



THE "PUSH," COMPANY I, FOURTEENTH INFANTRY

(See page 291 for mention of above picture)

Back row center (with pipe), H. Middleton; front row center, F. Poett; behind Poett, A. Center; at extreme right, W. Turnbull.

Reproduced from a photograph in the possession of Mrs. Roswell Cochran of San Mateo

California Soldiers in the Philippines

From the Correspondence of Howard Middleton, 1898-1899

Edited by HAROLD F. TAGGART

HOWARD MIDDLETON was born in the family home at the corner of Geary and Mason streets, San Francisco, March 1, 1875, the son of John and Ida Parks Middleton. His father was a businessman in San Francisco, interested in real estate and owner of a wood-and-coal yard. His grandfather, also John, came to San Francisco in September 1849, set up a prosperous business as an auctioneer, became a member of the Vigilance Committee of 1851 and an alderman the same year. Howard attended the Pacific Heights Grammar School and graduated from Lowell High School. In the spring of 1898, he enlisted in the Fourteenth Regiment of the regular army and was assigned, together with several young patriots from the bay area, to Company I of that regiment. After training at Camp Merritt, the several companies of the Fourteenth sailed from San Francisco for Manila on July 15, 1898.

Following his return from service in the Philippines, young Middleton attempted several positions over a period of a few years, including a venture for a short time in the stock-brokerage business with his friend, Fred Poett, a nephew of W. D. M. Howard. About 1903 Middleton entered the employ of the Goodyear Rubber Company, a San Francisco concern, then located at Second and Market streets and antedating by many years the now better-known Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company. He rose rapidly to become president of the company, and guided its administration until his death on November 17, 1943.

On June 25, 1906, he was married to Mrs. Mary Martin, the mother of a daughter, Camille, who was immediately adopted by her stepfather.

Middleton took very little interest in civic and fraternal affairs, although he was a thirty-second degree Mason, but concentrated his time and attention on his work and on his family. He was especially fond of his grandchildren, children of his adopted daughter, now Mrs. Roswell Cochran of San Mateo, California, who kindly lent the letters to the writer for publication.

In its issue of July 15, 1898, the San Francisco *Chronicle* printed a story on the departure of the troops. At 8:00 A.M. that Friday morning, the two battalions of the Fourteenth Infantry left Camp Merritt at Third Avenue and Fulton Street, marched down Post and then Market Street to the Embarcadero, and boarded the *Puebla* and the *Peru*. The Fourteenth had 300 California volunteers in its ranks. Karl Irving Faust and Peter MacQueen, *Campaigning in the Philippines* (San Francisco, 1899), list the ships in the

several expeditions and give the names of the officers and the number of men in each ship. This was the fourth expedition to leave San Francisco. Aboard the *Peru* was Maj. Gen. Elwell S. Otis, who was to relieve Gen. Wesley Merriitt. Maj. Charles F. Robe was in command of the Fourteenth Infantry, Maj. S. O. L. Potter of the third battalion, and Lieut. Robert Field commanded Company I.

Howard Middleton wrote his letters without any thought of publication. For this reason it has been deemed advisable to omit names in a few instances because of the rather pointed remarks. In practically every letter the homesick youth pours out his appreciation for packages of food, clothing, books, and other items sent him. Much of this has been omitted as repetitious. Frequently, passages of purely personal interest have been omitted. Most of the letters are addressed to his mother, a few to his father or his sister, Edna; several are without any heading.

All in all, the letters are such as many soldiers have written home, whether it be in 1898, or 1918, or 1943, or 1950. There is the usual "gripe" about the food, the boredom of routine drill and guard duty; he describes the abundant crop of rumors, the clash of personalities in the closeness of everyday living, the nervous tension, and, finally, the emotional confusion arising from the tragedy of battle and the thrill of victory. Those who have worn the uniform of Uncle Sam can read the letters with tolerance and nostalgic understanding.

Aboard City of Puebla

My Dear Mother.

6 [7]-16-98

Our first night is over and such a sick lot of men you never saw. About 50 of the 900 were not sick and I was one of them. Center and myself employ ourselves by walking the deck and smoking before those sick. Fred kept to his bunk and Jennings was out and out sick. The bar was breaking and they started in soon as we passed it.

Our quarters are very comfortable but will be very hot in the Tropics so guess I will sleep on deck. Have eaten every meal so far with relish and have second helpings. Have to stand in line 1 ½ hrs every morning in order to get there a second time. We only have two meals a day now, one at 8 AM. and other at 4 PM. The officers have three. Have had a petition presented just now for three meals. I declined to sign.

The *Peru* was not in sight this morning, but about 3 PM we stopped and waited for her and are now in shouting distance.

Later, our first case of measles has broken out but as it is kept away from us, no danger is apprehended.

17 July 1898

Was an guard last night. . . . Am feeling fine. About midnight McIlrath, the fellow who lost \$5 for not obeying orders went out of his head with fever.

Howard Avery tried to quiet him but was chased around the ship instead. Peru is about 1½ miles off starboard bow. I never saw such blue water before and so salt why beans and everything else are cooked in it. It is getting very warm and they have just spread the awning.

Had an hours drill this AM. with guns, was very amusing as it was impossible to stand straight. Do not expect to sleep in hold again. This trip will teach several fellows several things. One Corp. Averett the most unpopular man in camp boasted of not being sea sick and at first was not, he found a large piece of meat and showed it to the sick, now for the past 2 days he has hardly been able to move. The meals are getting something awful, today we had 3 meals, as the crowd made a kick, they consisted of poor coffee, 1 piece of boiled bacon and hard tack. if it were not for our box we would be in a poor way. . . .

If this writing is bad and the language is not fine you will have to answer the first on plea of rolling of the ship and the last on the talk going around me at the time.

Of all the things to steer clear of a "troop ship" is the first. We have to stand in line to get anything, even a drink of water or to go below and the men a tougher lot you never saw and you have to be as tough as they are or you will get it in the neck. Why this morning a 6 footer tried to get ahead of me in line and because I told him what I thought of his kind in plain words he threatened to cut my throat. He then went a few places further back and tried the same dodge and got a most beautiful punch in the jaw. After which he went to the foot of the line. And there are lots just like him but our crowd about 15 of us (in the picture) stick together and they know it.¹

Fred Poett lost his purse with \$28 in it today. Every man is to be searched at Honolulu as there has been lots of stealing. Slept on deck last night and as usual it rained so they say, but as I was asleep I did not know it. I took a cold salt water shower this morning at 6 AM and will take one very morning after this. Miles Baird has just reported having \$70 stolen.

July 17/98: Cont.:

Slept on deck until awakened by rain and found top blanket drenched about 2 AM. Went below. Peru is to the stern of us and is very slow as we have to slacken up and wait every 2 or 3 hours. Has been overcast up to the present time but sure is shining brightly now and is very warm. Water is very smooth and there is scarcely a breeze. Have had fresh meat every meal so far, but guess it will soon give out. Am going to try the deck again tonight. They are having services forward to which I will hurry *int.*

Later. I just missed the services, am very sorry as they have an organ. I volunteered for guard tonight and tomorrow so as not to have it in the hot weather. My principal duty is to keep men from being sick where they should not. A small pie can be bought for 30c. I have not bought many.

Meals are getting poorer, no more fresh meat — had beans tonight. Am now going on guard.

July 20

At 2 AM last night we (on the hurricane deck) were awakened and told to go below as they feared a storm and intended to take in the awning, but the storm has not reached us although the swells are larger and she rolls considerably. We had fire drill today and the boats were partly lowered. The Peru is nearly out of sight on our starboard side. Passed the Mariposa early this AM, expected to mail this on her but they were too far away to speak. Will probably be in Honolulu Friday noon as we were over 1400 miles out this AM. . . . Captain Goodall, the Captain of the ship, has made himself very much disliked by all the men, he seems to be happy only when making trouble for us. The tailor of G Co. was sick on deck and the Captain grabbed him by the neck and kicked him. If he ever tried that on me I will lamn him with the first belayin pin handy as he has no authority over us. He made the remark to Allman and myself that we (the soldiers) were a "filthy lot," we both said, "thank you, same to you." and left him open mouthed.

If we cared to sleep in the Hold we would be very comfortable except for air. Our bunks are three high and in the middle of the ship two wide with an opening on either side for exit and entrance while those on the side of the ship are single with a port hole for every tier. All are made of iron with wire mattresses and straw mattresses and pillows. Everything has to be aired every morning. Fred and several others put in 50c a day and get two pans of food, but I intend to stay with the ship's food.

The Commissary opened today, there you can buy tobacco, canned fruit, soap and so forth at very much cheaper rate than in the city. Canned fruit is only sold on order of the Doctor. Much to my surprise I found we had a Dentist aboard.

21 July-98

They (the sailors) made us get up at 4:30 AM so they could wash down the deck, I think they only do this to be disagreeable as one or two of them received a good beating from the soldiers. Signal Corps report 40 cases of measles on Peru, we have only 3. Am feeling fine, big appetite and lots of sleep. . . .

My Dear Mother.

6/21/98 [July]

Have just been sent for by 1st Sgt. Did not know what was going to happen but went. He informed me that Jennings and myself had been made Corporal. I was very much frightened. One step nearer. Yours in haste.

YMCA, Honolulu,

My Dear Mother

Aug. 3, 1898

. . . The Pennsyl. and the Rio de J. sailed today and we expected to leave tomorrow, but the Philadelphia has just arrived so we may stay for the Flag

raising. See by the papers of the 27th that Spain wants peace and Manila has surrendered. Am going to dine at Col. J. H. Fischer's again tonight, they have been awfully kind and have sent quite a box of things aboard.

My Dear Mother.

Mid Ocean, SS City Puebla, 8/8/98

We are again on the Ocean after a 10 day stay in Honolulu and am rather glad, for the trip to come will be a dandy. There is not an old soldier aboard who would not take his discharge right here.

The people of Honolulu were very kind to the boys and the papers came out with articles praising the Regulars and "especially the 14th" for their behaviour. Mrs. Fischer could not have been kinder to her own than she was to me, as the house was open at all times and I dined there 4 or 5 evenings. She also put up an immense basket of jellies, milk, and crackers to take with us. I told her you would appreciate her kindness as much as I did.

Walter Turnbull has made friends with one of the crew, deck hand, and he gives us our meals from their mess, so we are doing very well, as they live high in comparison with us. There is a great deal of crooked business going on in the Commissary dept as we do not get nearly the amount allowed us by the Govt. The food we do get is very bad, the meat if not absolutely bad is so tender as to be suspicious, while the beans are sprouted, the potatoes growing and when the cabbage has become too bad for the officers mess we get it.

They even keep a guard over the water and you are not allowed to carry any away but drink it right there. It is necessary to wait your turn in line (probably half an hour before you get it and then it is almost too hot to drink and very slimy). On a ship like this when they can distil so much it is a shame that this should be. Alice Rix came aboard just before we left to write up the ship and I can tell you we gave her some good stories. She promised to roast the Captain.

Several of the fellows are quite sick. V. Du Bois has a very bad case of measles and Jennings is anything but well, with his stomach. I think he will have trouble. As for myself I have not been sick a moment so far and this is our 5th day out. . . .

It is so hot that the perspiration runs down our faces while we sleep and as we are going with the wind it is much worse than otherwise. They are keeping the ship exceedingly clean now as it got a good roasting from the chief inspector in Honolulu. We caught the other ships after giving them 30 hours start in a little less than 5 days. We passed so close to them that you could distinguish faces and exchange joshes. I tell you they were pretty sick when we pulled ahead of them and soon had them out of sight behind us as it means so many more days on water for them and this trip is no joke. . . .

The 1st Segt is holding a Non-Com school for our Co. every day now and it is a great help to us. It is much cooler as the wind is blowing across our

bows. The nights are something beautiful as the moon is still up and the myriads of stars make it almost day. . . .

I doubt whether any of our friends would know us now as the whole Company (nearly) has had their heads shaved, and a harder looking set I never saw and every man with dirty face and hands. We have on board 2 or 3 fellows, who I think, will never see their friends again. One begged to be discharged in H. as he has slow consumption and the Dr. told him he would not live 2 months in Manila. We gained a day today and instead of being Thursday it is now Wednesday. At the rate we are going we will make the quickest trip yet, to Manila. We expect to stop at Ladrone Islands but may not. Our drinking water has been as hot as coffee and almost makes one sick to take it. The Major was asked to taste it, which he did and he said it was enough to poison us.

Tell Miss Greene that I think her chocolates kept me from being sea sick, but that her roses made me homesick. Wish you would tell everybody to write to me, as one cannot appreciate how monotonous this is and now that there is not much hope of a scrap left, all we can do is to wait for news from those at home. I hope that Kimona will arrive and will fit Edna. It is not much but just something from Hon. in rememb. of my trip.

Tuesday Aug 14

It is our 10th day out from Hono. and the weather is still beautiful. A ferry boat could have made the whole trip with the exception of the bar in perfect safety. We will not stop at Ladrone Islands but will go right on to Manila, and expect to be there Sunday next as we average nearly 14 knots an hour. The meat is absolutely green and the bread musty. The weather is very hot and we are in one continual state of perspiration.

We had inspection of bodies yesterday. We rolled up our pants to our knees without shoes and stockings which we carried in our hands and undershirt open in front and no hat. We also carried all our underwear on deck for inspection. Two doctors, two Majors and Lieut. Field did the honors. Several men are to be fumigated. . . .

After holding our quarters on Hurricane deck since leaving S. F. had to give them up to G Co. last night and we now have to sleep in the hold. A good many soldiers have volunteered to shovel coal so as to get a good meal with the firemen. It has gotten down to the point where food is the only thing thought of.

It is a funny sight to see us bending over wash tubs washing our clothes and very funny to hear remarks made about the army, as we have to wash in salt water and dirt does not come out very well, but we have struck a better way, i.e. to tie a rope to our clothes and let them drag behind. The first man had a portion of a leg of his underclothes left after they had dragged 2 hrs.

This is certainly a lovely trip for the officers and they are enjoying it very

much. They have fresh water to *burn* while we have not enough to drink and when we do get it, it is positively hot, but we cannot carry it away to cool, but must drink it there. What with the water and the meat it is wonder we are not all sick. . . . Was on guard yesterday and the night before so I have old guard fatigue today, i. e., clean the main deck. As Corporal I have 11 men to do the work while I boss them and make myself generally disliked—which seems to be part of Non Coms duty. A lot of *Pure Apples* and *Bananas* and Frozen *Turkeys* just went by for the Officers mess.

Aug. 18-98

It is very interesting to see the titles of books being read by different fellows. Jim Walsh is in a great state of excitement over the "Frozen Pirate" while Walter Turnbull thinks there is no finer piece of literature than "The Banditti of the Prairies," still another reads "The Mountain Mystery." The 2nd day out from S. F. an English fellow, Clayton by name, sort of drifted into our set and as he had appearance and education in his favor he soon became recognized as one of us. The story he gave was that he had enlisted the day we sailed and therefor had no clothes. It now turns out that he is a stow-away and has been working a very clever scheme. He would never have been found out if it was not for his love of talk, as he told several fellows the truth and some one told the Captain. Mr. Clayton is now shoveling coal in the hold.

We had our identification badges given us today, marked in this manner [diagram, showing name and outfit, similar to later tags]. . . . We are not more than 500 or 600 miles from Manila and expect to meet our convoy any-time now. We are all so weak from lack of exercise and poor food that we could put up only a very poor fight now. I received in a round-about way a compliment from a Sergeant of G Co., an old soldier. He was Sgt. of Guard the same night I was Corp. of the Guard with Jennings. He told a fellow in our Co. when they were discussing different men that I "was a very soldierly young fellow," which is all very nice. I have now gotten into the habit of bossing as Edna calls it and she will have to look out when I return as I am now accustomed to be obeyed or she goes to the Guard House. It is very amusing to see the fellows playing cards for tobacco etc. (which they draw from the Commissary) until all hours of the night. We are now passing the first of the Philippine Islands in the Balintang Channel but have as yet seen no habitation.

Aug. 20-98

The Coast of Luzon now on our port side, distance 2 miles. We are now going due south and expect to make Manila late tonight for which I am very glad. The coast is very low and rolling and being thickly wooded and pure white sand makes it a very beautiful one. We can now see people on the beach watching us.

Aug 21

We are now in Manila Bay and are too excited to even speak rationally. A German cruiser passed us as we came in without a shout or anything and in a very grim manner. We have just been told that Manila has been taken and are all disap. in consequence but we hope we have a chance at insurgents yet. The 14th is on outpost duty so we will see service any how. We expect to go ashore tomorrow. Never saw such rain as we are now having. . . .

My Dear Father

8/24/98

We have at last arrived at Manila and a more filthy place I never saw. Why the streets of the city are used by the Spanish soldiers as Urinals and the stench is something awful. We are very well fixed as far as quarters go as we have garrisons here for 50,000 troops. Those assigned to 14th are comparatively new and well ventilated. They say that even these were in filthy condition when first taken. The Spanish soldiers are everywhere and treat our fellows very well. They are the most indolent men you ever saw and dont seem to feel the shame of being disarmed.

The insurgents have their outposts right near our camp and we go among them unarmed at all times. They are a miserable lot and 10 of them equal 1 American. An armed officer tried to stop one our boys from taking firewood, he stopped long enough to knock his face in and then carried his wood. We will probably disarm them without much trouble. The horses here are about 3 ft high and all draying is done by water-buffalo. We landed yesterday and had almost 2 miles to march; in this climate it is no joke but anything is better than the trip across. We had our extra luggage carried 2 miles by coolies for 10c.

There are some very pretty houses here but all their money seems to have been spent on churches and the like although all are now going to ruin and what was once a beautiful park is now a swamp. The river is a smelly body of water, is full of wrecks from Dewey's fleet. One can now see what a wonderful thing he did in entering the bay under the guns of Cavite where there are some very fine pieces. All other fortifications are of the old style brass cannon and have not been shot for years. Every street is guarded and Gatling guns are trained up the principal ones. The insurgents had cut off the water but it is running again. Fine cigars can be had here ½ c. to 2½ c a piece and cigarettes 1½ c for 20.

All the Vol. are crazy to go home and I think they will shortly. We expect our turn at outpost duty will come shortly as Co. D goes tonight. \$5 here in our money is worth 11.60 Mex. We have not been paid yet. Have only received one letter from home as yet and that at Hon.

Aug. 25 — 98

Great excitement!! Last evening just after taps 9 PM we were awakened by shots and a call for the guard. 1st Segt came in and told us to dress quickly

and take a blanket over our shoulders and stand by ready as there was a fight on and we lay there hugging each other at the prospect, but it turned out to be a drunken brawl.

Some of the men got drunk and charged the insurgents and they thinking the whole U. S. force was coming down on them fired. One 14th man was shot. Center was greatly excited and cocked his gun. One Co. (14) was sent to Cavite. . . . The Spanish soldiers wish to lead the charge against the insurgents as they say they have been treated so well by us and the residents treat the boys very well, give them food and cigars. You should see the number of *Brass* cartridges found here, no wonder our boys die from a scratch. We have a fine place to wash clothes here, a long trough made of cement and the sides sloping granite which is just rough enough and is used instead of a wash board.

Have seen no papers since July 23 — 98 so am rusty. English war vessel sent us some magazines. A rumor here is that Russia and England are at war.

The climate is very hot, a sort of oppressive heat and we are in a continual state of perspiration. The fruits here are not as good as our own and no comparison to Hon. No fear of eating too much as they are not good enough. The cigars and cigarettes are very fine, even children smoke. There is fine surf bathing here and about 7 PM there are hundreds of people in the bay. I never felt better in my life but *this is no White Man's country*.

My Dear Mother

Manila, Aug 30 — 98

We have been here a week now and have seen the City pretty well as we are free to go and come at all times. Last night our Co. went on patrol duty, i. e. each Corporal is given a squad of 7 men and has to patrol a certain route. Mine was #3 and extended 4 miles into the country and back. This I had to cover twice during the night 11 PM. and 3 AM. The path oftentimes was just wide enough for single file being flanked on either side by heavy underbrush. The insurgents whom we are guarding against have their outposts within our lines and although they pretend to be very friendly would like to stick a knife in any soldier. The trees are covered with fire flies and makes a very pretty sight.

The heat is something awful, it is a different kind and takes all desire for any exercise whatever away from one. We drill nevertheless one hour per day and some have fainted from heat in consequence. The food is not the proper sort for this climate. . . . Am going to see Ashley and Bliven tomorrow about 5 miles away.

My Dear Mother

Sept 2-98

. . . If this letter is mussed and soiled you will have to excuse it because as I sit here with only a very fine knitted shirt (of linen) and a pair of pants on the perspiration runs off me like a shower bath . . . to add to discomfort mumps is now an epidemic. Fred Poett's face is like a pear as to size and he

suffers a great deal. Like many other things in army the surgeons are a farce and only seem to care to get rid of you as quickly as possible. A pill is all you are able to get and the same pill does for many things. I was one of the first to get mumps but so light that it is not noticeable; although my ear is a little bothersome.

All intoxicating drinks, Beer, Vino, Gin are not sold now here as Gen. Merritt has stopped it and a good thing too for in this climate a drinking man would not last long. If there are repetitions in this letter of statements in former ones the fault lies in the lack of subjects.

The City of Manila is about 3 miles distance and costs 6 centavos or 3 cents in our money to get there as you pay by section, 2c a section. The streets are very narrow and are filled with dis-armed Spanish soldiers and natives. There are many fine stores here especially jewelry and perfumery. All business is stopped during the middle of the day on a/c heat and Spaniards sit around in Cafes sipping Sarsparilla, Lemonade and smoking cigarettes. Among the natives none are too young to smoke and it is an ordinary sight to see a girl of 3-4 smoking. . . .

All they [the natives] seem to do is sit around on the curb stone and peddle poor fruit and Lemonade. Bananas are worth 6c our money a dozen here. The food they give us here . . . will surely have to be changed. Coffee 3 times a day, heavy beans, yeast powder biscuits (lead) and fresh water-buffalo and canned salmon is chiefly what we get. Potatoes are worth 7c a lb. . . .

My Dear Edna:

Manila, Sept. 5, 1898

Since last letter have been on outpost duty. The whole Co. left barracks Saturday afternoon and took provisions enough to last until Monday night. The entire Co with exception of 1 squad guarded one of the largest tobacco factories in the world. When they are running full force 5,000 people are employed, mostly at \$3.00 Mex. (1.50 our money) per week. Emery Smith was Corp of squad which was sent on "cossack duty" for first 24 hrs. at end of which time I relieved him for next 24 hrs. Cossack outpost is a small body of men under a Corporal, sent about 1 mile from last picket of main body, to guard a certain place. The men relieve themselves, i. e. there is only one sentry and he awakens the man who relieves him so the Corporal has a snap. This time it was the house of a Spaniard we were guarding for if there was no guard, all the furniture would be stolen by insurgents who are very ugly because we do not allow them to wreck the deserted houses. All houses outside New Manila are deserted by the Spaniards and have to be guarded by us. In this house we had an iron bed with real springs, which I proceeded to take as my own. The other fellows found two Mahogany beds with cane coverings and had to bunk 2 in a bed. The owner is quite wealthy and a manufacturer of Cigarettes of which there were many thousand packs in house.

All guards (and every entrance and exit to city is guarded) have orders to take all wine found on natives away and turn over to serg. of guard. There is a great quantity of a drink called "Vino" taken away from natives and not all is turned over either, as the condition of several of men testified. One fellow took a handsome decanter, filled with Vino, from a native woman but she would not give him the stopper. I thought it was quite shrewd of her.

The men were issued White Cork helmets today and more light underclothes much to disgust of Volunteers, who have as yet nothing. There are some rather ugly stories going the rounds concerning the bravery of Minnesota Boys in the taking of the City.

The Commissary and Medical Dept of the U. S. Army are *rotten* to the core. One is a grand money making scheme in which "Red Cross" donations were sold to the men and the other is either incompetent or does not care or possibly both. There are several Newspaper Corrs. in our Co. and there will be lots of stories. . . .

Came into quarters and found Center and a fellow by name of Nutting scrapping, of course had to separate as a Non Com is held responsible for any breach of peace. They are, however, going to settle it this evening behind an old church (280 yrs old) so will report the fight by rounds later. It seems that Center bought a pistol from a fellow and as is like him, gave about twice its value. This man Nutting jollied him about it and made Center mad. I think it will do him good, as he has been much disgusted at our not having any fighting yet. The climate is making everyone so disagreeable that it is one continual growl. Privates are not allowed out of Barracks without a Non. Com. so there is not much to do.

Rumor is rife that we are going to be paid tomorrow but as we have heard so much and received nothing that I cannot credit it. Suppose you are glad to start school again as you are *so fond of study*. . . . Barry Baldwin ex U. S. Marshal is here for Macondry and Co. so am going to see him. If he starts a branch house, I will stand a fair chance of getting in as we did business with him in H. T. Allen's office. . . .

My Dear Mother.

Sept 21, 1898

Since last letter many things have happened. First of all we were again awakened and told to dress on a/c Insurgents but all that is over now. They were given until 15th to get out of town.² On the afternoon of that day our Co. was hurriedly called out and we surely expected a fight. Everybody shouted "Give it them fellows" as we went along. We marched down one street and then in the same direction on another. We could see them as they passed the cross streets. We then turned into their streets and followed them to their barracks which we then occupied.

It turned out that the whole crowd, about 2,000 in all, with 2 bands serenaded us, then each Co. in turn shouted "Amigo American," "Amigo Fili-

pino” and three cheers for Americans, but nevertheless we shut the gates of our barracks, just to be cautious with our “*friends*.” So all our hopes are gone for, never to return. Their barracks was an exposition building built in 1895 and it was finely fitted up. Every house we have been in shows that the people have left in a hurry, leaving letters and all behind. Next day we came in and were sent out for wood. The natives pointed out a very good looking house to us so we proceeded to wreck it. Other Co’s came up and took a hand, at the end of one hour there were two poles left. Next day the owners, Spanish people, who had left when the city was taken came to look at their home as they intended to move in the next day. They have now put in a claim on U. S. for \$5,000.

We were paid Saturday and enclose order for \$25 in a letter to father. I would have sent more but several subscriptions and one or two debts took a good part. We get paid again in two months and will send you \$30 of the \$36 that I will get. Five of us, Jennings, Poett, Turnbull, Center and myself had a fine (for this place) dinner in town. Had chicken soup, Roast chicken, claret, pint Champaign, one or two other things and Cognac for all, for which we paid \$1.60 Spanish or \$.80 American.

Talk of drinking I never saw so much in my life as there is now among the men. You can hardly hear yourself think because of the noise and as I write this about tattoo 8:45 PM. the moans, shouts and songs of drunken fellows right alongside is something to remember. And gambling for three nights it has kept up, just outside of quarters of course, but we can hear the ceaseless jangle of gold and the curses of the losers. Some of the fellows have lost every cent and are now trying to borrow. Fights are of hourly occurrence. There were 42 men locked in guard house last night and the noise was something awful. They had a terrible fight and drew knives all in the dark. An officer went in and one of them cursed him, the Captain nearly strangled his life out so I guess he will be good next time. A transport leaves tomorrow with a lot of sick men, there are 3 from our company. Halstead lives in S. F. Do you remember Vassar at Camp Merritt? He could not pass in 14th so joined the 23rd, he goes also and gets \$375 in coin for transportation and free passage on transport.

I saw Ashley and Bliven yesterday. Ashley is looking very well, but is very thin and stoops terribly. Bliven is a wreck, has lost 30# and is very weak, all from Dysentery which they cannot seem to stop here at all. He could probably get his discharge very easily but does not want it. Do not tell his sister this as he does not want her to know. As yet I have not been affected in that way at all but have had cramps twice but Dr. Davis’s medicine Chlorodyne works like a charm and I am hanging on to it myself. I asked Dr. Richardson re it and he said it was very fine thing for this climate. We have a canteen open in our barracks now and Saturday, pay day, they sold 1700 bottles of Beer. . . .

My Dear

Eminita, Manila, Oct 3/ 98

... My turn came for guard again today and for the first time I have mounted guard when everything was done in strictly proper manner. Being a non-com. the Adjutant does not examine your gun but merely salutes you and passes on. It may not seem much but I have seen the knees of soldiers actually quake when he reprimanded one about his gun, for you are liable to have your "belt pulled off" and thrown in guard house.

During the night on my relief about 2 AM there was a call for Corp. of Guard Post # 13. I answered the call and found a man with delirium tremens gone clean frantic and I tell you I had a hard time getting him to the guard house. Being crazy I could not frighten him with gun but twisted his arms behind him and pushed him howling down the street, quickening his step with jabs of my bayonet. I put him in one of the "dark cells" and for an hour his shouts and curses kept the whole garrison awake. Shortly Lieut. Field, who happened to be officer of the day, came in. He sent for an opiate and on our promising him (the crazy man) to take the "monkey out of the clock" he took the draught. It took about 15 minutes to act.

Another man was put in with the same thing, was sent to the hospital but died from the effects; he had lost a brother killed in Cuba and he has been drinking ever since. Miles Baird is sick with dysentery and fever, will try to see him tomorrow.

4 Oct. 1898

We were issued *cots* and *mosquito* bars of which we have been badly in need as all insects are terrible here. It looks most odd at night to stand at one end of barracks after "lights out" and see all those white cubes. The mosquito bars cover our entire cot and are about 5 or 6 ft. high. One can now get a good night's sleep. It is wonderful to see the houses being repaired and finished and the number of Spanish moving back to town.

Oct. 5 1898

... It is now 3 AM of Oct 6 and as I write the native women are passing down the road to market in Manila. They have eggs, oranges, bananas, cigars, etc. all of which they carry in large baskets on their heads. There is no dashing up and down of milk wagons here. There seems to be very little milk here and that is brought around by men on foot. This is no country for meat and I have not seen a butcher shop here.

There are hundreds of things used in every day life that have to be imported such as butter, which is all canned in Australia or Denmark. There are no paper mills, no glass factories and all such common things and this a city of civilized people over 200 hundred years old. Why it is dangerous to go 10 miles into the interior on a/c of *savages* who are still armed with spears. Later. We had dress parade this afternoon in nice *swampy* grounds with a large crowd of Spaniards and natives in attendance. It was very amusing to

see them all take off their hats when the band played "Star Spangled Ban." they are learning something every day and will know a lot before we go away.

I note you say you enjoy going to "Guard Mount" but if you had to "stand it" as often as we do you would not think it so fine. You must know that "mounting guard" in San Francisco with a crowd of "young girls" looking on and mounting guard in Manila 7000 miles under a tropical sun is quite different.

. . . Nat Messer, jr. came to see us yesterday, he is looking thin but well. He has only been here 4 days and even then only ashore twice but he says he cannot get out of here quick enough. Calls it a "hell hole" and he lives aboard "Scandia" and feeds like a "white man."

One thing about this country is that no cut seems to heal but festers and becomes a running sore, no matter how small the wound is the greatest care has to be taken of it. An hour or two a day sleep here is almost essential and the Major has advised it. We also have inspection 2 or 3 times a week to see whether or not the bandages are worn. I have worn mine ever since I left and am not inconvenienced at all by it, as the heat is not nearly as hard on me as the majority who break out with prickly heat.

Allen Wright is here but not assigned to Co. yet. He makes a pretty little soldier. I tell you I long for time when I can speak to these Lieut's as an equal. Yesterday I had a squad to take Lieut. Field to do a little moving, of course I had nothing to do but oversee the job. When we had finished he told me to take the men to the canteen and there we found 7 bottles of beer on ice for us. I tell you he is a *fine* man. . . .

Cuartel de Malate, Manila, 10/9/98⁸

I guess your wish that I write more often will be fulfilled for it seems that I write nearly every day for we must have something to do. As I sit here in barracks there are no less than five pretty good sized gambling crowds around in one Co. For the soldier "Craps" and "Chuck a luck" have great attractions and especially soldiering in a country such as this where it is too hot to go out with pleasure, one must have something to do. As for myself I do not care enough for cards and only play small games in our crowd. Howard Avery lost \$80 to one man playing 7² but was let off on paying \$50. Last evening the guard made a raid on a native gambling house, some soldiers tried to escape, a serg. was told to halt, but ran on so the guard shot him in the leg. He will loose his leg if not his life for blood poisoning sets in here on slightest wound. There are at present 40 prisoners in the "gig" and all pretty tough characters, nearly every night 2 or 3 have to be bound and gagged to stop their curses.

Last Sunday we had a base-ball game, the 14th played the Astor Battery and won by the score of 13-3. There was lots of good natured joshing on

both sides and the whole thing tended to liven up the men. We played the Utah Battery yesterday but were beaten 6-3, intend to play them again. This is a pretty hot country to play ball in but you can always bet on the game being stopped by the heaviest rain you can imagine. . . .

Last evening we were invited to a native's to dine and a dance afterwards. The father is a Professor in the College here and two of his sons showed us their dresses as "Bach of Arts and Civil Engineer." We had a fine dinner, about 16 at table counting the *ladies* of which there were several, all Filipino Senoritas. We then had several waltzes and quadrille. It was very interesting to listen to conversation between ladies and ourselves. They could speak no English and we very little Spanish, so it was very limited. The party consisted of Fred, myself and two North Dak. Lieuts.

Oct. 12, 1898

Have just returned from the same native's where we had the privilege of bathing. There are no accommodations in our quarters for bathing except a hydrant and it is nothing to see a line of fellows waiting their turn. We bought 2 large stone crocks and fill them with boiled water in morning. We contracted for 65 # ice a day so now there is plenty of cold water.

My Dear

Cuartel de Malate, 10/16/98

For the last three days one of the hardest rain and wind and thunder storms has been raging, everything is flooded with 2 or 3 inches of water. The rain comes down in perfect sheets and the wind in hurricanes from all directions especially at night. In such weather as this it is very pleasant to do guard duty. Of course it was our luck to strike outpost duty during the thickest of it and when I posted my relief at 3:00 AM I was drenched to the skin and my boots filled with water, however on my return to guard house I slept like a top as we are accustomed to sleeping in all sorts of places and conditions.

We were stationed at a school house opposite the oldest church here. While there an Insurgent soldier was buried. They brought the corpse, carried by two men, wrapped in matting in a sort of long dog house with slats on sides like a coop. He laid in church all night and next morning about 6 AM held services. The mourners arrived in carriages followed by old women on the run, with bundles of candles which on arrival at the church they sold to the mourners. Some of the candles were in shape of Virgin Mary. These were carried by friends on their knees the whole length of the church and then taken by a small boy, lighted and placed on table near body. The women dressed in bright red embroidered satin as if it were a ball.

Miles Baird is very sick and Dr. Johnston said he had an even chance but spoke as if it was very slim. I would not say anything about this where it would reach Mrs. Baird. . . .

(To be continued)

NOTES

1. The group picture was taken at Camp Merritt. Of the men shown, Turnbull, who, according to Middleton, spent some time in the Guard House, returned to San Francisco, to become a successful stock broker. Fred Poett later made his home in Santa Barbara; his uncle W. D. M. Howard's ranch once included the land now occupied by the cities of Burlingame, San Mateo and Hillsborough. Poett and Center are now living in Reno, Nevada.

2. Gen. E. S. Otis had notified Aguinaldo on Sept. 8 that the Insurgents were to withdraw beyond the city limits by Sept. 15. After a show of resistance the Spanish had surrendered the city on Aug. 13 to General Merritt.

3. Cuartel de Malate was a small village about three miles south of Manila alongside the bay. Maj. Gen. T. M. Anderson commanded the 1st Division, in an arc around and south of the Pasig River. Brig. Gen. Samuel Ovenshine commanded the 2nd Brigade, which included the 14th Infantry, on the right of the line. The army had passed through Malate in its attack upon the city, Aug. 10. Faust and MacQueen, *Campaigning in the Philippines* (San Francisco, 1899), p. 127.

California Soldiers in the Philippines

From the Correspondence of Howard Middleton, 1898-1899

Edited by HAROLD F. TAGGART

(Continued)

My Dear Mother.

Manila, P. I. 10/21/98

The city of Para is going to leave for Nagasaki and then home tomorrow, so I take the opportunity to write you. . . . Young Center almost had his discharge but the Dr. said he was not sick enough so would not sign it. He has sent back to his father by Mr. Jerome, formerly Agt. P. M. S. here to try and work our, Fred and myself, discharges. In that case I would probably go to Japan and perhaps home, for I long more every day to see you all and to live and eat like a civilized man. For three days I have eaten nothing but tea and toast, for all they have had has been rice horsemeat and flour and water, called gravy, sometimes desiccated potatoes, which are as good as none. When I say Horsemeat I do not joke but mean it, for the bones have been recognized by one who knows it is salted in barrels and the odor when cooked is something awful. We have to smother it with mustard to disguise the taste. Rice three times a day without sugar is not pleasant eating. However I hope it will all be over soon and I can sit down to the plainest meal you ever set. The Govt. furnishes enough food, but it is made way with before it reaches us, probably by Officer in charge or by Co. Quartermaster. In the bids asked for it looks as though we had canned cherries, etc. but I have yet to see anything nearer than dried Apples and Peaches. We are looking forward to the end of our enlistment, with impatience and a more sour crowd you never saw than the one that gathers around some one bunk on an evening after a particularly bad meal. We talk of all the good times we have had and what we would like to have and it almost invariably ends up with a unanimous vote for, what do you think, plain beef-steak and fried potatoes. However all things come to him who (not waits but) goes after them. There is very little meat used on the island and by the natives none, we get our meat from a large refrigerating strm. from Australia. She arrived about the same time we did and carried nearly 6,000 tons of frozen meat, after she is empty we can expect no more. When the meat arrives at camp it is so cold that you can break it and much colder than ice. Well enough about eating or you will think that has become our one aim in life and with the exception of the desire to be of the *World* again, you would not be far wrong. I am writing in a native's shack for it is much cooler here, surrounded by bamboo 30 ft high and dense shrubbery all around than in the exposed barracks.

On my right also writing is Fred Poett while George Allman is fast asleep in a stone chair near by. The shack is made, as is the custom here, of pampas grass tied together with cane. The floor is split bamboo about $\frac{1}{2}$ in apart. Just under my chair, under the floor is a hen about to lay an egg, for in this country the house is raised off the ground on bamboo poles and open all around.

It is very hot now but it is getting very black in the distance and I hear peals of thunder so expect a heavy shower soon. Have just finished a fine meal here in the native's, on Fred's invitation we take turns. We had sweet potatoes rolled in an egg omelet and fried chicken with bones broken and meat spread out like a chop and then fried in crumbs, then (a surprise) canned corn (from "G. B. of L.") cooked in Water Buffalo milk, fried fish called in Phillipino "Dapho," bananas, oranges, black coffee, cognac and wine, all for \$1.00 Mex or 50c our money. I am afraid when I get back I will try to give half as much as a keeper asks thinking the price is in Span. . . . Tell Miss Greene that I still have some of her roses and intend to keep them until I reach again the land where I no longer need reminder that there are still poker games at which one would rather lose than win. . . . Many thanks for the papers, I enjoyed them very much. They are a great deal more concerned than we are, for even with our present forces we could hold Manila against 60,000 Insurgents. Felix Santos a 1st. Lieut. of the Insurgents has invited us to come and see him at the headquarters at Punta. . . .

My Dear Mother —

Manila, Oct. 26, 1898

. . . Last evening Dr. Johnston invited Du Bois, Lawrence, Poett and myself to dinner with him. I do not know whether you remember my speaking of him or not, but he was a great friend of the Myers and we were quite good friends in S. F. He is now a 1st. Lieut. in Reg. Army and is stationed at our convalescent hospital quite near our barracks. We went to a Spanish restaurant in Manila and had a private room, for although we had intended to go in our plain white linen clothes it rained so hard that we had to put on our blues, so it was better we were in private seeing that he was an officer.

We started with bottled Cocktails, then soup, fish, fillet of beef, peas, cold meat, roast capon, claret, Vermouth, Curaco and Whiskey and soda and dessert, quite as many liquids as solids. We enjoyed ourselves very much and before leaving he gave me a note to the head surgeon giving me permission to see Baird. He seems to think that Baird has had a miraculous escape and says if he does not suffer a relapse he will pull through. He also gave me a prescription for my blood which I think is out of order for I have had several stys and small boils. Our own Dr. gives us the same pill for everything. We are going to be vaccinated, i. e. all those that did not take at Camp Merritt and Dr. Johnston does it. . . .

We received orders that no man was to leave Quartel de Malate and to

hold ourselves in readiness to get out under arms at a moment's notice. The Red Cross and Medical Dept were in readiness all night, all drugs, stretchers and instruments gotten together in their cases and all was fixed. The fellows, in their glee at the prospect, shook hands and hugged each other for all hoped for a scrap. It all came about from the insurgents being ordered to leave their trenches and move 12 miles from the city because it was claimed that the Germans were inciting them to a disturbance. Up to the last moment it was expected that they would make a resistance but they withdrew however without trouble.

Some seem to think that we shall still have trouble but I do not, for Aguinaldo is too bright a man to run up against a stone wall, for we have enough men here to hold Manila. His army has already broken into two parts under different heads and dissension is rife. . . .

Later: I was one of the few whose vaccinations at Camp Merritt took sufficiently well to warrant our being excused from its being done this time. Fred Poett has just come in in a great state of excitement, waving a paper in his hands, it turns out to be his "special duty detail." He is now clerk to Perry Haines, Lieut. in charge of the party (to be formed and of which I spoke in last letter) to investigate the Agricultural resources of the Island. He will live with Haines and live like a white man. I will miss Fred very much as we had become very good friends. . . .

One of the boys in our Co. was given \$10 gold to go into Manila and get some supplies, he returned to barracks with a bottle of whiskey and a monkey and nothing else. He got home just in time for retreat, and stood there with his gun in one hand and the struggling monkey in the other. We were nearly convulsed and as he answered "here" to his name the monkey gave a squeal.

Last night three fellows came in with the "snakes" and raised a terrible row, so we had to hold them down and give them a draught. There is a drink called "Vino Blanco" or White Wine, it tastes like Anisette and Absinthe and makes them positively crazy and in time will kill or make permanently crazy. I have only tasted it once and that was when I was Corp of a lone post and my sentries had orders to take all Vino from the natives. They collected quite a quantity and more for an experiment than anything else I took some before I broke the other bottles, for this I had to do in order to have a sober guard.

They speak of the "*Volunteers*" having such a fine lot, so much better than the *regulars*, why look at our guard house today, where we keep the prisoners of N. Dakota, Idaho, S. Dakota and 14th Reg. the worst men there are VOLUNTEERS. One has been given 2 yrs and a dishonorable discharge, another *one* year and a dishonorable discharge. When a man is given one or two years or a term of years it means hard labor in a military prison in the U. S.

probably Alcatraz. The one who was given one year had his sentence read out the day I was Corp of Guard and the curses I ever heard his were the worst. It happened to be a Vol. Officer who read his sentence and nothing was done, but the same thing happened the day before to a regular officer and he promptly knocked the fellow down with a stiff right hander under the jaw. Last night the same man threw an empty bottle at the sentry on guard at the door and nearly killed him, his head is cut open and he is still unconscious. The fellow was knocked down and gagged and thrown in the dungeon.

They are putting an addition to the house and as I sit here I can see the whole operation; there is not a nail used in the whole thing but bamboo tied with cane and fastened with wooden pegs. At the rate they work it takes days to make any headway. . . .

Have just succeeded in sewing six buttons on the wrong side of my white coat so will have the exquisite pleasure of doing it all over again. I am quite a hand at sewing now and a patch I have just put on my blue shirt is a marvel of workmanship, it really excels anything I have yet seen, the stitches are so fine and close that it is hard to find where the shirt is (not) mended. Although we have all become adepts at sewing it still is a mystery to us how you all thread the needle at the first stab you make at the eye. We think sometimes that either we or the needle have no eyes and to you it would all be very amusing but to us it is *work*. . . .

Oct 27 — 1898

. . . You never fail to speak of my health and the care you wish me to exercise. You need have no fear for I have never felt better (or lazier) in my life. I have not had a glass full of water unless it was boiled, in the last month. Our Co. uses three wash boilers full every day and we buy 65# of ice to keep it cool, it is put in a large earthen ware jar, called "ojai" and placed in our quarters. Then the Canteen has kept out thirst for there we can buy cold beer, Sarsaparilla and Soda. Dr. Johnston tells me that in every regiment in which the "Canteen" has been established the health of the regiment has improved 50% for it keeps the fellows from the water and native drinks. . . . "Cognac" has been rec. by Dr. J., i. e. in moderate quantities, say 5 or 6 drinks a day, for he says in his experiences both here and elsewhere those men who have taken it were the very last to get the fever, in fact all the fever patients now in the Hospital are men who never drink. You need have no fear but that I will take the best care of my health here. . . . At the rate I am writing this letter will be as large as a Sunday Ex. — and just about as much interesting reading in it. . . . You cannot imagine what a pest insects are in this country, they range from the mosquito and the fly to the roach (3 inches long) and house lizard. There seems to be quite a rivalry between the first two as to which can be the greatest nuisance. The mosquito is a terrible pest at night

and, if it was not for our nettings there would be no rest. During the day the flies are always "right there" and each fly picks out a certain spot and no matter how often you drive him away, he will return to that same place. They are most patient and surely teach us to try again for at least we are too disgusted to drive them away so they remain and succeed. The ants we have with us always day and night and their bite is quite sharp. The other insects content themselves with running over your face while you sleep but do no harm.

Later: All is excitement as news has just arrived that England and France — it is however just a rumor but we have to take such as true for we are no longer in the World. Just went over to "quarters" and found every bunk outside and all our clothing on it. They were disinfecting and scrubbing the whole barracks. This is done every little while and although we have to sweep out three times a day it is surprising the amount of dirt that is collected. All of this I have only to oversee and do not have to do any dirty work which is a great help. The other day I was doing a little sweeping myself and the Lieut. saw me, he came up and asked why I did not tell some of the men to do it. I told him it was easier to do it than to order some one else. He said he preferred for Non. Coms. not to do such work. I have found it, as I told him, easier to do it one's self than to stand and tell others "how" to do it. It seems that the better friend a fellow is the more talk necessary to get him to do anything for they all think "Oh, you might order some other fellow to do it," which is all very childish. I would not accept a Non Com. position again under any circumstances.

The "band" which plays every afternoon has just stopped and I tell you it helps to brace a fellow up for they always end with the "Star Spangled Banner" when every hat comes off and all stand at attention, except when you are under arms, then you do not remove your hat. When I get back I will always rise and stand during *that* piece even if I am the only one in the house, but by that time I hope it will have become the custom.

A great drawback to this country is their ignorance of the *hot bath*. I have not had one since I left Honolulu, now you may not think from your past experience with me that it worries me much, but when I get back you have to give me but one invitation for I have changed in many ways since joining "this man's army."

The "Major" came around to all the kitchens yesterday on a tour of inspection. He nosed around some time, lifting up boards and looking under boxes, at last he wished for an explanation of the smell. It happened that we had had some Ham, I spoke of in last letter, for lunch so it was shown to him. He was satisfied as to the source of the stench and said, "My soldiers shall not be allowed to eat such stuff" and ordered it thrown out. It was really rotten but we either had to eat it or go hungry. This morning our breakfast con-

sisted of burnt coffee, "slum" (stew) made of tainted and burnt meat, stale hard tack soaked in water and baked with grease and poor bread. A fine breakfast for a white man. We often have to go outside the gate and buy eggs and cook ourselves in order to put something in our stomachs. . . .

It is raining hard outside and the day is Sunday. Seated on a chair with her elbow on sill and chin in her hand is a young girl looking out upon the rain, just as Edna does even now, while nearby the father, he instead sitting on the window seat and superintending the operations on "Fair's Property" as ours does, is rolling cigars for "dos centavos por una." Now the similarity may not suggest itself to you but it recalled many rainy Sundays at home to me.

Cuartel de Malate, Manila, Nov. 5, 98

The father of the native friend I spoke of and who works in an English firm's office in Manila made three of us an offer the other day. I have inquired his character of the firm and they speak most highly of him. His other son is a prospector and has just returned from the mountains. He showed us some gold washings he had obtained and offered to take 3 of us, whom he calls his "mui bueno amigos" (very good friends) with him whenever we say and promises it will pay us. I intend first to go with Lieut. Haynes expedition for the Govt. when we will be given the first opportunity to stake claims in both timber and mining lands. The first is in my opinion going to be *the* richest thing here, but will take capital to cut it. According to the natives there are vast forests of Mahogany, Teak and Ebony but of course all this would take money to cut and ship, but I could sell my claim as soon as capital began to be interested in the Islands. As for working in an office here the pay will, I think, be very low for wages of all sorts are. I would like to have some agency here which I could work very well. "Jesse Moore Whiskey" will be a great thing as it is asked for every time and there is none here, only "Cyrus Noble." . . .

Cuartel de Malate, Manila, Nov. 10, 98

. . . Have just this moment come off guard, as it reaches a corporal every 17 days, and a fine wet night of it I have had. One fellow tried to pass the #1 sentry with a bayonet stuck in his legging. We stopped him and threw him in the guard house. His language was such that it was necessary to bind him and gag him. Another fellow escaped but was recaptured after I had searched a very large hospital (he is a nurse) from top to stable found him at last in a Spanish saloon and you bet I was none too gentle. . . .

We have all been issued straw hats of this shape [diagram] the brim is hooked up on right side so that we can drill in them. We have to pay 75c American or \$1.50 Span. right out of our pockets. The same hat can be bought for 50c Spanish or 25c our money in Manila so you can see something is wrong somewheres. They say that we will be charged \$7 American

for a Manila suit. There is a great kick over the price charged for the hats, for although the straw is very fine, straw is cheap here.

Later. Have just received your most welcome letter of Sept 25 to 29. Am glad you have at last heard from me here. The trip was hard but we are quartered in the most healthy barracks in the Phil. We are not over 300 ft. from the beach and directly in front of the entrance of the bay. Again we are 3 miles from Manila and there are no ill smells here as we get whatever breeze there is. You speak of white-washing the quarters, why they are 300 ft. long and 70 ft. wide with very high roof the whole being painted white. They are comparatively new and modern having corrugated iron roofs and raised 4 ft. off the ground with a cement floor underneath. As to the small pox it is confined to the 4th Cavalry. They are quartered at a suburb called "Paco," a very thickly settled (and by the lowest) place.

You need have no fear for I am taking the best of care and never felt better in my life. All the boys say I am getting fat and I really think I am. If I can get some *very* cheap photos or get Fred to take mine I will send you some showing the uniform for Battalion Drill and Dress Parade. We are all in white and straw hats, no leggings. It really looks very well to see nearly 1,000 men thus dressed, but it is very hot I must say. I take a cold bath nearly every evening and always sleep from Taps to Reveille.

The box you speak of has not arrived but may any moment now. Also received letters from Mrs. Boench, Mollie, and Ron, all of which were more than welcome. Letters are looked forward to by most of us with more longing than anything else and when a steamer is sighted by any fellow the word is passed around. We then go and sit on a half completed Spanish fort at the edge of the water and speculate as to whether she carries mail or not, for that is our one connection with the World and those we love.

I have received the package and all is curiosity around me to see what it contains. I merely told them *underwear*. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate it, the cocoa will be especially welcome as a cup of that is a meal in itself and with the crackers will help out many a poor mess here. I needed the handkerchiefs very badly and am very glad you sent them as prices have been tripled on everything here. The Magazines and papers are also here for which I am very grateful.

Saw a piece in an S. F. paper purporting to be an extract from a letter of — to his mother. If it is true that he wrote it, and I dont doubt it, he is not only a liar but a fool. He claims to have met a Spaniard with a knife, while he had only a bayonet, but according to his story the Spaniard fell on his knees and begged for mercy which he very magnanimously extended. It is well for him he is now in the Guard House and will be for 30 days, for the boys have pasted it up in quarters and would josh him unmercifully. He has been in the Guard House off and on since he has been here, and last time, as

usual, he insulted an officer and the Army, for which he got 30 days and \$10. It would have gone quite hard with him if it was not for Lieut. Savage's friendship. At the rate he is going he will get a "Bob Tail" (Dishonorable Discharge) from the army. . . .

My Darling Mother.

Malate, Manila, Nov. 14/98

. . . I cant tell you how much I enjoy the crackers and cocoa. I make a cup of the last every morning while the crackers help during the day. The magazines arrived by last ship and also some by this. They help out the long days and nights in good shape, and I keep them locked in my chest, until I am through and then pass them around. If they cinch us \$7 gold for a suit and take it out of our pay I call it "robbery." The profits of the Canteen are divided between the 10 Co. of 14th, and Co. I has recd. over \$200 gold already which money goes to mess fund, so with what we already have we should be able to live well, but our Com. Sgt. does not seem to care to spend the money. . . .

Have just received a note from R. Bliven. He has been in the Hospital most ever since he has been here. He wishes me to speak to Dr. Johnston and try to get him a disability discharge. He has dysentery and looks awful and has lost fully 40#. I do not think he will ever be well here.

Last night at 2 AM the "Fire Call" was sounded and in a very few moments every Co. of 14 was in line. We had only our pants and shoes on but it was warm and we had no time to dress properly. About 3 blocks away was an immense blaze, to this 4 Cos. were sent and the other 6 held at the barracks in case it was a ruse of the insurgents to capture barracks and arms, for we have constantly to be on the alert even though they never tire of assuring us they are "mui bueno amigos de Americanos."

Have since seen the bodies of a man and 2 children burned to death in this fire. It was very surprising why they did not escape as the 2nd floor is not 10 ft. above the ground. Evidently there was foul play as the place was a saloon. The boys did fine work and it was by their efforts that the flames did not spread. . . .

Have just returned from Dr. Johnston and he tells me that although Bliven is really not poor enough to warrant his discharge (from the govt. standards) he will nevertheless do all in his power to get him one and says that he will probably succeed. Does not wish me to say anything re it. He thinks I am looking finely and says that not only have I grown tall, but am filling out and thinks that I have, as it were, "caught on" to the climate and will probably stand it much better than most of the larger and physically stronger men.

"Latest Rumor." Fourteenth Reg. and Sixth Artillery are to be sent to town of "Illio" on another island. Cannot vouch for the truth of it and do not put much faith in the report.



HOWARD MIDDLETON
Company I, Fourteenth Infantry
1898-1899

From a photograph in the possession of Mrs. Roswell Cochran
of San Mateo

This has been a hard day as we have had over 3 hrs drill in a very hot sun. Had one hour in forenoon and at 3:25 PM had 45 min. Battalion drill and without stopping marched to the Parade Ground at the "Lunita" and had Regimental Dress Parade from which we returned with a great disgust for "Soldiering in the Phillipines." Read a joke in "Life" that was appreciated in our Reg.

Old Lady — (to soldier with arm in sling) "Are you one of the heroes of the '71st." (71st N. Y. Vol.)

Soldier: "No mam, I aint no Hero, I'm a *Regular*."

This joke appeals to the Regulars very strongly for here it is all Vol., i. e. according to their talk and that is all they seem to do (besides eat).

The "Menu" for Thanksgiving day for our Co. has just been made known and I will send you a copy of it. As we have a few hundred (I was going to say "pesos," Mex for dollars) dollars in the fund we shall also have fine Christmas and New Year meals. For my Christmas dinner Fred Poett has asked me to dine with him. It will be very different Christmas from last but by next year the old regime will be renewed and we shall all sit around the *log fire* at home and I can tell you of my *last* Christmas. This will be my first Christmas away from home and it is just about as far as I could get, but my thoughts will be with you nevertheless. We will, here in Manila, celebrate almost a whole day before you do in S. F. but as my thoughts are with you daily, no hourly, why we will be together in hopes and thoughts on that day. This is probably the last letter that will reach you before Christmas, even if this does, as it leaves here Nov. 23 and today is 21st. and all I can do is wish those I *love* a Very Merry Christmas. However, when I return I shall bring you all something either from here or from Yokohama, so I hope you will overlook the lack of a present this time. . . .

George Allman is also in Guard House and has his trial today. His charge is "drunk on guard." Yesterday one man got "4 months hard labor and \$10 a *month fine*," for the same thing. Please do not mention this to any one.

Nov. 22, 1898 [same mail]

All is excitement. Two steamers have just come to anchor off the town. We can see by the glass that one is the Senator and think the other is Newport, both are crowded with troops, all this means mail today, so I will hold this letter until last moment and take it into Manila myself.

When mail is in sight everything possible is dropped. All anxiously wait distribution of it. These are the feelings of all shown by the expressions on their faces. He who receives mail is all jubilant while he who is disappointed stands around in a lost sort of way trying to find some one else as unfortunate as he and discuss it with him.

We see by the papers that a number of Vol. Reg. have agreed to stay 3 yrs. Oh, if they could but ask *any* soldier here they would get the answer "Fohh."

Nevertheless no one could have told me anything and I do not regret for *one* moment having come for I would never have been satisfied otherwise. . . .

The very idea of Stone's thinking of a Com. and of Barrie's getting one makes us disgusted with Reg. army. I do not doubt but that any fellow who has gone through this campaign would be passed very easily for a Com. but for me it is in time of peace too ambitionless a life for me. I have had enough of the army either in war or peace. It is a lazy life and one I am not fitted for although if another war should wage I should join in a moment, bitter as the experience has been. . . .

It is true there are many men in the Hospital but they are, according to Dr. Johnston, either men who have never drank or either men who have drank to excess. The man who takes his *two* or *four* drinks of Cognac a day has not been on sick report. As Cousin Lena says I will be much changed when I return. It will, I hope and think, be for the best, for I have changed in my ideas. Edna will I am sure have a much easier time for I am surely "much broader" as you were wont to wish me, and having seen more of life and of men will be able to *pass over* more trifling things than before. We will, however, all be together before long, for the arrival of more troops means relief to those here. I received a very interesting and very much appreciated letter from father. His letters are especially enjoyed by me for I know how he dislikes to write letters and this one was 4-page and large pages, too.

Cuartel de Manila, 11/24/98

My Dear Father.

Today is Thanksgiving Day but you are not celebrating in S. F. We have just had that *breakfast* that I wrote about last mail. As usual everything was spoiled in the cooking, eggs (scrambled) were mixed with hard tack soaked in water, and then boiled potatoes smoked, etc. So far this day has been a failure, for first thing this morning drill call sounded and much to our surprise no "recall," so drill we had and this on the day when all here have something to be thankful for. Yesterday we killed 50 ducks and chickens. L Co. had 4 pigs fattening at a native's hut, but when trying to kill them last night one escaped.

The troops are probably being taken off the transports now for we can see barges alongside . . . [enclosed, penned copy of menu for three meals].

Malate, Manila, 11/27/98

My darling Mother.

The box arrived on 25th and great times we look forward to. The can of ham and crackers I also received and am very grateful for same. Lately our breakfasts have been poor. This morning we had burnt hash and poor coffee, so I took a couple of slices of ham and fried them and made cup of cocoa

and had a meal envied by all. The ham is really fine, as good as any fresh meat I have ever had.

The boxes for Hooper and Jennings contain all kinds of canned, such as soups, oysters, jams, fruits, bacon, ham, sardines, milk, etc. and will last us some time, also two large tins of sweet and cheese crackers. . . . We, J. and myself, intend to ask for a pass for 2 or 3 days as we have been asked by the Captain to come and stay on the Senator for that time. Will be quite a change.

I see that as usual Stanford won the football game. Berkeley should quit for good now.

Several stmsr have arrived. There are now in port, Senator, Valencia, Arizona, Ohio, Indiana. We have received mail from Senator but as yet have received only one letter from other stmsr. think it was from the Ohio.

. . . I was on guard last night and a more quiet and bright night I never saw. The moon was full and one could read by its light. When off watch I walked to the beach about 2:30 AM and sat on the stone fort. The ships in the harbor all stood out plainly and the water was like glass and as I looked at the stars I thought of what you said about their being the only things that we both could see and that could see us. Never mind, I think March will see us back. I hope so anyway, for I am sick of a climate in which one has to be continually taking the greatest care of himself and denying himself this and that. I must say though that almost everything the Red Cross advised us not to do is the very best thing we could do. For instance we were told never to touch liquor here. Now our own Reg. Dr. told Robe, who has been sick with fever 2nd time, that if he wished to be free from it he must take a few bottles of beer or a little whiskey every day as those men who drank moderately were never sick in a fever or malarial country. . . . I can tell you how sorry I feel for those "poor fools" who have just arrived and have agreed to stay three years. It will take them just three weeks to get enough.

The Minnesota and 1st Cal are the most disliked Regts. here and in the last case it is entirely their own fault for they have talked too much re themselves and really do not deserve anything like the credit some other Regs. do, notably 10th Pennsylvania and they do not say a word. According to S. F. papers there was only one Reg in the fight and that was the 1st Cal. Have just ended my 5th sty and very sore it was too. . . .

Cuartel de Malate, Manila
P. I., Dec. 3, 98

Your letter of Oct 26th recd yesterday. I would have gotten it sooner but Jennings and myself have been on the Senator for 3 days and 2 nights. We went with her to an Island called "Corregidor" as she was bringing troops (200 — 10th Penn) and 50 Hospital men there to establish a Hospital. The Island is about 30 miles away and we went down in the morning and came

back afternoon of next day, thus having a day or two's stay. It really is an ideal place for the sick, being very hilly, no water settles and so no swamps, the drinking water is fine, and it has a beautiful beach for bathing. One side is the ocean so it is cooler and the air better than in Manila. Here if any place the sick will improve for it is really a beautiful place.

Although there were 9 officers aboard, the Captain of the Senator had us and only us at his table for meals. I am more than disgusted with Volunteer officers for the Major was very drunk all the way and was continually drinking from some bottle of whiskey with his privates. The Captain treated us finely. The first night we spent in Manila, and went with him to a fight between American soldiers with the Captains of the Zealandria and Arizona. From Captain Dowdell of the Zealandria I received packages of crackers and soup.

. . . I had heard of Butler's escapade and felt very sorry for he was an awfully good fellow. I am glad that you felt that I am strong enough to resist drink but after the first month when they size up a fellow and see that he does not care to go with that crowd they do not press him and as I keep entirely with our own fellows and none of them except — care to drink why they let us alone. . . .

Dr. Davis' Chloryd. came just in time for I was nearly out and every week or so I am taken with cramps and diarrhea, but one dose 30 drops of that in water stops everything. Florence's marshmallows arrived but not by the same vessel as letter advising about them. I tell you they tasted fine and brought Kearny St. near to us. Smith, Boss and Jennings helped me to get away with them, which as you might guess did not take us long, but then the ants would have eaten them if we did not. . . .

This is very monotonous and how able-bodied men stay in the Army for 30 years I cannot see, but they say that after 3 yrs you do not care to leave it. Really it has a sort of attraction but not enough for me even though I might get a Com. It is an awfully lazy life and in time of Peace must be even worse than now.

Dec. 5-98

. . . I noticed in papers a picture of bones and skulls thrown out for non-payment of rent of graves. That is a very common sight here in all grave yards. In some there is an immense vault under ground and for hundreds of years the remains have been dumped in there and there are thousands of skulls. You speak of brass shells. Unless you mean the small ones for rifles, I have not seen any but am sending today a set (5) of Mauser Cart. One of which I have drawn the charge and melted lead from bullet, also 1 Remington with brass bullet, 1 Krag and 1 Spring. In these last the charges have been drawn. . . .

My Darling Mother.

Cuartel de Malate, Manila, Dec 8-98

. . . Center is going to return to Co. as he has had enough "office boy's" work but then he never stays with anything very long at a time. . . . You ask me to write of my doings. As I do the same thing every day and that I have described, why I cannot write more on that. . . .

We cannot take walks as the American sentries stop us a few miles out and even if we did dodge them we would be stopped by Insurgent lines not much further. I begin to think that there will not be much doing in Manila for some months and even then clerk's pay will be very small as there are so many Filipino clerks who work for very little. If we get transportation money I intend to go to Hong K. and Yokohama. Well as I have written 6 pages to Father I am necessarily short of material. . . .

My Darling Mother.

Cuartel de Malate, Manila, Dec 10-1898

I intend to write a few lines every day so that when the mail does go I shall not have to rush. There is so little to happen here that it is hard scratching to find anything to write.

As I sit here in the Y.M.C.A. Tent writing I can see the small ex-Spanish gunboat "Manila" steaming in. She is the one that steamed in to Manila Bay day after the fight ready for inspection not knowing of the battle. She is really quite a handy little boat having very good guns on her and being small can go into almost any harbor. This boat accompanied us to Corregidor. A large French transport also entered this morning. She will take 1250 Spaniards back to Spain, a nice reception they will get.

Yesterday the 13th Minnesota paraded streets with band as they had been ordered to be ready to leave in the next 30 days. A happier lot of fellows I never saw, all dead crazy to go. Captain Dowdell sent our boxes this forenoon and very glad we were to get them too. The fellows wondered whether I was going to start a circulating library. They will be much enjoyed by us. Many thanks to Father. . . .

A great many officers have their wives here now and its good to see an American woman once more. Most of the Spanish women here wear no hats but wear their luxuriant hair high. One of the papers here started a subscription for a Christmas dinner for the sick and several thousand dollars was subscribed, a good part by Spanish firms, but the Govt. has refused to accept it. Pieces of red flannel are being issued to the Army here. They are in shape of figure eight and are worn on hat, standing for 8th Army Corps. We have had 12 fine showers put in an outhouse so now we can enjoy a really good bath. . . .

12 Dec 1898

I have just returned from the Puebla and Senator with Jennings. We staid

some time on the Puebla and she did look familiar but is a much dirtier ship now than when we came over and the crew say that the Tenn. are a bad and dirty lot. There are a few old regulars aboard and when they heard we were from the 14th they all came up and shook hands and told us how glad they were to see fellows from that branch. They are disgusted with Vol. officers and told us how they sat down on deck and played craps with the men. Avery and Boss stayed all night on the Zealandria and in that one night Avery lost a pair of pants. The men on this ship are also Tenn. . . . Everything is being made ready to scrap Aguinaldo if he does not lay down his arms when told to. He has been ordered to release Spanish prisoners and guess he will do so.

Spanish transport arrived yesterday and as soon as she came to anchor Dewey sent the Monadnock stripped for action just to show what we had here. Her guns looked immense and the side of the Spanish boat was lined with sailors looking at her.

Cuartel de Malate, 15 Dec 1898

My Darling Mother.

I have just come off guard after being on for nearly 2 days. The Segt of Guard, an old soldier and a friend of mine, gave me the star post at Cap. Eastman's. This is considered a fine post especially for Corp. as he can sleep all night. . . . Ralph Bliven has his discharge but it is by favor and not disability and he leaves on same steamer that this will go on and he has promised to go and see you, tell you just how I am looking and all about me. . . .

Dewey has raised and repaired two more Spanish gunboats and has saved about 7 in all and they are quite handy in this place. Aguinaldo has released Spanish prisoners according to our demands. . . .

Cuartel de Malate, 12/16/1898

This afternoon we were ordered not to leave our quarters and our officers have had all their bedding brought down and will sleep in office. We also had 150 rounds of ammunition issued to us. It is expected that we shall have trouble with the natives so everything is being made ready. Twelve men have been picked out from each company to fall out under arms in case the fire call sounds for it is thought that the natives will set fire to some buildings expecting that the whole Reg will turn out without arms. They could then cut us down as we would have no way of defending ourselves but we will not be caught napping. For my part I do not expect any trouble for I think Aguinaldo too smart to run against a brick wall.

Dec. 17 — 1898

After all there was no trouble last night but of course that does not do away with the possibility of it other nights. The natives in and around Manila do not like the idea of a fight for it would do away with their business and this will be a factor towards a peaceful ending.

Dec. 18 — 1898

Last night the expected fire came about 11:30 PM but it was probably only a coincidence as there was no attack made. Then men from each Co. went to do what they could but all the rest stayed in barracks under arms. Every well soldier in Manila was under arms that night as it looked very much as though there would be trouble. When the "fire call" sounds in the dead of night and especially at a time like this it rather startles one for the moment.

Dec. 20 — 1898

. . . I received a letter from Will Hogg this A. M. saying that he could not come here as they would leave there on 24th to continue their tour. He sent package on S. S. Tailer to Warner Barnes and Co., so I went there today and then to the Custom House and got a landing permit but could not get the box as stmr was in middle of the river, so will take a "sampac," sort of native canoe, and go tomorrow. There was great excitement today among the Spaniards as some were being sent aboard stmr to go back to Spain. If the natives ever took Manila there would not be a Spaniard alive in a day, so bitter is the feeling. . . . The Army and Navy Journal says that the 14th is going to Atlanta, Ga. If that is so, we will go by way of Suez Canal so will have circled the world.

Dec 23/98

I will have to finish this in pencil as we have not been allowed to leave the quarters for the last 3 days in anticipation of a scrap. I wish we would have our scrap, if it is really coming and get over with it, for this being locked up in a space a block square is no fun especially as there are over 1,000 men in that space. . . .

I am somewhat surprised at what you say about Father's coming here for in the "City" of Manila there will be very little doing and it will be some months in my estimation before one can go into the interior with any surety of coming out alive. . . . The natives are not only the Insurgents who will be but a small factor in a short time, but the savages in the various islands and who are even on this island in great numbers. However I have two schemes which are open to me and will be for some time, i. e. if I can raise \$1,000, but which, of course, I will look into very thoroughly before I attempt anything. I have become acquainted with them through Poett, who is, as you know, with Lieut. Hayne who in turn is ordered to explore and report on the Agricultural and Mineral resources of this island. I will keep you posted but will without doubt return to the states first, i. e. before doing anything. . . . If it layed with the Tenn. Reg. or if they were on outpost duty near Insurgents, as we are, you would have heard of a scrap before now. They are very excitable and a couple who were up here told us, "You all better get all your cartridges fo' they's sure gwine to be shootin tonight." . . .

My Dear Father.

Cuartel de Malate, Dec 26/98

The Christmas boxes were received by our Reg on the afternoon of the 24th so you see they did not lose time in getting them to us. I cannot tell you how much I appreciated the pocketbook and knife. I have been without both ever since I left S. F. and have been very much inconvenienced by it. I will now have something to keep my pictures and papers in without their being sweated to pieces. Everything arrived in fine shape, nothing broken . . . [tobacco, socks, etc. and good whiskey].

The latest rumor and it is from a good source is that the Insurgents will be disbanded and Aguinaldo given a Civil Appt. and some of his soldiers enlisted as our soldiers 1 Battalion to every reg. . . .

Cuartel de Malate, Jany 4/99

I have been so busy lately that I have had no time to do anything in way of writing. The whole Insurgent business is coming to a head and within the next few days we will know whether they will peaceably lay down their arms or make a stand.

We went on outpost Monday for 24 hrs. in the trenches and Block House 14. Two Co.'s go at a time and are divided into squads under a Non. Com. and sent to different posts. Mine with 3 men and one more Corp. was in sight of the Insurg. lines about 100 yards from their furthest post. Smith had one about 400 or 500 ft. to our side and Jennings one the same distance up a road to the right. These and many other posts are supposed to control all entrance to Manila but it would not be a hard matter for them to get past in small bands if they cared to. The night was intensely dark. One could not see 3 feet away and as they (the insurg) wear no shoes they could easily creep up on sentry walking past in road 3 or 4 ft. wide and lined on either side with dense brush. In this country the brush is positively impenetrable even as near the city as 4 or 5 miles where we are.

This outpost duty will come every 5 days, so our Co. go on again Saturday. Besides that we have our regular guard to do, so you see we will be kept busy. But as Corporal I have a very much easier time as I of course have no post to walk and also much less danger.

Lieut. Field instructed me and the other Corp. to hold our ground in case of attack as all other posts of our Co. would fall back on us. He sent us 6 more men to reinforce us for the night, but all passed quietly. My last guard was at Gen. King's residence. It is always good luck to get a "headquarters" guard as the Non Com in charge sleeps all night, the men awakening one another. . . .

[He sends thanks for Christmas box, towels, soap, tooth paste, etc.]
I Co. received more than twice the number of boxes any other Co. in the Reg and our quarters looked like a Commissary. . . .



CALIFORNIA SOLDIERS AS GUESTS
OF PHILIPPINE FAMILY

From a photograph in the collection of Mr. Fred Poett of Reno, Nevada

I will tell you how I spent Xmas eve. Poett, Center, Allman (who drinks very little now) were invited by our friends, Jose Manuel's family to dine with them at 12 midnight, Christmas eve, as it is a custom here among the "Tagolas" or "Pure Filipinos" to have a feast for their friends on this night. They had been fattening a suckling pig for some little time before. We arrived about 11 PM and found them roasting it in true native fashion. It was on a stick which they turned constantly over hot coals, getting a most beautiful color. I tell you it was fine eating, being fat and cooked just right. They also had chicken, fish tortillas, Claret, etc. We toasted them and then the old man, Jose's father, whom we called Grand Pa, gave a toast to our long and happy life. Matting was then spread on the floor for us and we slept until he awakened us at the first call of the bugle. He must have staid up all night in order to get us back for Reveille. These people were at one time very well fixed but the Spanish and the Priests have reduced them to their present condition. Aguinaldo receives every Xmas "un peso," 50c our money, from every Filipino as a present so you can see what a harvest he reaps.

The 1st Cal. Reg. Vol. which according to the papers is the only Reg. in Manila, and also the only Reg. which lost its head and fired into the Penn. Reg., left under sealed orders last night, probably for Iloilo where the Insurg. refused to allow our troops to land. There are 25,000 insurg. there.

New Year's Eve we spent at Fred Poett's, there being present Jennings, Center, Smith, Allman, and I tell you we had a fine time. Lieut. [?] and Maj. Cardwell came in later and we drank good health to those at home and a prosperous New Year. Then Lieut. Hayne came in and gave us a toast to the New Year. We had a very nice dinner and did not leave until after 1 AM, Jan. 1, 1899. The next day Fred came to Cuartel and got the same crowd dressed in blue shirts and brown fatigue pants, campaign hats and leggins. We then went to Jose's and had our pictures taken with a native shack for a background. Jose's entire family then dressed in their finest and their picture was taken. He also took both groups together. He now has a fine large camera so if the pictures are good, I will send you some of each. . . .

My Dear Father.

Cuartel de Malate, Manila, 1/12/99

I have just returned from outpost duty today (Thursday). Sunday I went on guard with my Company, Tuesday with "D" Co. as they were short of non-coms., and yesterday on "outpost duty," with my own company in the trenches in plain sight of Insurgent lines. Wednesday afternoon a small Filipino boy came tearing up on horseback past our lines and shouted a few words in their native language (Togalo) to some of the natives near us. They all took to their heels and packed their valuables in boxes and sacks. Those lucky enough to own a horse harnessed him up and drove by as fast as they could, but always with a touch to their hats as they passed. Some even car-

ried food in their hand. One had a dozen or so pretzels or rather they looked like them. Then the troops began to come and a more anxious lot of fellows I never had seen, every one laughing and joking, all looking for the "niggers." All came at double time and if it were not for the officers would have gone at top speed so anxious were they to get at it.

Down in Manila, on the "Escolta," everything was closed up in a moment, street cars were grabbed, their drivers knocked down and the reins taken by soldiers. The horses surely never went so fast before but still it did not satisfy our fellows. Every carriage in town was taken, regardless of what the driver said and driven at break neck speed to the barracks. They were then turned loose. Fellows in the hospital begged to be allowed to go and many did join their companies, although very weak. One fellow they would not give a gun to, so he grabbed a stretcher and started off, he was pretty fagged when he passed us.

A more frightened lot of people I never saw in my life. They were "dead leary" of the Americanos. One fellow prostrated himself when one of our fellows looked through his gun to see that it was all right.

To show the treachery of these people I will cite an instance. Two nights ago a sentry on outpost challenged two natives as it was late at night. They replied "Filipino amigos" so he advanced them. As they passed him one drew a knife and made a slash at his bowels, the sentry dropped and received the cut across the face. He then, after that, killed one and the other "Filipino Amigo" is dying in the hospital. They have found out that the American sentry is a different man from the Spanish sentry. Another thing they do not understand is the promptness and rapidity with which the Americans got to the forts, block houses and trenches. The Spanish were very slow in sending reinforcements to their outposts and thereby lost many men. The whole of Aguinaldo's army is scared speechless and do not want to fight but he must make a bluff in hopes that the U. S. will buy him off as Spain did.

The Monterey is close in shore and has had her searchlights on the Insurgent trenches for 3 nights. Dewey was yesterday made Gov. Gen. of the Islands so we will know in the next few days just what will happen, as he is pretty "pronto." Our officers slept in the Cuartel last night and the Gatling guns were made ready. The Escolta was covered from one end to the other with them yesterday. . . .

My Darling Mother.

Cuartel de Malate, Manila, Jan. 18/99

. . . Sunday was the day things were expected to come to a head. The secret service sent word to all the commands that the natives had been told to go to church and they would there get their arms. We were consequently kept in our quarters under orders to hold ourselves in constant readiness. We were however not called out and as it stands now never will be. The Gatling guns, of which we have two, were made ready and the men detailed to work

them, all ammunition issued for same. Two bull carts that were going past our barracks were taken and made ready to haul the Guns out to the trenches.

Natives moved out of town and all Spaniards into the "walled city." The number of French and German flags raised showed the people feared an inside attack as well as outside and so sought the protection of their flags. The English are classed with the Americans by the Natives, so their flag was not so much in evidence as the others. I have never seen a lot of men take things so gayly even though it was generally known that a good hot time was almost certain to occur within 24 hrs.

The Doctor then took us out and proceeded to give instruction in bandaging broken limbs and wounds. He became angered and more insulting language it has never been my lot to listen to without resenting. He told us in so many words that the "*Govt cared nothing for our lives,*" that "*it did not give medical aid to save life but to save us for the next fight,*" also that "it was our rifle they cared for and not us." He also said that he wished the first men to be wounded would be those whom he asked questions and who could not answer. He then made a crack at Berkeley College and ended by mentioning the tender [?] of the physician. A fitting ending for such a speech. Such talk by an officer should not be allowed especially to men as unable to resent it as we are.

However it is all over, everything being fixed between Aguinaldo and Americans, he agreeing to our holding the Islands for 2 to 5 years and if at the end of that time the U. S. thinks they are able to hold and govern themselves they are to have Independence with protectorate.

This was read to the Insurgent soldiers by their leaders in the trenches and with a great shout the American flag was raised by them. All is now serene and the treaty with Spain having been signed by the U.S. Senate, we are now looking for our discharges as there is no further chance of a scrap. The "Monadnock" has been anchored as far in shore as she could possibly get and the effect of her big guns on the natives was marvelous. At night she threw her searchlight on their trenches and the men were shown up as though it was daylight.

Everybody is working for their discharge. One fellow got his last week with \$600 besides. He enlisted in Cleveland. If you have any chance I wish you would make a *play* for *mine*. I would not have written as I have if I thought we would have any more fighting but all is now "bueno" so you need not worry. I intend to have my photo taken as soon as we get our "Khaki" uniform or if that is not soon, in our regular drill uniform. . . .

(To be concluded)

California Soldiers in the Philippines

From the Correspondence of Howard Middleton, 1898-1899

Edited by HAROLD F. TAGGART

(Concluded)

Cuartel de Malate, Jany. 28/99

Today we returned from a 48 hour outpost at Singalong Church in province of Singalong. This time I was stationed at the Church or rather in an old large Spanish house just opposite the Church of this district. The house in which we slept must have been at one time a very fine residence, but at present is riddled with bullet holes and over-run with rats as large as cats. Everything is built on a large scale and clearly shows that it was owned by Spaniards with "mucho dinero" (money).

We had a crazy sergeant and the Lieut. with us was equal, so had a very hard time of it. The insurgent soldiers invited some of our fellows over to dine with them but they declined. The lines in some places are not more than 10 ft. apart and we often have long conversations with them. They have, if one is to believe what they say, no desire to fight us and I believe them for they are pretty well frightened already. They are in a bad way, for if we attack them and drive them back as we undoubtedly would, they would have another enemy to contend with. These are the savages in the interior who use blow guns with poisoned darts. We will never have any trouble with these people unless we make it ourselves. . . .

They are getting stricter every day here and its becoming harder to soldier especially as we are so short of officers that we seldom have Lieut. Field when we do picket duty. This makes it pretty bad, for there are some officers who are very mean and small. Lieut. Field kicked a big fellow, named Pat Mulloy, to a finish because he treated some of our fellows rankly. He is an officer having risen from the ranks not very long ago, is "shanty-Irish." . . .

Feb'y 3, 1899 [same letter]

Have just returned from outpost at same place as last time. At 10:30 PM was sent to reinforce a post, the nearest of any to the insurgents, as there was a general calling out of troops last night. This post is not 10 ft from the sentry posted by "*our friends*" the Insurgents and only separated by a small stream about 4 to 8 ft. deep. Their sentry is in a tree on other side of bank so I posted ours under a banana tree on our side and ordered him to put 6 shells in his piece, on my own responsibility. In order to reach this post you have to leave the main road and branch out on a trail to the right. This trail

is not wide enough for two men to go abreast for on the right is dense underbrush and bamboos, on the left is a ditch 4 ft. deep and thick with ooze.

The other night a 4th Cavalry fellow fell in and did not regain his gun until the next day. The night was very black and before I reached my post I had been up to my knees in black mud. This path has to be patrolled every hour and I tell you it is no fun. It all passed off quietly however and was caused by an armed body of Insurgents trying to enter the City to bring back 50 or 75 drunken Insurgents. This, of course, could not be allowed and as they insisted, hence the trouble. . . .

My Darling Mother.

Manila, 2/12/99

Recd your cable, am sorry you thought it necessary to wire. I received a very slight flesh wound in the hip but that was not what laid me out. I also received a heavy blow from the butt of a rifle while mounting the first insurgent trench. This caught me in a very delicate spot and laid me out for some time. I managed to reach temporary aid however and again started on with A Co. but only got a little way then dropped.⁴

They sent M Co. (75 men) and 24 I Co. men to charge and that the strongest position the insurgents held. In that 100 men there were 9 killed outright, 2 of I and 7 of M, while 2 more of I's will probably die. Gens Anderson and Ovenshine complimented us highly. Lieut. Field as luck would have it did not lead us but we had a fine young fellow Lieut. Miles. Field said he was proud to belong to I Co.

The space we charged was only 90 ft wide and lined on both sides with bamboo trees. After we had advanced to within 100 yards of their trenches they opened fire from all sides. As it turned out they had sharp-shooters in all those trees and the cross-fire was what told on us. Miles saw we were in a hole and said, "Men, there is only one thing to do, I Co. forward double time, March." We gave a rousing cheer which was taken up by M Co. and fixing bayonets made a rush. The yell was what told, for the niggers left their first trench and ran to their second. It was here, just as we were going up the first breast works, that I was retired but will be out in a day or two . . . [on reverse side of letter is a small diagram of action].

Cuartel de M. Feby 14/99

Well as you know we have had the long expected fight with the Filipinos and have vanquished them although we lost some good men.

As usual I Co. was on outpost Saturday and that night as I was posting my relief we heard the first, a long way over to our left, at the Nebraska's camp. The fire kept getting nearer until there was firing all along the line except just in front of where we lay. As you will see, everytime I Co. has been on outpost or rather every time there has been a call to arms we have been on outpost. The whole trouble started by a Nebraska sentry killing two native

guards, who tried to take his post and make him fall back. This was done every night and our men had orders to fall back, but that night he was told to shoot to kill and he did, killing 2 of their guards. Then the sentries gave the alarm and the Filipinos opened fire on us. The Americans replied very little during the night and this gave the Filipinos the impression that we did not care to scrap them. As soon as dawn broke the Americans were lined up and the Filipinos thought we were going back to town and they shouted at us. The Spaniards always contented themselves with holding them out or not advancing. We showed them a different way to scrap and about 5:30 or 6 AM Sunday morning the order was given to charge the trenches. We could hear our fellows way over to our left cheer as they ran in the charge.

The Artillery ripped them wide open, blasting scores at every shot. As we lay behind our little trench that morning the big shells from the Monadnock *screamed* over our heads in a most terrifying manner and made us glad that she was on our side. We could see the 10 in. shells as they went over us. It was fine marksmanship, for they had to go over thousands of our men and miscalculation of 50 or 100 yds meant death to many of our too small force.

The order came from Gen. Ovenshine, in fact he came himself just as we (21 men in all) started to advance double-time. In a low tone of voice he gave us the order and silently we obeyed. We first fired 10 volleys and only got a small return fire. Not another shot was fired until we were within 200 ft of the trenches, then they opened a hot fire from all sides on us. With one accord we threw ourselves on our stomachs in the mud, fired one volley and then advanced double-time. As he gave the order we all took our hats off and gave a good old American cheer running all the time. Any man who says he was not frightened is a liar or a fool. I did not realize that bullets could come so thick and why we were not all shot is a wonder to me. One began after a bit to think of all the wrong things he had done and of those at home. I made up mind I would never do wrong again.

My gun got stuck, two shells jammed and I had to jump in a mud hole on the left under the trees. As I soon found out there were a couple of sharpshooters just above me in the tree and pretty hot they made it too. Almost the first shot took my hat off, and then they came thick and fast. They must have been miserable shots or I would never have gotten out of there. However I did and ran and joined Co. Just as I was climbing the breastworks one of our men fell and in trying to regain his feet swung his gun and caught me in a delicate spot. As I fell back I hit on my own gun. I was "hors d'combat" for some time. As I lay there a mauser just caught, went in about an inch but as they are small you could hardly find the place. By that time we had taken the trenches with M Co. It was in this charge that Lieut. Mitchell was shot in the stomach and 2 of our 21 men killed outright and 6 M Co. men killed with many wounded. Gen. Ovenshine and Anderson complimented us very

highly and said that no men could do more. The 14th has a fine reputation here now and Field said he was proud to be a member of Co. I. Of the men you know there were only two with us, the others were some distance away. Center and Avery were the ones, they fought like H-1 . . . dropping them one by one and laughing all the time. I only have one to my credit, a fellow I dropped out of a high tree.⁵

We set fire to every shack we came to and soon had the sky black with smoke. This was done by orders. Everything now bears the glorious "milk white flag," you can see natives with a game cock under one arm and a white flag over his shoulder. I must now close as mail leaves in 15 min. Am feeling fine, wound is alright, a little stiff. . . .

Cuartel de Malate, Manila, P. I.

My darling Mother.

3/4/99

Just a few lines to let you know that I am still well and am now with Co. At present the Co. is doing guard duty in quarters but expect to leave for trenches this P. M. I had quite a siege in the Hospital in all about 4 weeks but am feeling fine now. I am glad to say that during that time the Reg. had no fighting so I did not [miss] anything. . . . I will send back by the Senator two statues of native "milkman and Milk woman." These are very life-like and very good. They were made in Iloilo and given to me by friend "Jose." I will also send a watch-fob taken from a dead soldier by me, while I lay in the trenches waiting to be taken to Hospital. . . .

I must close now as my relief goes on soon. Our Reg. is stationed at Pasay, a small town some distance from Manila, 6 or 7 miles.⁶ . . .

My darling Mother.

Pasay, Luzon, P. I. 3/8/99

We are now some distance from Manila in a small town called Pasay. The American trenches run by here and it is in these that we do duty every other night. Today and tonight we sleep in trenches, while F Co. will have 24 hrs off, sleeping in old convent. As I Co. is on outpost there will surely be a call to arms. The first night we were here Insurgents set fire to some shacks 700 yds in front of the trenches I was in. This was done to find out our outposts so they could fire on them. They did fire a few shots but our men did not reply so they could not locate us. This is terrible country to fight in as the underbrush is almost impenetrable and wells and swamps are everywhere, while the trees and native shacks are filled with sharpshooters.

Last night an M Co. man accidentally shot himself in the foot. As he was on outpost the Corporal from the trenches came running up to find the cause of the shot. He saw a dark form in the timber and of course took a shot at it. It turned out that he had shot and killed one of his own men.

In Trenches, Feby 12, 1899 [March]

Have just been told that our troops will move in morning so we will have our breakfast at 4 AM. As this is our day in trenches, suppose we will be left behind to hold trenches. This is really more dangerous than being on the firing line, as the niggers shoot so high that they stand more chance of hitting us than those they aim at.

Feby 13-1899 [March]

As I said the bullets are whistling over our heads but do no damage. Heavy firing is going on up by the lake from river gunboats. Part of our Co. is stretched along the road from firing line to trenches to watch for sharp shooters of whom there are many. It has rained all night and we are wet, sleepy, tired and muddy. Reports say great number of niggers killed while trying to cross lake by gunboats and 5 Americans wounded. It is going to take a long time to capture Paranaque, the town we are making for, as it is full of niggers.⁷

Feby 15, 1899 [March]

Another M Co. man shot himself last night. Am feeling first rate considering the campaigning we are doing, as well as any of the fellows. You must excuse the briefness of my letters but have a good deal of duty to do now. There is heavy firing on our left and we are ordered into the trenches so will close. . . . Expect to advance on Paranaque in a few days and expect a hard fight.

My Dear Father.

Pasay, Mar 18-1899

. . . I did not join my Co. for some time after I thought I would, but as we have had no fighting since the 5th I have missed nothing. We are now strongly entrenched 2 or 3 miles from Paranaque, an Insurgent stronghold, but which could be blown to pieces by our ships. I think however that the plan is to close in around the town and starve them out. Gen. Lawton says we have lost enough American lives already so will not charge. If that is the case it will be a month or two anyway before we get into the town.

The 1st Cal. Reg. is the laughing stock of the whole island on account of the S. F. papers. The real facts of the case were that one Co. was held in reserve for the 14th but was never used and that in another Co. the Lieut. only got his men out of the trenches at the point of his pistol. 100 Engineers took a position that 900 1st Cal. were driven from. They have not a friend on the Island and I am most thankful that I am not in such a talkative and boastful organization. They have sent 1 Battalion where they can waste no more powder, to Negros, a place where the natives raised our flag of their own free will.

The Oregon arrived last night. All is talk of getting out, for this thing will last some time yet and the bad season is coming on and all want to get away.

My darling Mother.

Pasay, Mar 19, 1899

At present it looks as though we would stay here for some time, for now our Co. stays a week at a time in trenches and then goes to an old convent in Pasay for a week. This is getting very dull and disagreeable as it has rained hard every night for a week and the trenches are nothing but mud. With the exception of a covering made of banana leaves we have no shelter and our blood is so thin that we are getting very cold by morning although the Ther. says it is 70%.

It is rather discouraging to be in the Reg. that lost the most men in the shortest space of time and then have a Vol. Reg. that really did nothing but show the "yellow streak" get all the credit. Yesterday one more of the boys in this Co. died of his wounds. He was a fine plucky little fellow and came from Concord, Cal. Of the 21 men of I Co. that charged up what the Spaniards call "Bloody Lane" with M Co., 3 have died of wounds and 6 more wounded. 1 of the last will likely die.

So you see it must have been a pretty warm fight, for M Co. lost 6 men and 1 Lieut. killed and large number wounded. Lieut. Mitchell just to the right of me and I saw him fall and say, "Never mind me, men, go on." The other part of the Co. did not have a man wounded but had several narrow escapes. The paper had all our 14 Reg. wounded under the heading 1st Wash.

There is not a man with but 3 exceptions but that would take his discharge and if you think you can get mine why please do it for me. Have had enough of this Guerrilla warfare. The people in the states do not realize the sort of country we are in, one cannot see 10 ft ahead. If we had had troops enough here when it first started, to keep after them, it would all have been over now for we had them on the run. As it is, they have had time to strongly entrench themselves, and the same job as we had that Sunday will have to be done over again only in a worse country and in the worst time of year. We are all pretty much disgusted with the procrastinations shown by our Govt. and many are the votes the Rep. party will lose.

This village of Pasay was a stronghold of Insurgents up to the time we charged their trenches, a mile or so in front. It is only a small place of a few huts, a church and this old convent. At present Chinamen are almost the only ones here. Most of the natives skipped on our approach.

My Dear Edna.

Pineda, Mar. 23, 99

We are still in trench but will go into Pasay Sunday for a week's rest. This trench business is very tiresome as we have to sleep with our belts on and you bet they weigh something. Then every 3rd night my turn comes to go and sleep with outpost about 300 yds in front of trenches. This is not hard for the Corp. for he does not have to keep awake, but it is pretty hard to get much sleep when you hear the outpost 100 yds on your left firing and a

Mauser or so answering them, then the same thing happens on the right. This goes on intermittently all night and you are always expecting yours is the next one they will take a pop at. Then the dogs, all night these keep up a most awful noise, for, being left behind when the natives fled, they are now almost starved.

We all have our pictures taken in the trenches for the book Hicks Judd and Co. is getting up, "Campaigning in the Philippines." Everything looks now as if 2 months would see us on our way home. The 1st Sgt. in compliance with a Gen. Order took names of those who intended to re-enlist. Three of our Co. will do so.

It is the general opinion here that the Vol. will be held for two years as they signed for "2 yrs. or war," while we signed for the "war with Spain." The first Cal. is the butt of the whole island for as you will see by papers I am sending, they must have been a pretty big Reg. Santa Mesa is at least 8 miles from Singalong or where we were. It is true that there was *one* Co. of them about a mile behind us that refused to leave their trenches. Not a Reg. here does anything but hiss their name and make fools of them. They are now where they can do no harm and can only impress the natives with their greatness. But this is a poor way to speak of the men who saved our lives. . . .

My Darling Mother

Pasay, Apr 1 — 1899

We are still in quarters here resting this week as we go in trenches again next week. This life is something awful and there is not a man here who would not welcome his discharge, for now the wet season will be here in a very short time and it is not conducive to health or spirits to lie in trenches with 2 ft of water in them. Neither will it be pleasant to "bushwhack" through such a country as there is in front of us, and over which we will have to drive Insurgents before we can take Paranaque. The whole country is full of swamps and the niggers have had time to build fine trenches. I am afraid it is going to be a hard fight but they may be demoralized when they hear that Mololos has fallen.⁸ In the taking of Mololos a good many fellows lost their lives and a great number wounded. . . .

I think our last fight will be taking Paranaque which will I am afraid be rather a stiff fight. I received notice of Reg. package but have not been able to get it, yet, as we are not allowed in town at all — for our lines are not any too strong here and they need every man.

My darling Mother.

In Trenches, Pasay, 4/5/99

Am just in from sleeping with squad on outpost, i. e. 300 yds in front of trenches at edge of bamboo jungle. Although the Corp. has no watch to keep, one cannot sleep well with firing going on only short distance on either side of him. All night long the niggers at a distance of 300 or 400 yds. from

the outposts open fire and with intervals this is kept up all night. They are such poor shots that the bullets whistle 10 ft over our heads or way to the side. We never reply unless we can clearly see the man. A scouting party goes out every morning and evening and is just as regularly fired on by "amigos" in white clothes.

While I am writing this a native is practicing on his cornet. The tune is "Home Sweet Home," which reminds me that while on outpost the other night an empty shack fell in about 25 ft. in front and some distance to the right of us. It had hardly struck the ground before M Co.'s sentries had sent 2 volleys into it. It was dark as Egypt and dreadfully still. I was sitting up and smoking and thinking of the time when I could smoke my pipe in my room, and just as the picture was brightest "it happened." Needless to say the train of my thoughts was interrupted for time being and all haste made for our little breastworks, for the outpost is supposed to hold out as long as possible so as to give the men time to get in the trenches. Nothing more happened, however, so suppose it was the wind.

Apr. 6, 1899

Have just got orders to be ready to move at a moment's notice. Probably to the lake "Laguna de Bay" near San Pedro Macati. Do not know for a certainty yet. . . .

My darling Mother.

Manila, Apr. 13 — 1899

We left Pasay Saturday and marched some 1500 strong to San Pedro Macati, distance 5 miles. Each man had 200 rounds of ammunition, a poncho roll, canteen, haversack, 2 days rations and rifle. The 2 days rations consisted of 2 cans of Corned Beef, 1 can of Beans, hard tack and ground coffee for 3 men. Now all this weighs and in a climate like this it is hot and tiresome work. At S. Pedro Macati we embarked on "casas" or large barges which were towed by tugs. We were so crowded in the casas that there was just room to sit up and we had no sleep that night. It was 6 P. M. when we embarked. All that night and all Sunday until 4 P. M. we were in those ill-smelling barges. You must know that whole families are born and live in either end of these, so you can imagine how pleasant it was for us to sit there all night and day with nothing but a *little* cold corned beef to eat.

We embarked some distance down the Pasig river below the lake. This trip under other circumstances would be a most beautiful one as the river banks are heavily wooded with bamboos and the lake is nearly 50 miles long, and surrounded by fine country. By "beautiful country" I mean to *look at*, but to fight in there is no such thing as a worse place.

The underbrush is so thick that you cannot see 3 ft ahead and in places it is impenetrable, then again there are swamps in which you sink to your waist. Well we at last arrived before Santa Cruz or so they told us for we could see nothing but some fishing villages. These the 3 gunboats, "Laguna de Bay,"

“Oeste,” and “Napindan” bombarded. They are small side-wheelers the Govt has armed and protected with steel plates. Receiving no reply the troops proceeded to land. We had to jump off the cascas into the lake up to our waists and wade ashore.

When all was ready the advance began and a fine sight it must have been to those on the boats to see 2 lines of men, one in front and other in reserve, nearly a mile long go over the open field in skirmish order. For the first $\frac{1}{2}$ mile all was well but suddenly we came to an immense swamp. It was a terrible place and nearly a mile wide. I as luck would have it struck a particularly bad place and went in nearly to my arm pits. Some of the boys pulled me out a couple of times but as the line was advancing had to leave me. I struggled as hard as I could but was getting weaker as I had not been well before starting. The reserves pulled me out when they came along, but by that time my own Co. was too far ahead to catch up with, so Lieut. of D Co. told me to stay with them. Not a shot had been fired up to this time but now, as the advance arrived at the edge of the jungle, a hot fire was opened on them. The reserves then “double timed” as best they could and soon all were in it. We then charged the trenches with a yell and of course the niggers fled. After driving them from the trenches we halted for the night. As we went over the trenches a wounded native made a cut at one of our fellows with a “bolo” and nearly severed his arm from his body. He is now a “good” nigger. There were 12 dead in the field we camped in that night and not an American had been hit with a bullet. We had to *sleep* all night in those wet muddy clothes. We did not sleep but lay there and nearly shivered our heads off. I could hardly walk or breathe in the morning. The town was taken next day Monday with but 2 killed and 4 or 5 wounded on our side. The slaughter of the natives was awful, you could not go 50 ft. in some places without seeing some.

That afternoon the Dr. sent 4 of my Co. to Hosp. Fred Poett was one. I have Neuralgia in my side and am stiff with Rheumatism but will be all right soon. Am only sorry that I had to leave Reg. Wish it was all over, I am tired of this life. Am going to ask General Anderson’s son, who is a friend of mine and who is Inspector Gen. of Post Office, regarding position if I get my discharge. This will give me about \$100 Am. a month, and in meantime can try and work an agency or two as business is getting brisk here. . . .

My darling Mother

Manila, 4/23/99

. . . Reg. has returned from lake and are now on line near Pasay where they were before. I am laid up with Rheumatism of joints brought on by that boat trip as I already had some in my system. Hope to be all right soon though. Nothing to worry over as it is very common here.

Col. of Nebraska was just brought in dead, also some men; more fighting

is being done near Mololos. Niggers are very thick out there. Im afraid the "rainy season" is about to set in as it has rained every night for several days. . . .

My dear Father.

May 4, 1899

By time this reaches you I hope to be a civilian once more. The order is now in office of Reg. for our discharge, and Lieut. Savage says we will be discharged as soon after May 1st as possible. The Reg. is still on South line but have only had a very little fighting to do and that from behind trenches as the niggers attacked them. They found 11 dead next morning while none of our boys were wounded.

I am still laid up with rheumatism of joints. It feels a bit better lately but cannot walk yet. Hope it is well before boys are discharged for they will not discharge me here but send me to Hosp. in S. F. until well. Once out of this climate it would soon leave me. However it is nothing to worry over as there are many here with the same thing.

Avery has passed and is assigned to 14th. Field is 1st. Lieut. now, also very *unpopular* for he is so lazy and seems to care little for his men in the field. Never repeat outside what I have written re Army, for one or two are in trouble over [?] business as it is. . . . Think most of the fighting is over as their strongest position has been taken, "Calumpit," where they have wonderful entrenchments. A Reg. of Americans could have held off an army behind these.

My Darling Mother.

May 20, 1899

You will be surprised to know that I have resigned my Corp. stripes. This was only right for I have not done duty with the Co. for over a month and it will probably be some time before I do any again. Other fellows have to act in my place and do the work without the extra pay and as duty is pretty hard now even though there is no fighting and not likely to be any more. I think it the right thing to do. If one did not do so, the fellows would make remarks and it would end in my being replaced by Lieut. as this is the custom in all Regiments. I am just as glad to be rid of it, anyway, as it is a very thankless job. . . .

If Mr. Peyton finds me here I will be very glad to see him, but now is a poor time for him to start anything like a reading-room, for the troops are so scattered and so few in town. . . . You mistook me in regard to the watch chain sent. It was taken from Philippino soldier, not an American. Fred Poett is going to be sent home to Hosp. in S. F. for treatment for his appendicitis but will return when discharged. Our Co. has only 40 men for duty now, others much smaller. . . . Center was in yesterday and says he is getting sick of it, as there is nothing doing but guard duty. . . .

My darling Mother [last letter]

June 11/99

Have put off writing because expected I would be *home* as soon as a letter could reach you, but as Oregons go tomorrow I will write this.

Dr. Williams has been here and so has Will Smith. Glad to hear you are all well. . . . I am still in Hosp. as Rheumatism has taken quite a hold on me. Reg. had orders to put in for discharges last week. They are having their last fight, now, and here I am in Hosp. Had one man wounded in my Co. Will not be long now until I see you all again. In haste, Love to all,

Lovingly
Howard

NOTES

4. Karl Irving Faust and Peter MacQueen, *Campaigning in the Philippines* (San Francisco, 1899), p. 129, describes the incidents of the night of Feb. 4. Four armed Insurgents attempted to pass the line near Block House No. 6; private Grayson, of a Nebraska regiment, fired upon them. The fighting became general, moving around the line from north to south. Singalong church was inland a short distance from the barracks of Co. I; close by were Block House No. 13 and No. 14. Middleton sketched on a piece of wrapping paper a "map of Singalong fight."

5. *Ibid.*, p. 138, describes the attack on Block House No. 14 by men of the 14th Infantry; it notes that Captain Mitchell was mortally wounded.

6. Pasay is about two miles south of Malate on the shore of the bay.

7. Paranaque is about four miles south of Pasay.

8. Frederick Funston, *Memories of Two Wars* (New York, 1911), Chap. III, traces the campaign to capture Aguinaldo's headquarters.

9. Faust and MacQueen, *op. cit.*, Chap. X, give detailed story of "Lawton's Lake Expedition"; p. 202 mentions the bolo incident and names William Sowers, Co. D, as the victim.