

The regiment was without a guide and was proceeding in the dark. As the men passed along the lane, which was about 12 feet wide, they overtook the Seventy-first New York, which was somewhat demoralized. They also passed several disabled dynamite and machine guns returning from the fray; and the boys of the Sixteenth realized they were right next door to a red hot time, though they did not need other evidence than the hail of lead that flew in all directions about them until it seemed they were being shot at from every point of the compass.

After they had proceeded about a mile along the lane, an opening to the right was discovered, and the regiment passed through and into what was afterward called the "jungle of death." There seemed no way out of it unless on the back track, and the boys were being peppered by an unseen enemy without any opportunity to return the compliment. It was here that Lieutenant Spence was shot in the wrist. Later he was wounded in the thigh. After a rough reconnoiter, Captain Dunning, who a short time afterward was wounded, discovered an opening, and the regiment passed through it and across the San Juan river. The regiment formed in a sunken road, which afforded some protection from the Spanish fire, and the men about 1 o'clock in the afternoon lay down to get a little rest.

General Hawkins rode up and gave it out that the San Juan block house must be taken. The Americans were losing more men, he said, than they would in a charge. It was found the regiment was against a barbed wire fence. The boys cut this down in a hurry with their bayonets. In this work they were materially assisted by a Cuban, who used a machete with telling effect. Once through, the regiment formed in a field covered with grass all the way from 4 to 6 feet high. The men were exposed to the fire from the block-house and also of the sharpshooters, who roosted about in trees on all sides.

The charge was a gallant one. The Spaniards kept up a galling fire, but the advance of the Americans was not checked. Yelling and shooting, they rushed ahead. On the way up they were reinforced by the Sixth and a part of the Thirteenth. The regiments advanced in a solid line. The battery at El Pozo opened up on the hill, and Captain Noble made a short detour and stopped the battery's fire by waving his handkerchief from the end of a pole.

The distance from the point in the field where the Sixteenth formed to the block house was about 800 yards, and the boys covered the distance in remarkably short time. The Spaniards fired by regular volleys until the Americans reached the crest of the hill, when the firing became desultory and the dons left the entrenchments and scampered down the other side.

The cheering Americans peppered it to them as they fled. Captain Noble, who was among the first to reach the Spanish position, picked up a discarded Mauser and let fly at the retreating forms of the Spaniards a number of times.

Company A, the Boise company, occupied a prominent part in this celebrated charge. Led by the gallant Steadman, the company went after the dons like the wind. Steadman's command lost one man killed and four wounded after the company had reached the top of the hill.

The Sixteenth remained at the block-house until 5 o'clock, and then veered around and went into entrenchments at another point overlooking Santiago. The regiment changed positions again before the armistice was arranged, being at

one time within half a mile of Santiago and constantly under fire.

One day 12 men were killed and wounded by one shrapnel shell. The men were off duty behind the rows of entrenchments, which were filled by their comrades, when the shot struck them. The regiment remained in the trenches until the 10th, having been under fire the 1st, 2d and 3rd.

"The Sixteenth did nobly," said Captain Noble, after he had related some of the details of the fight. "Officers and men are entitled to the highest praise for the manner in which they conducted themselves, both in the face of the enemy and in camp." The captain said all the enlisted men conducted themselves in a most praiseworthy manner, and it would be difficult to pick out any one or more who gave more honest or courageous service than his or their fellows.

The boys were anxious for a fight from the start, and when they got into and took the lead in what was really the only big battle of the campaign, so far as the regulars were concerned, they showed they had the right kind of mettle in them.

When Captain Noble made the detour to flag the American battery into silence a hundred or more of the men pushed ahead and arrived at the top of the hill in advance of him. They went after the Spaniards like tigers. He said he wished afterward he had been present to have seen just how this advance guard behaved; but he believed he was the senior officer of the entire line, including the Sixth and Thirteenth, and therefore it was his duty to see to it that the battery was silenced to the end that no harm should come to the advancing soldiers from the American battery.

Sergeant Jensen of company A was among the first to reach the top of the hill. He sat down coolly and whacked away with the greatest deliberation at the Spaniards. He is a distinguished marksman, and it is altogether likely every one of the dozen or more shots he fired while he sat on the little knoll brought down a don. Others showed by their conduct that they had the right kind of stuff in them, and altogether Captain Noble said he was more than proud of the men it was his privilege to lead through that tangle of grass and up the shot-swept San Juan hill.

Capt. Noble claims for the Sixteenth the credit of capturing the San Juan block house. Because of the importance of the engagement (as the San Juan hills commanded the key to the Santiago land situation), the commanders of the Sixth and Thirteenth regiments had claimed the credit. But it did not belong to them. The Sixth and a part of the Thirteenth had joined the Sixteenth after the latter had started up the hill, although they had previous to this exchanged shots with the Spaniards from the rank growth of grass.

"I think every officer should stand up to the last for his regiment, and therefore I do not blame the others for making these claims," said the captain, "but I believe the Sixteenth can show that it took the block house, and I also believe the regiment to which I have the honor to belong will be given the credit."

On the night of the 2nd the Spaniards made an attempt to break through the lines of entrenchments in order to reach the interior, but they were beaten back with terrible slaughter. The Americans, in view of their position and the fact that they had lots of ammunition, could have withstood the entire Spanish army on the island.

Captain Noble was taken sick on the 9th, having on the evening before been drenched while superintending the construction of some works in front of the regiment. The captain says the Sixteenth lost during the campaign 140

men killed and wounded, or about 25 per cent.

After the battle the Sixteenth was without a surgeon. The regimental doctor, a young fellow, who had joined the regiment at Tampa, did not put in an appearance, and the wounded were suffering from lack of attention. Captain Noble had heard there was an enlisted man named Lemen, a member of company F, who had joined the regiment at Fort Sherman, Idaho, in order to go to the war, who was a physician.

He called the man up, and after examining him closely ordered him to organize a regimental hospital under some trees. Lemen proved himself to be worth his weight in gold. He took excellent care of the injured men and rustled like a good fellow for medicine, etc., in which he was highly successful.

For this work Dr. Wood, who was in charge of the field hospital, secured Lemen an appointment as assistant surgeon. This is a contract position, and is as good as a commission while it lasts. The government can, however, terminate the contract at will.

Captain Noble has a number of relics which he brought from Cuba. Most of these were secured in Santiago by the captain's interpreter, a bright young man who had served five months with Garcia. They included among other things the sword of a Spanish officer. It has a Toledo blade and is a very wicked looking stick. This officer led a command on the 2nd, when the effort was made to break through the American lines, and he said afterward he had to practically pound his men on the back to get them to move.

Captain Noble also has a Spanish bugle, an odd looking instrument, and a number of Mauser bullets. These are arranged in blocks of five and are placed in a magazine arrangement. The gun can be loaded with single shots, but it does not work as well. The captain brought back for Mrs. Noble a very richly hand-embroidered shawl, with a deep fringe. This is called a "mantilla," and is worn by the Spanish women over their heads. The shawl is of the most expensive silk. Another present brought back for Mrs. Noble is a feather fan.

The captain says a Spanish colonel was killed on the brow of San Juan hill. He was tempted to take the dead officer's coat as a relic, but he did not. The officer was dressed as though he had started out for a party. His linen was spotless and gold studs adorned a broad expanse of shirt front. Other relics the captain had in view, but the interpreter who was to procure them in Santiago was also sick and he could not secure them.

#### SERGEANT HINES.

Headquarters Battery B, Utah Light Artillery, Cuartel de Melic, P. I., Sept. 10, 1898.—I am very proud at this time to have the opportunity of writing you a few lines. In a foreign land among a strange and I must confess a most degraded race we now await the message which calls us back to the land we love so well. I need not relate all that we have gone through since we reached these islands, as more able authors than myself have already done that. Suffice it for me to say that we came, we saw, we conquered; we mastered the great difficulties of the mighty deep, and the serious difficulties in landing, due to protracted storms blowing high surf through which it was necessary to pass the small boats which afforded the only means of disembarking the army and its supplies. This great task and the privations and hardships of a campaign during the rainy seasons in the tropical lowlands were accomplished and en-