Volunteers, has received the following interesting letter from her husband:

Camp Dewey, Near Manila, Aug. 8, 1898.—Well, I tell you I will be glad when the time comes when the Utah artillery will roll into Salt Lake depot. Won't you all? War is not a very pleasant thing. There is so much to worry and fret about, so much responsibility, so much mud and rain, so much that you cannot do that you would like to do, on account of the disagreeable disposition of the fellows on the other side. Now, for instance, here we are out in tents and it rains—pours down—several times every day. There are plenty of fine barracks up in Manila, but these Dons from the Iberian peninsula, not filled with the spirit of brotherly kindness, insist upon keeping us out here in the rain. And we in tents are much more pleasantly situated than the men who go out in the trenches. The regiments are changed every day, so that the men go only every third or fourth day, remaining in camp the other days. But up in the trenches they must stand out in the rain and take it; that is, all but the Utah artillery, and we have built shelters for the boys, which keep them quite dry. Eight nights have now passed since the big attack and five nights since then have these night-workers poured Mauser bullets and shells into our entrenchments. They do not do much harm, only killing one or two or three men a night and wounding a few others. Our boys are learning to lie down behind the breastworks and let them exhaust their ammunition. We are not ready to attack yet and so our policy merely is to watch them, keep them from surprising us, and wait—until goodness knows when—some say until the arrival of the Monadnock, another iron-clad—about two weeks.

The third expedition, which arrived here a week or two ago, is now all landed. They have been much delayed by the high winds, which piled up the breakers along the beach nearby in a destroying way. We now have 10,400 soldiers in camp. Dewey has the Monterey, and it looks to me as though the captain general would be asked to surrender or fight within a few days. He will probably fight—a little just enough to satisfy the demands of his people, and then he must surrender.

Later, Thursday, Aug. 11.—It begins to look as though it was the beginning of the end. We have each had two guns up in the entrenchments. This morning I am sending up my other two. We all understand that tomorrow with the big fight will be on. Admiral Dewey presents his compliments to the front of the city and will assist us in attacking the south side. The ball will open about noon and it will seem as though h— itself is let loose. The whole fleet will pour in a deadly rain of shot and shell. We will contribute eight or ten guns, the Astor battery six more probably, and then all of our infantry and the Spanish big and little guns will do their level best.

I will stay in the trenches tonight. We will be glad to have the thing settled. It is getting fearfully monotonous out here in the everlasting rain. The temperature is cool; I have slept every night under a blanket, but how it does rain! Why last night the water was four inches deep in the tents everywhere, almost.

I have a few souvenirs—some bullets, shells, a table made from timber taken

out of the church around which we are stationed. We shall be delighted to get Dewey's help, I can tell you. The Dons have sandbags piled mountain high and think to keep us out and it would be a long, weary task to capture the city if we had to do it alone. But with the admiral's help it will be a job soon finished. The enemy has a number of heavy guns on the water front, which the fleet must first silence; then it will devote its attention to the bombardment of the walled city. South of the Pasig river there is the old town, heavily walled and armed, with moats around it and entanglements of wire, fallen trees, etc. Here dwell the chief functionaries, civil, military and ecclesiastical, and here will the fleet do its worst work. There is a strong line opposite us, which the fleet will also help us in taking care of.

I am now waiting for several caribou or water buffalo to arrive to haul our guns up to the front. These cattle are splendid workers. They are usually hitched to a two-wheeled cart. We uncouple our guns from the front parts or limbers and then attach the detached parts to their carts, and away goes a hugh buffalo with one half of one of our guns. Others are expected at once. You should see the monkeys in camp. Nelson has one which he says is mine and which he will take care of until we arrive home. Would it not tickle the little ones to have a monkey or two? I am going to try to take one or two home. What a jolly day that will be that will see these batteries roll into the depot at Salt Lake. Nor will it long be delayed in my judgment. But how long I do not know. Say Thanksgiving dinner at home. How would that do?

Friday, Aug. 12.—Since writing the above date, Colonel Anderson and Mr. McSomething, a newspaper correspondent, came in, and later Lieutenant Naylor, just in from the trenches.

Colonel Anderson is quite a picturesque figure. He is a soldier of fortune and has served in South America, in the Chinese army, was an officer under Lilljoukalani, and now has just resigned from a position as chief or ordnance of the insurgents. He is an American by birth and feels certain that we shall have trouble with Aguinaldo.

The general impression is that the most difficult part of the campaign will be to appease the insurgents. They are very desirous of complete independence and have been waging a successful war against the Spanish for two years. Now, quite naturally, they want the fruits of their victory. Of course, we cannot for one moment concede that the insurgents have any rights superior to ours or equal. We claim to have conquered the islands and the right to dispose of them. Just how General Merritt will be able to solve the problem remains to be seen. The main difficulty will arise as once. The insurgents will demand the right to enter the city along with us. This we must not permit, since their chief aim is to loot. They have been treated with such cruelty and avarice by the Spaniards for so long that they are in no mood to stop short of murder, rapine and robbery to avenge their real wrongs. They are a quick, bright people, much like the Japs, and now have an ample supply of Mauser guns and ammunition. We shall see what we will see. In the meantime, the day for the general mix-up has been postponed. It will not be today—maybe tomorrow or next day.

General Greene sends for Captain Grant and myself, together or for one alone, several times a day, to consult on artillery matters. This is the worst country to fight in ever I saw or heard of. Can't see anything for trees; can't

go anywhere for rice fields and mud. We don't know where the enemy's lines are in many places, except approximately. But we are going to have very little fighting—nothing like the severe battles that are occurring in Cuba. The worst of these fellows is their disposition to fight at night. Never but once have they made anything like a serious attack in daylight hours. This makes the dark hours along our intrenchments very gloomy. Last night I spent at the front, all of my guns being in position now. The very best place to sleep that I could find was in the second story of the monastery, now so well known to our troops. This was somewhat dangerous, owing—

Interruption by Colonel McCoy, the lieutenant colonel of the Colorados, who is field officer of the day, and came to see if there were any fruit stands in our camp and to say that our sanitary condition is O. K. Now comes the first lieutenant to say that mail is going over to Cavite in a few minutes and asks if I have time to sign my name on a number of letters.

To continue—owing to the fact that the building is a miserably thin structure, and has been pulled and shot to pieces, so that there is little or nothing left but the walls and the roof. But down in the trenches is so stinking and malarial that I would prefer to take the risk of a shot than the danger of malaria.

It would kill you all with laughter to see one of our monkeys out there looking for boogies in the baby monk.

We had nothing to sleep on but the hard floor, but personally I got a very good night's sleep, barring one interruption. I used my \$24 mackintosh as a bed and coverlet and found a splendid pillow in a canteen, and when Lieutenant Critchlow left and did not take his canteen, I put them close together, and the little valley between made a splendid substitute for down. Of course, rubber boots, sopping feet and wet underclothing, together with a heavy belt containing a big revolver and a cart-ridge pouch, all tended to make things more or less uncomfortable, but singularly enough I slept, and slept almost without waking, except on one occasion, when the adjutant of the Californias, the regiments of infantry along the trenches with us, came into the lower story and whispered: "Get up quick. Get onto the breastworks. The Spaniards are coming." We all bolted upright. Critchlow went out of the back window onto a house below, occupied by our boys, and Grant, Naylor, and I skeddaddled down into safer ground. But no Spaniards came. Not a shot was fired. The boys turned out and got things in readiness to fire if desired, but I told them to go back to bed—it seemed improbable that anything would happen. This morning we tramped back through flooded fields to camp. I shall go up again tonight and nightly until the big fight takes place and be there then.

I place the greatest confidence in the promise that I shall return. It assists me in doing my full duty as a man should. Now I must get in a nap, so good-bye for the present.

Saturday, 4:30 a. m.—I received orders last night to start at 6 this morning with the men to take part in the final bombardment of Manila. That will take place at 10 a. m. Dewey opens from the sea and we from the land. Of course, the city must surrender, but no one knows how much fighting they will do. Of course I have (and Nelson) all of your prayers and best wishes. I have little fear of the issue myself. This evening will tell. Good-bye for the present.

Sunday, Aug. 14, 1898.

You will rejoice in the fact that the