




1998

Adams County in "The Splendid Little War," April through August 1898

Timothy H. Smith

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/ach>

 Part of the [Military History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

Smith, Timothy H. (1998) "Adams County in "The Splendid Little War," April through August 1898," *Adams County History*: Vol. 4 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/ach/vol4/iss1/4>

This open access article is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact cupola@gettysburg.edu.

Adams County in "The Splendid Little War," April through August 1898

Abstract

The Spanish American War lasted less than four months (April 25 to August 13, 1898). For the entire war, American casualties totaled less than 2,000 men, among them 345 killed or mortally wounded. Many more, however, died of disease (about 2000). Over the years, the war has been remembered as an event in which American interests and yellow journalism led to a conflict where the outcome was never in doubt. The nation of Spain, embroiled in internal dispute and civil unrest, was ripe for the picking and could do little to organize a defense of her colonies against a nation that was quickly becoming one of the world's superpowers. Today, using hindsight, it is easy for us to view the war in this fashion, but the men involved had no such insights.

In this, the centennial of the Spanish American War, it is important to take a fresh look at the struggle through the eyes of the men who witnessed the events firsthand. These men had no idea that the war would be over so quickly or that American forces would be so successful. Like the men of other wars, they did their duty and deserve to be remembered. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Adams County Historical Society, ACHS, Adams County, Pennsylvania History, Spanish American War

Adams County in the "The Splendid Little War" April through August 1898

by Timothy H. Smith

The Spanish American War lasted less than four months (April 25 to August 13, 1898). For the entire war, American casualties totaled less than 2,000 men, among them 345 killed or mortally wounded. Many more, however, died of disease (about 2000). Over the years, the war has been remembered as an event in which American interests and yellow journalism led to a conflict where the outcome was never in doubt. The nation of Spain, embroiled in internal dispute and civil unrest, was ripe for the picking and could do little to organize a defense of her colonies against a nation that was quickly becoming one of the world's superpowers. Today, using hindsight, it is easy for us to view the war in this fashion, but the men involved had no such insights.

In this, the centennial of the Spanish American War, it is important to take a fresh look at the struggle through the eyes of the men who witnessed the events firsthand. These men had no idea that the war would be over so quickly or that American forces would be so successful. Like the men of other wars, they did their duty and deserve to be remembered.

For sake of clarity, the war itself can be divided into four distinctive operations: the Santiago campaign (June 24 to July 15, 1898), the Puerto Rican campaign (July 25 to August 13, 1898), the Philippines campaign (June 30 to August 13, 1898), and the naval war. Two other components of the story include the road to war and the mobilization of tens of thousands of men to serve in the United States army. Men from Adams county participated in each of these chapters in American history. The object of this monograph is to tell the story of the war in the words of Adams county citizens and soldiers, most of which are taken from the newspapers of the time. While reading the accounts that follow, it may be helpful to examine a detailed map of the Caribbean Sea, in order to follow the adventures of the soldiers involved.¹

The Road to War

Shortly before 10 o'clock on the evening of February 15, 1898, the battleship *USS Maine* mysteriously exploded in the harbor of Havana,

Cuba. It quickly sank to the harbor floor taking with it more than two-thirds of the ship's men. Outrage over this episode, would ultimately spark a war between the United States and Spain. This event, however, was actually just the straw that broke the camel's back in a relationship that had been strained for years. Although the two countries had generally been on friendly terms, there was one issue on which they could not seem to agree: an island known as Cuba. In 1848 the United States had even offered Spain \$100 million for the colony, an offer which that nation rejected. Between the 1820s and '60s there were at least ten attempted coups or insurrections in Cuba to oust the Spaniards. In 1868 a civil war broke out in Spain, and nationalists in Cuba took advantage of the opportunity to begin their own uprising. The Spanish eventually put down the rebellion, known as the Ten Years' War (1868-1878), and regained control of the colony. During the war, however, almost 60,000 Spanish soldiers were killed or died of disease. Cuban deaths, which included a large number of civilians, surpassed 150,000. Many in the United States were sympathetic with the Cuban's struggle for independence, and some assisted them. In 1873 an American ship was captured attempting to land supplies and volunteers for the rebels. As a result, some 50 of the ship's men were executed—including a number of Americans. Many in the United States called for Cuban recognition and war with Spain. It was avoided only when Spain agreed to apologize for the incident, pay retributions to the families of the dead, and punish the commander responsible for the executions.

In 1895 another serious insurrection erupted. Led by Cuban exiles and partly financed by American sympathizers, the rebellion promised to be another long and bloody war for Spain. By 1896 there were 80,000 Spanish soldiers in Cuba. The Spaniards introduced a scorched earth policy, destroying many railroads and burning canefields and sugar refineries, not a few owned by United States citizens. The most oppressive measure enacted by the Spanish was that of reconcentration. The rural population of Cuba was ordered to leave their homes and move into designated camps in fortified towns. Whoever remained in the countryside was considered a rebel. By 1898 it looked as if the rebellion had been squashed. With the overpopulation of these reconcentration areas and the shortage of food, many suffered and died. Estimates of death among the Cuban population during this period run as high as 400,000. As time went on United States neutrality became difficult as more and more Americans supported the rebels.²

In 1896 the Grover Cleveland administration tried to convince Spain to give autonomy to Cuba or implement some other political reforms. Cleveland even offered to mediate the dispute, but in the end nothing was accomplished. During 1897 the William McKinley administration urged an end to the reconcentration policy. The administration also suggested, that if Spain could not resolve the situation, the United States might find it necessary to intervene. The Spanish were suspicious and hinted that if it were not for American support the war would have been long over. By the end of 1897, the suffering among reconcentrated Cubans had become so disturbing that Fitzhugh Lee, former Confederate general and the American council general in Havana, called for a relief effort to be undertaken by the United States. As a result, the American Red Cross was allowed to enter Cuba and other groups from all over the country lent a helping hand. On January 8, 1898, the governor of Pennsylvania went so far as to issue a proclamation "calling upon the people of the Commonwealth to come to the aide of the destitute inhabitants of Cuba."³ The arrival of relief, however, brought more attention to the problems in Cuba, and with no resolution in sight, official American intervention loomed. With civil unrest in the streets of Havana affecting the security of U.S. citizens and a perceived threat of German intervention in the Cuban situation, President McKinley ordered the *USS Maine* to Havana. At this point, a war between Spain was virtually inevitable. Once the United States had committed itself to ending the suffering in Cuba, the only thing needed was a spark to ignite and solidify public opinion.

Then it happened. On February 15, 1898, the battleship *Maine* mysteriously exploded in Havana harbor. To this day, it is debated whether the explosion was an accident or an act of sabotage by Spanish officials or Cuban Nationalists, who had the most to gain by American intervention. When news of the disaster reached the United States, a correspondent for the Gettysburg *Star and Sentinel* reported that "the awful story of the blowing up and sinking in Havana harbor, of the U.S. battleship *Maine*, and the drowning like rats in a sewer of two hundred and fifty-odd of her brave crew...had cast a pall of gloom over Washington and the country."⁴ On March 1, 1898 an editorial in the same paper, "The *Maine* Disaster and its Consequence," recorded the feelings of Americans everywhere:

....The first news of the disaster was coupled with the request from the commander of the *Maine* for a suspension of judgment as to the cause of the destruction of the vessel until all the circumstances could

be officially investigated. The President and government officials, as well as the people at large, recognize the soundness and good sense of this suggestion and acquiesced in the recommendation. Judgment has been suspended, but with the suspension of judgment there has been the grim determination to ascertain the truth and to probe the mystery to the bottom, with the steadfast resolution to assert and maintain our rights under all circumstances. If the investigation should show that the disaster was caused by an accident on board or within the vessel then the country would bow to the inevitable and accept and deplore the misfortune. But if it should be proved to be the result of design on the part of Spain or of those over whom she has control, then our people would be satisfied with nothing short of the fullest indemnity for the loss of life and property, failing to grant which public opinion would impel the government of the United States to enforce our rights by a declaration of war. War would be a terrible settlement of the difficulty, and neither our government nor our people would adopt such a settlement from choice; much less would either shrink from it in defense of national honor.⁵

Over the next few weeks the United States and Spain drifted closer to war as American support for action against Spain solidified. On March 9, Congress voted \$50 million dollars to be used by the president at his discretion for national defense. The bill passed the Senate and House without a single dissenting vote. On March 21, a board of inquiry, set up by the U.S. Navy to look into the explosion of the Maine, concluded that an external explosion caused by an unknown party had detonated one of the ship's magazines. According to an March 22 editorial for the *Star and Sentinel*,

The course of events growing out of the unfortunate destruction of the Maine in Spanish waters had given rise to the most trying situation in which our country has been placed since the Civil War.... The possibility of War has been a living and serious fact—a possibility that may develop into a certainty at almost any moment so great has the tension become....

The unanimity of determination to protect American rights and defend American honor also shows to the nations of Europe that we are a united country notwithstanding that we may have differences as to our internal policy, and that as a nation we are as quick to act in any just cause as we are patient and peace loving under ordinary circumstances. The powers of the old world well know what would be the result of a war between the United States and Spain if forced upon us, and we believe that the prompt and active preparation on our part to meet the issue will have an effective influence in inducing the powers to compel Spain to keep the peace.⁶

On April 5, the same paper noted that the explosion of the *Maine* "did more than destroy a battleship and murder some two hundred and fifty American tars. It destroyed American indifference; it stirred a nation's resentment; it touched our own heart and we awoke. In our wrath we demanded that a question, which our foreign office had been struggling with for two years, should be settled instantanet."⁷

Meanwhile, Spain rejected another proposal to sell Cuba to the United States, and the U.S. rejected a Spanish concession of Cuban autonomy. The final U.S. proposal demanded that Spain abandon the reconcentration policy, proclaim an immediate armistice and agree to Cuba's independence. On April 11, President McKinley asked for the permission of Congress to intervene directly in Cuba. Americans soon lost patience with the ongoing negotiations. While some journalists around the country were demanding war, others called for caution and restraint. In the weeks of uncertainty leading up to the war, Adams county papers ran the gamut of public opinion. The *New Oxford Item* took a very strong anti-war stance, asking: "War? What does it mean? It means misery, desolation and National Murder."⁸ The *Gettysburg Compiler* and the *Adams County Independent* (printed in Littlestown) traveled the middle of the road, waiting to see how things developed. One Gettysburg newspaper, however, typified the yellow journalism that was sweeping the country at that time. As noted by the *New Oxford Item*, the Gettysburg "*Star and Sentinel* has its was paint on."⁹ The following are examples of comments made in its editorials around the outbreak of the War:

Let us have no babbling sentimentalist orate of peace or forgiveness. We hope and believe there shall be no forgiveness before the Almighty's Throne for the infernal fiends that destroyed the Maine - assuredly there will be none in human justice.

Unless Spain discover the guilty [those responsible for blowing up the Maine] and surrender them to us then she herself is the criminal and on her must our wrath and justice be appeased....She stands to-day before the Bar of the World, as guilty of the most damnable outrage of modern times - one such as only Spain could perpetrate - one worthy of the land of the Inquisition - the nativity of Alva - of Pizarro - of Philip - of Weyler. She is a stench in the nostrils of Nations.

Make Spain drink to the dregs the cup of humiliation - make her grovel in the dust for space - make her beg on bended knee for mercy - and show but little to her then.

No arbitration; no courtesy, no brotherly kindness. Vengeance stern and swift and terrible.¹⁰

On April 19, Congress passed a joint resolution recognizing the independence of people of Cuba and directing the president to use the land and naval forces of the United States to assist Cuba obtain its freedom. Diplomatic relations between the two countries broke off shortly after. On April 21, the United States Navy blockaded the port of Havana. On April 23, 1898, Spain formally declared war on the United States, and two days later the U.S. reciprocated. On April 26, the Gettysburg newspapers announced that war had been declared. Once it was official, the Adams county newspapers became unified in their patriotic spirit and all supported the war effort wholeheartedly.

Mobilization

Surprisingly, the outbreak of the Spanish American war found the United States very much unprepared. Even throughout the period of tension before the outbreak of war, little had been done to strengthen the nation's armed forces. Although vast experience was gained during the Civil War, the last time we had fought against another country was during the Mexican War, and the last time we had faced a European opponent was in the War of 1812. The peace-time army in 1898 numbered only about 28,000 men. There were about 25,000 insurgents in Cuba, but these would prove to be a little value to U.S. forces. Spanish numbers are hard to establish, but its army was already mobilized due to the war with Cuba and had, by some estimates, almost 200,000 men (regulars and volunteers) under arms in that country alone. The total Spanish armed forces, including troops in Europe and its various possessions, numbered more than 300,000.¹¹ As it turned out, much of Spain's strength was only on paper. Although forces often outnumbered those of the United States, the Spanish would not claim a single victory, either on land or sea, during the entire war. Inept leadership, indecision and inability to use or concentrate their superior forces, continually gave the advantage to the impulsive Americans who were quick to take the initiative.

Not only did the Spanish have the advantage of numbers at the outset of the war, but they were very confident in their ability to defend their territory. In October 1895 a Spanish journal had remarked that

with regard to the possibility that the Yankees, fond of boasting and threats as they are, will make war on Spain...we need not worry ourselves. The North American republic is absolutely powerless for carrying out an offensive war with a nation even moderately military,

as ours is. Let us defend ourselves in Cuba by sinking the American vessels that carry contraband of war...and let us laugh at the United States...¹²

General Valeriano Weyler, who in 1896 had been largely responsible for enforcing the policy of reconcentration in Cuba, wrote to a friend in Havana on January 8, 1898, "that the Americans are thinking about sending one of their warships to that city. During my command in Cuba they did not even dare to dream about it. They knew the terrible punishment that awaited them. I have Havana Harbor well prepared for such an emergency....If the insult is made, I hope that there will be a Spanish hand to punish it as terribly as it deserves."¹³ And in fact, early plans estimated that U.S. would require a force of at least 70,000 men in operations against Havana. Commanding General of the Army Nelson A. Miles preferred a small well-trained and well-supplied force, but public pressure incited by the press demanded a much larger army. On April 22, President McKinley called for 125,000 Volunteers, 10,762 to be supplied by Pennsylvania. Several other calls were made including one on May 25, for an additional 75,000 volunteers, 6,458 to be supplied by Pennsylvania.¹⁴ It is estimated that across the country over one million answered the call. Partly because of the large numbers of men who were willing to volunteer and partly because of the experience of the Civil War (a long and bloody conflict), over 250,000 men were enlisted and mobilized during the War. As a matter of fact, it has been estimated that of the total men mobilized across the country, less than 20,000 ever fired a shot against Spain.

One of these units never to see action was Company M of the 5th Pennsylvania Volunteers from Gettysburg. The 5th received permission on June 29, 1898, to expand and recruit four additional companies. A recruiting office was set up in Gettysburg and Captain Hugh S. Taylor of the 5th was placed in charge of mustering the men into service. On July 14, medical examinations commenced under the direction of 1st Lieutenant W. H. Hay of the 10th U.S. Cavalry and Dr. W. F. Riley of Carlisle. Of the 120 men who were examined, only 72 were accepted. Added to the Adams countians were men from York county and a few from Maryland, filling out the company to 100.¹⁵

On July 20, the recruits formed in the square of town and were mustered into federal service for a term of two years. The temporary commander of the unit was Gettysburgian Harry F. Buehler, who had been promised a commission as captain. Hours before the company's departure for Georgia, however, Captain Evan Russell of Williamsport, Penn-

sylvania, arrived to take command, and Ross Hikok of Harrisburg was appointed as 1st Lieutenant. This betrayal of trust, as the citizens of Gettysburg saw it, would be the topic of editorials and newspaper stories for weeks to come.¹⁶

At 3:30 p.m. on the afternoon of July 21, 1898, Company M reported to the square of Gettysburg to prepare for departure on a special train to leave at 4 p.m. The crowd of spectators numbered in the thousands. The *Star and Sentinel* wrote that

...After Roll call they were addressed by Judge Swope. The ladies who had kindly volunteered to prepare a lunch for each of the boys to take along, deserve great credit for the excellent manner in which they carried out their part of the program. Each man in addition to the lunch, was presented with a towel and a cake of soap. They were then escorted to depot by a band and drum corps and an immense crowd of citizens amidst the ringing of bells, blowing of whistles and firing of cannon. All the business places were closed during the hours of 3 and 4 o'clock.¹⁷

The bass drum used to escort the company to the station was played with great vigor and precision by Charles B. Tate. It had performed a similar duty in April 1861 when the Gettysburg's Independent Blues marched off to war. As the boys were getting on the cars, Mrs. William Archibald McClean presented the company with a handsome flag, and David McCleary presented a fine white bull terrier to the boys as their mascot.¹⁸

After a 700 mile journey, the company arrived at Camp Thomas, Chickamauga Park, Georgia, on the evening of the 23rd and marched three miles to join the rest of the 5th Pennsylvania Volunteers. Although these soldiers were not aware of it, by the time they reached their camp, the war was almost over. The unit stayed in camp throughout the remaining days of the war (periodically changing base from time to time), where they were supplied and drilled.

The local papers of the time are filled with letters written by the men of Company M, most describing the tedium of camp life.¹⁹ During their service at least two died of disease. Not one member of Company M would get a chance to fire a shot in anger during the war. The 5th was furloughed and sent home on September 17, 1898. It participated in the Peace Jubilee at Philadelphia on October 27, and was finally mustered out on November 7, 1898.²⁰



Fig. 1: Company M, 5th Pennsylvania Volunteers. This view was recorded by M. F. Williams on July 21, 1898, just hours before the company's departure (ACHS).

Naval Operations

No aspect of the Spanish American War was as lopsided as the war on the sea. In the several engagements with the U.S. Navy, the Spanish were outgunned, outclassed and basically destroyed. During the early morning hours of May 1, 1898, Commodore George Dewey sailed his Asiatic squadron into the Manila Bay, and after a sharp engagement annihilated the Spanish fleet in the Philippines. In a matter of hours, three enemy vessels were sunk and six were scuttled or burned, at the loss of only nine American wounded. Little more than a week into the war the American navy had won a decisive victory and severely restricted the options of Spain's Navy. By April 22, the port of Havana was closed and over the next few weeks most of the major ports including San Juan, Puerto Rico, were effectively blockaded. During the initial stages of the war, the navy bombarded Spanish coastal defenses and undertook raids to destroy several installations.

While most of the North American fleet was engaged in activities off the coast of Cuba, other ships were formed into a "Flying Squadron" and stationed along the eastern seaboard of the United States to guard against the threat of a Spanish fleet whose whereabouts were as yet not determined by the U.S. Navy. On April 21, Admiral Pascual Cervera set sail from the Cape Verde islands off the coast of Africa for destinations unknown. Among his command were three armored cruisers and three destroyers. For a time, the east coast of the United States was in turmoil, fearing that the Spanish would suddenly appear and attack some major city. It is interesting that the war hungry Gettysburg *Star and Sentinel*, used this opportunity to take a swipe at the creator of "yellow journalism," William Randolph Hearst and his *Evening Journal*:

If the Spanish fleet should happen to get near New York, we hope it will have opportunity to fire but one shell and that that shell shall hit the *Journal* building full and fair and blow it to the seven winds - Hurst and all.²¹

On May 10, Cervera's Fleet turned up in the Caribbean at Martinique, an island under French possession, 200 miles south of Puerto Rico. Unable to obtain coal at that port and learning that San Juan, Puerto Rico, was under U.S. naval blockade, the Spanish fleet sailed to Curaçao off Venezuela. From there, still in need of supplies, Cervera sailed for one of the ports that was as yet not cut off by the U.S. Navy: Santiago, Cuba. Arriving there on May 19, the Spanish fleet began to refit and resupply.

With news of the fleet's whereabouts no longer in question, the U.S. sent its vessels guarding the eastern seaboard to Cuba. By May 28, the U.S. fleet arrived in force outside Santiago harbor and completely bottled up the Spanish fleet. From this point the U.S. Navy enjoyed a free hand in all operations at sea. The end came for Cervera's fleet on July 3, 1898, when it tried to run the blockade in order to avoid capture by the American land forces who were closing in. In a running, gunning battle, lasting just a few hours, the Spanish ships were destroyed or run aground. This fight was a decisive blow against Spanish hopes for victory. During the war, Spain would lose over 30 of her vessels.

Besides maintaining the blockade and operating against Spanish shipping, the navy was also responsible for assisting the transports that landed Americans in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. During the War, a young man from Gettysburg named Robert E. Tipton served on the *USS Columbia*. Robert was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lee Tipton. His uncle was the well-known photographer William H. Tipton.²² Through his letters, reprinted in the *Star and Sentinel*, he gives us a day-by-day record of the events that occurred on that vessel. Initially, the *Columbia* was on duty along the east coast of the U.S. It was next used as a troop transport, sailing to Cuba just prior to the fall of Santiago and soon after to Puerto Rico to take part in that campaign.

In mid July 1898, Robert E. Tipton wrote to his father that the *USS Columbia* was positioned "off Santiago Cuba":

I now take the time to drop you a few lines to let you know where I am at and how I like it. We have left Charleston Saturday [July 9th] and have been running up to the present time, Monday [July 13], with fine weather and a calm sea. We took on 335 Illinois troops Saturday. It was raining in the morning and a few of them got sea sick. Saturday and Sunday were fine days; in the afternoon we saw 7 waterspouts off our starboard bow, they were apparently, drawing up the water at one place and letting it down at another - it was a grand sight. Near dark we struck the Bahama Islands. Monday morning we struck the coast of Cuba and we can see nothing but high mountains with green trees on them; no houses or people. We pass a patrol boat every few hours. We just passed the place where the marines were killed [Guantanamo Bay], some of our ships are coaling up in there. Well I will stop until we land troops. I expected to hear from you before we left Charleston, it has been a long time since I heard from home. We laid off a small town all Monday afternoon [July 13th] and up to the time I mail this.

Tuesday Morning [July 14th] - We still have our troops aboard. I don't know why they don't land them. From where we are at we can

see Camp McCall and the iron pier; also the bill as you go into Santiago. This place where we are at is between the Iron Pier and Santiago. (You can see by looking at the maps that you see in the newspapers. I don't know the name.) This morning we saw smoke coming up in the town, pretty soon flames broke out and it was not long until half a dozen houses were in flames, a big rain storm came up and we had to go out further and the rain shut out the view. I don't know whether it was set on fire on purpose or not. It is not so hot here, only when we are in the sun or on watch. We have rain every 4 or 5 hours. I saw the *Brooklyn* [which was engaged in the naval engagement on July 3rd], but she did not look as if she was in a fight; but we were most too far away to see very good. I suppose we will coal up in a day or two.

If a person would come along here and not know that there was war, he would think this was a busy place, as you can see from 40 to 50 ships at one time. We have control of everything around here, it don't seem like war. Yesterday (Monday) a couple of ships bombarded Santiago, the Spaniards put up a flag of truce and sent out a man for terms - this is what they wanted; to give up the town if they would let the army go forty miles from before we would start after them. Our answer, nit. Started to bombard again - put up another flag of truce - we have not learned what terms they want this time, so by the time you get this letter you can look for the surrender of Santiago, or a fierce fight. Well, I must close for this time, as I am going to write to Walter [his brother who was serving in Company C, 3rd United States Cavalry]. Coming down I wanted to see the sights, so that my face, nose and neck are all burned that I can hardly touch them. Robert E. Tipton.²³

On July 17, 1898 Robert Tipton again wrote his father, this time from Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

We left Santiago Saturday [July 16th] and came down here to coal up. This is the place where the Marines were killed. Their camp is on a hill and the brush is all cleared off around it. Close down to the water is a Cuban camp with a Cuban flag flying over it, being the first Cuban flag I have seen on Cuban soil. You remember that burning town I mentioned in my last letter, well about two hours later, they burned the rest of it for fear of yellow fever. We drifted around all last week with the Illinois troops still aboard. Every morning and evening we go down to the Morro Castle, and we went pretty close, close enough to see Spanish Flag and the other forts and batteries, but while some of our boats went within firing range.

Tuesday [July 12th] we were to bombard the forts, but the flag-ship signaled that Santiago had surrendered, and that settled it. The Spanish flag still floated over the forts until Saturday noon [July

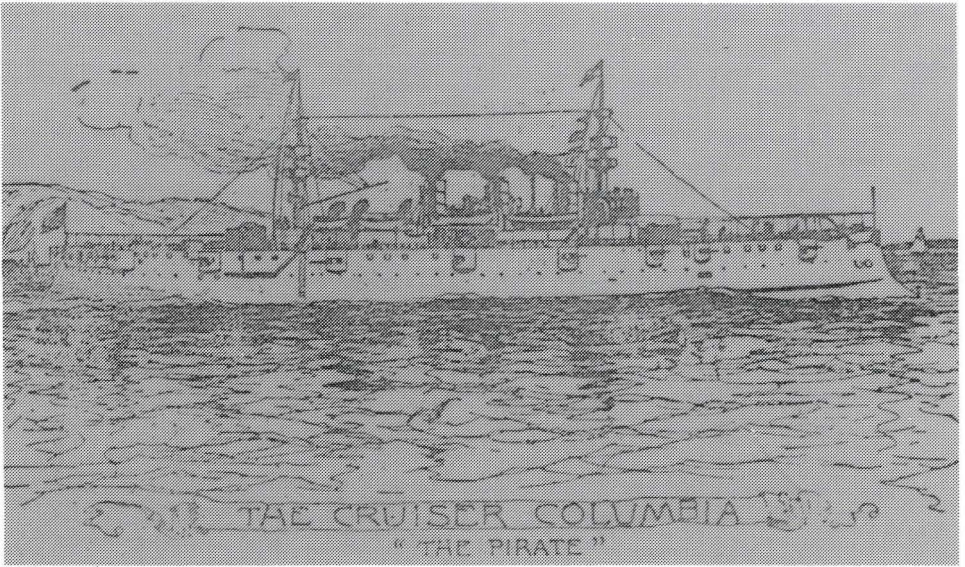


Fig. 2: Gettysburg resident Robert E. Tipton served aboard the *USS Columbia* during the war (Gettysburg Compiler).

16th], when they put up white flag, then the U.S., when a couple of the battleships and cruisers left. Just before we left, we went close to the shore, we could see where the shells struck the high cliffs and tore great holes in them. They stood back from the shore between the cliff and the shore the railroad ran. We could see big caves in the rocks, with ragged edges all around the entrance where the shells tore their way through, there must have been Spaniards in them but at present our boys occupy them. It don't seem like war from where we are, as we can see the boys walking around, no marching or fighting. I guess they won't need any of our soldiers on this end of the Island, as there are about 2,300 on the transports, and they have been here nearly a week and are not landed yet. Everybody along the coast is in our hands. This is a terrible mountainous country, and 100 men ought to defeat four times their number if they took a good position; it is the kind of country for guerrilla warfare. There was not so much rain since I wrote to you last, but the temperature was about the same, except here in the harbor, it is much warmer as we do not get the sea breeze. I am well at present. I have not received any letters yet. Tell me all the news. I wrote to Walter but have not received any reply, if you receive any news from him tell me where he is. I expect to be here for about a week. Address the same as before. Your loving son, Robert E. Tipton.²⁴

On July 25, 1898, Robert wrote to his father from Guanica, Puerto Rico.

As I have not much time to write a long letter I will send you a few items from my diary, which will inform you that I am getting along all right. Sunday, July 17 - Went in swimming in the evening, the water being 48 feet deep; there were about 150 in at one time.

Monday [July 18th] - Started to coal ship and worked all day.

Tuesday [July 19th] - Another collier came along side for us to get coal aboard. It had 4 Spanish prisoners that surrendered here (Guantanamo). They were so weak and thin from starvation that they could hardly walk. The one I paid the most attention to was a young boy about 18 years old; he was a cavalryman. He had ridden down to the beach, dismounted, shot his horse, threw his gun and saber in the bay and surrendered. He was so weak that another day on the beach would have finished him.

Wednesday [July 20] - Still coaling up. In the afternoon five Spanish ships came in that had surrendered at Santiago. They say we will get some of the prize money from the sale of them. It is true about the Spaniards cutting the marines to pieces when they get the chance. There are up this river two gunboats and one torpedo boat (Spanish), but they don't seem to be in a hurry about capturing them. They have taken 14 mines out of this bay. It is full of Spaniards on the other side of the bay. From the marine camp we can see them in bathing, but there is no fighting.

Thursday [July 21] - When I got up this morning Porto Rico was in sight and we arrived about 9 a.m. The *Gloucester* was the first to go into the bay [of Guanica]; she fired a few shots to see if there were any Spaniards in the bushes, but we could not see, or hear, but after an hour the transports started to go in and unload. We are lying at the north of the bay; there being a small town here of about two dozen houses, but the inhabitants have evidently fled to the mountains when they saw us coming. I had a pair of glasses looking at the place, and I could not see a living soul, but I saw lots of fruit trees and the soldiers will look out for it. Just as soon as we get the troops off we will start for St. Thomas to coal up, and from there we expect to go to the states, but of course we do not know. Thanking you for the fishing tackle and stamps I must close to catch the out-going mail. Give me all the news. Robert E. Tipton.²⁵

On August 5, 1898, he wrote to his father from Ponce, Puerto Rico.

I will drop you a few lines to let you know where I have been since last I wrote to you. From Guanica we went to Charlotte Amioele, St. Thomas, a Danish Island in the West Indies, arriving there the next day (July 26). While we were there we took on coal and water. When

we first started in the harbor we could see the city plainly, as it is built on the side of a hill, with old fashioned houses, mostly of a light colored stone with the roofs, and on the top of the hills a couple of fine castles.

What took me by surprise the most of anything was the expertness of the natives (Negroes) in diving. We would throw a small piece of money into the water and with only one exception did they let it get away from them; remember that they had to get it long before it got to the bottom as our line showed 80 feet of water at that point.

We had good times there as the natives did all of our coaling up. I had a day off while in this port, and the first thing I did after landing was to go up to the top of the hill and viewed the castle. It is called "Black Beard Castle." I got in and mounted to the tower; and one of the finest views it has been my fortune to ever see burst upon me. The bay and ocean for miles and miles and the hills all around made a perfect picture; after viewing this awhile I came down stairs and met the lady of the house, who spoke pretty good English; she gave me a history of the Castle, and we talked about the war and news in general. From there we went to "Blue Beard Castle" it is on another hill and is larger than the other one; but they both built very strong with walls 2 feet thick with loop holes all around. From there we wandered around the city, and discovered that about eight-tenth of the inhabitants are Negroes. As we went about the city what struck me as being so strange was the native women carrying baskets, buckets, and in fact anything they had to carry on their heads, barefooted, poorly thin and clad, and the funniest part was to see the women coaling up merchant steamers, carrying a bushel basket of coal on their head. After looking over pretty nearly all the town I got a bicycle and rode around awhile, but the city was so hilly that I could only ride on one or two streets, but I got pretty tired and when evening came I went back to the ship pretty well fagged out.

We left there for Ponce, Porto Rico and arrived the same day. As we were going into the harbor we ran unto a coral reef, and were aground for 24 hours, but we got off all right with the exception of a few dents in the ship's bottom. We were hardly off when a big transport came in and ran into the same reef, and is still fast at this writing, although they have taken off all of the troops and horses, and they expect to get her off in a day or two. We left here and went to Guanico to pull off a steamer that had gone ashore and just as we got our hauser ready to pull her off, she floated herself, and we went back to Ponce. There are transports after transports coming into the harbor with troops aboard, and they must have a good many thousand here by this time, and I suppose some of our Gettysburg boys are among them.

I read in the paper you sent me of Herman Kappes being wounded; please let me know if he was hit hard, and if any of our other boys got hit. We are the Flagship now, and from the looks of things we will

stay here for a while. Are there any signs of peace yet, as we do not get any news here, so you see I don't know how the war is going on. I hope we will stay down here until the hunting season opens up, then if we get up to the states, I will try and get a furlough and take a few days with you. I must close, but be sure and give me all the news when you write. Your loving Son, Robert E. Tipton.²⁶

In retrospect Robert Tipton's experience must have felt like a vacation instead of a war. Several times, he made the comment "It don't seem like war from where we are." Other Adams countians, including Robert's brother, would not have it so easy. They would be involved in the one great land battle of the war.

The Santiago Campaign

Although the enforcement of the blockade by the United States Navy was very successful and our ships enjoyed full control of the high seas, it would take an invasion of Cuba by the United States Army to end the war. While the country was mobilizing its forces, army high command was planning the logistics for an American landing in Cuba. Four staging areas were established in the southern United States (Tampa, Florida; New Orleans, Louisiana; Chickamauga, Georgia; and Mobile, Alabama), where forming units could be organized and trained.

Over the first few weeks, plans seemed to change daily. Early on, it was established that Havana, the capital of Cuba, would be the objective of this operation. The plan called for 70,000 men to land in northern Cuba and surround the city. A date for the invasion was determined several times, but problems delayed the forces departure, not the least of which was the missing Spanish fleet under Cervera.

By May 28, the U.S. Navy, for all intents and purposes had trapped the Spanish fleet in the harbor of Santiago, Cuba. A request was made for the Army to land a force near the port and assist the navy in destroying Cervera's forces. At this point, American strategy quickly shifted away from Havana and focused on Santiago. The 5th Army Corps, commanded by Major General William R. Shafter, was stationed near Tampa, Florida. It was made up of a large amount of regular army units, who at that time, were the best trained and most prepared troops the United States had to offer. After much confusion and considerable delay, the largest overseas movement of American troops ever attempted (up till that time) left Tampa on June 14. On June 20, Shafter with a force of over 16,000 arrived off the coast of Cuba near Santiago. It was decided

that, instead of landing near the harbor's entrance, the army would land 15 miles east at the town of Daiquiri, secure a base of supplies, and then push westward toward the city. On June 22, the navy bombarded defenses at the harbor entrance and feigned a landing near Santiago; meanwhile, American troops landed unopposed at Daiquiri. By the next morning, advance elements of Shafter's force captured the town of Siboney. From here the plan was neither pretty nor complicated. The army would push up the "Camino Real," the main road from Siboney to Santiago, and defeat any force that opposed it. The total Spanish force in the province of Santiago de Cuba was estimated at over 36,000, but inept leadership, indecision and an inability to use or concentrate their superior forces, continually gave the advantage to the Americans who were quick to take the initiative.

On June 24, 1898, the advance elements of the U.S. Army (10th U.S. Cavalry, and 1st Vol. Cavalry or "the Rough Riders") under the command of Joseph Wheeler, engaged and defeated a force of Spaniards on Las Guasimas Ridge. Soon after, the 5th Corps advanced to the village of El Pozo. About a mile away were found to be Spanish soldiers in heavy force, entrenched on the heights overlooking the San Juan River. At this point, logistical problems impeded the advance, and the column halted so that reinforcement and supplies could be brought up. On June 28, however, it was learned that a column of 8,000 Spanish troops was marching to reinforce Santiago. If the force arrived in time, the Americans would be outnumbered. As the fever season would soon be upon them, a long protracted siege was out of the question. It was decided to assault the enemy position on July 1, 1898.

On the day of the battle, Shafter's command consisted of three divisions: the 1st commanded by Brigadier General Jacob F. Kent, the 2nd commanded by Brigadier General Henry W. Lawton, and the Cavalry Division, most of whom were dismounted, commanded by Brigadier Samuel S. Sumner (who replaced Major General Joseph Wheeler when the latter was taken ill). Shafter's plan for the battle consisted of several elements. A feint was ordered at dawn across the Aguadores River so as to mislead the Spanish into believing an attack against the defenses at the entrance to Santiago Harbor was in the works. A hour later the 2nd division under Lawton would attack the fortified town of El Caney on the Spanish left flank. Once this position was captured, Lawton's force would swing south and outflank the entrenchments on San Juan Heights, while the two other divisions advanced directly upon them. From there the entire American force would march on Santiago and capture the

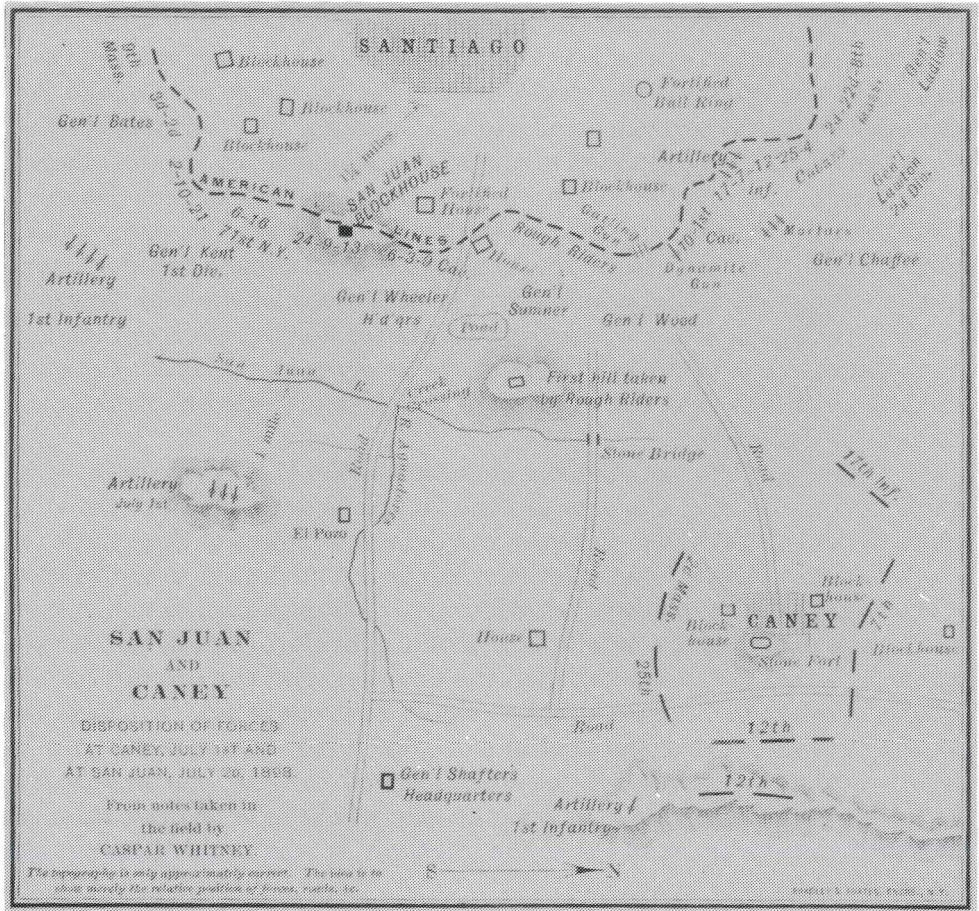


Fig. 3: Map drawn shortly after the battle (*Harper's Pictorial History of the War with Spain*).

city. Meanwhile, the Cubans would cover the northern flank and harass any Spanish troops marching toward the battlefield.

All in all, it was a good plan, but things did not develop as expected. The Cuban Army did virtually nothing. Fierce resistance at El Caney tied down Lawton's men and prevented their assisting the troops moving on the Heights of San Juan. It was left to Kent and Sumner's divisions to take the position by frontal assault. The fighting was very heavy and lasted the entire day. By evening, however, El Caney was captured, and U.S. forces had driven the Spanish soldiers from their trench and back into a final defensive position around the city of Santiago itself.

The fighting actually lasted for several more days as Shafter maneuvered his forces to capture the city's water supply and place Santiago under siege. During the fighting, the American army suffered about 1,500 casualties (227 of whom were killed). On July 3, the entire situation abruptly changed when Cervera made his suicidal attempt to escape and was destroyed. In a bold move, Shafter called for the Spanish to surrender. After lengthy negotiations, the city officially fell on July 14, 1898, and on July 17, American troops entered Santiago.

At the time of the surrender, the hurricane season was approaching. The fever-season was well under way, and it was estimated that half of Shafter's force was down with malaria, typhoid and dysentery. During this period, more soldiers would die from disease than had been killed in battle. Although the soldiers were unaware of it at the time, the fighting in Cuba was over. With the destruction of her navy, Spain realized that the chances of winning the war were nonexistent, and negotiations for an armistice were undertaken.

At least four Adams countians were involved in the campaign against Santiago. Fortunately, each of these men left us a written record of their experiences. More can be learned by reading their letters home than in a multitude of books written on the subject.

Corporal Herman Kappes was a member of Company F, 17th United States Infantry, 3rd Brigade (commanded by Adna R. Chaffee, who ironically, was wounded at the Battle of Fairfield on July 3, 1863), 2d Division (under Lawton). A letter to his father was printed in the *Compiler* on July 12, describing the scene at Tampa, Florida, just before the departure of the 5th Army Corps for Cuba:

I like Tampa very much, but it is very hot here and there is so much sand. It is like snow and is very hard to march on but we only have one hour drill a day and that is in the morning at 7 o'clock when it is not so hot. We have church here every day and night, it is in a building that the people of the different churches have placed in our camp for the soldiers. We do our writing there and they give us paper and envelopes free of charge. There is lots of fruit of all kinds here. We are not allowed to eat very much of it as it is not healthy. We do not know when we will be ordered to Cuba, but hope it will be soon for we are all anxious to go. We have a fine place to swim here every day, so it is a great comfort to us, lots of good fishing also plenty of alligators. Well, Father, do not trouble about me for those Spaniards won't amount to much when we get after them. We have everything packed to move at a moment's notice, so by the time you get his we will be on the road to Cuba.²⁷

On the same day this letter was printed, news was received that Herman had been wounded in battle. On July 1st his unit was involved in the fighting around El Caney, against the outpost of about 500 Spanish troops commanded by Brigadier General Joaquin Vara del Ray. Stubborn resistance by the Spanish troops tied down Lawton's division (about 6,000 men) for most of the day. During the fight, two of Vara del Ray's sons were killed and his brother was severely wounded. At 4 p.m. the town was stormed and the Spanish general was killed trying to rally his men. In the battle, the 17th lost 8 men killed and 40 wounded, among the latter Herman Kappes of Gettysburg. Shortly after his wounding, he was sent to Tampa, Florida, and on to Fort McPherson near Atlanta, Georgia. A week after his first, another letter to his father, Charles Kappes of Gettysburg, was printed in the local paper:

I will write you a few lines to let you know that I was slightly wounded in the left arm. It doesn't amount to anything and I will be ready to join my company in a few weeks. I was wounded at El Caney. It was one of the greatest battles ever fought, I think, and one of the hardest. We started the battle on the morning of the 1st of July about 6 o'clock and it lasted until the 4th at 9 o'clock. We were fighting under great disadvantages. We had to drive the Spaniards out of block houses, stone forts and entrenchments. We made them fly, just the same. There were several foreign officers with us and they said they had never seen such gallant fighting as the Boys in Blue did, and that no other soldiers could have taken the forts and stood such a fire as we did.

Cuba is a very nice place, and of course grows all kinds of tropical fruits, oranges, coconuts, mangoes and dozens of other kinds, and we certainly enjoyed them. The papers said the Cubans were starving, but that is a lie, they are all fat and healthy looking. The only thing we have read about them that is true, is about their clothes—they are certainly very ragged. The people they call Cubans have surprised me very much. I expected to see a different class of people than they are—they are a lot of Negroes, and you can't tell them from ours at home. They are a thieving lot and have stolen our rations and robbed our dead. The Spaniards are good looking people. I have captured a Spanish sharpshooter's watch and mantle that he dropped from a coconut tree, after being shot. There were lots of Spanish sharpshooters on trees. They had themselves strapped fast to the trees. Well, Father, do not worry about me for I never felt better in my life and I do not think the Spanish bullet is made that will kill me. Herman Kappes, Co. F, 17 Inf., U.S.R.²⁸

On the evening of August 2, Herman Kappes arrived in Gettysburg on a two-month furlough to recover from his wounds. The next day a reporter for the *Star and Sentinel* called upon Herman at his father's residence on North Stratton Street and interviewed him on his experiences in Cuba. "Mr. Kappes spoke freely of his experience and related an interesting account of the fight," the article began:

The 17th was quartered at Columbus Ohio, prior to the outbreak of hostilities with Spain. The regiment was ordered to Tampa, Fla., early in the campaign. Kappes happened to be absent on furlough when the regiment moved, but hastened to join the command when he heard of their movement to the front, although his furlough had not expired. After lying at Tampa about six weeks this regiment was ordered to Cuba on the first expedition, embarking on the Iroquois, and landing in Cuba on June 22. Mr. Kappes says: We landed about 19 miles north [actually southeast] of Santiago. Our brigade consisted of the 12th, 7th, and 17th Regulars under Gen. Chaffee. We marched south [actually west], as near as I can judge, about six miles and camped in the woods. The next day we made another small march of about 7 or 8 miles, we then lay in camp for several days. Our company being on picket all night we met the division going on a forced march to El Caney. We joined in and marched until about 3 o'clock in the morning. Starting again about sunrise we marched about a mile and a half, when we threw our equipment off, and prepared for a close approach on the enemy. This was on the morning of July 1. Our advance was in skirmish formation. In fact we could not move in any other way on account of the character of the ground which was extremely rough and covered with thick growth of underbrush. There is nothing in our county here that can be compared to it in roughness. We fought in this way until about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, advancing on the six blockhouses and stone fort and other defenses of the town, which we succeeded in capturing. It was in this advance that I was shot, at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The enemy's sharpshooters were in the trees - tall coconut trees and palms - where they were entirely invisible, and could not be located by our men because they used the smokeless powder. Myself and two other members of my company were pushing our way ahead, and seeing a small opening in the brush we started to go through single file, I being in the lead. I was advancing in a stooping position when I made the opening. Evidently we were spied by a sharpshooter in a tree who tried to pick us off. I was struck on the left arm just below the shoulder joint. The ball passed clear through the fleshy part of my arm in a downward direction, then struck the man behind me and passed clear through his body, wounding him severely in the stomach, and then passed through the third man's right forearm, inflicting an ugly wound. We bound up one another's wounds with the bandages that

all the soldiers are supplied with. The second man was completely disabled. The third had his arm broken and had to drop out. I stayed into the fight until evening, not knowing how badly I was hurt. I finally found I could not raise my rifle through weakness. The captain saw I was injured and told me to retire, that I had stayed longer than I should. I found I was getting very weak. Owing to the imperfect bandaging I lost a large amount of blood. I found my clothing from my shoulder to my feet saturated with blood. I went to the rear to a field hospital where I had my wound dressed.

The next day I worked myself back to the division hospital, located on the beach, as did all the wounded who could move themselves. The severely wounded were taken back in the army wagons and the suffering of the poor fellows in these heavy wagons over the rough country - there is nothing like a road - was pitiable; but it was the best that could be done. I saw my comrade who was shot through the body brought in in this way and he certainly was in a bad fix. I went up to him and asked him if he could take a cup of hot coffee, he said he could, I got it for him, and it cheered him up a good bit. I understand that he was too severely injured to be removed from the island, and I have not heard what has been the result of his wounds. His home is somewhere near Pittsburg. The other comrade, whose home is at Columbus, came away on the same boat with me. On July 5 all the wounded who were able to move around were ordered on the boat. We thought we would be taken out to sea for awhile and then brought back; but we were taken at once to Tampa, we were then taken by train to the hospital at Fort McPherson, Atlanta. On July 22 I was furloughed for two months. I came to Baltimore, and after remaining there a few days I came home where I hope I may be able to regain my strength. I find I am very weak, although my wound has entirely healed. When asked about the watch he had captured Mr. Kappes said: This happened that same afternoon I was wounded. The Spanish sharpshooters fastened themselves to the trees as I before mentioned. I passing under a tree I saw a haversack lying on the ground, I looked up and saw the owner hanging in the tree, dead, riddled with bullets. The haversack had dropped down. I thought I would look into it. On examining it I found this watch and a large quantity of Mauser cartridges and some other articles. The watch I took with me, and have brought it along home. At first our men could not make out where the shots came from that were dropping their comrades. At last it was noticed that the bullets came downward, and we concluded the sharpshooters were in the trees. We learned this to be the truth, and then the boys began to pepper the trees, and many a Spaniard met the doom of the fellow whose watch I got. The coconut trees are about sixty feet high, with bare trunk until near the top, where there is a large tuft of foliage. The Spaniards climbed into these tree tops where they were entirely concealed, and strapped

themselves fast to prevent their falling in case of being wounded. For a long time they thus had a big advantage over us, and picked off our officers at an alarming rate. They even shot the hospital attendants while carrying off the wounded.

Mr. Kappes thinks the Mauser rifle with which the Spanish regulars were armed is superior to the rifle of our troops because with one movement the Mauser can be loaded with five cartridges arranged in a sort of pouch, while our own gun would only receive one cartridge with the same movement. The Mauser bullet is very small, only 28 caliber, that is 28-100 of an inch in diameter, but as long or longer than a Minie ball. The wounds inflicted by the Mauser are not as severe as those made by the Minie; the balls penetrate the flesh and the bones without shattering. All the Spanish regulars are armed with the Mauser, but volunteers have the Remington which fires a large brass-covered ball which seems to explode on striking and makes a large, ghastly wound, tearing the flesh in a horrible manner.

The 17th just missed, by half an hour, getting into the fight in which the Rough Riders had their terrible experience [the battle of Las Guasimas on June 24]. This was on the Second day's march above mentioned. The regiment came up on and passed over the ground immediately after the fight and saw the dead and wounded being gathered up and cared for. This was their first sight of bloodshed in the war. Mr. Kappes was not very favorably impressed with what he saw of the Cuban soldiers. He says they would not stay in a fight, but would fire a few shots and then retire. They seemed to find more comfort in getting to the rear where the Americans had left their stores and provisions, on which they found it less dangerous to make an assault than on the Spanish troops. He says he saw only one wounded Cuban in the field hospital and less than a score in the division hospital while he was there.

The climate of Cuba, Mr. Kappes says was pleasant during his short stay. It rained every afternoon about half past two or three o'clock, very hard, but for a short time only. There had been no cases of yellow fever up to the time he was removed, so far as he knew. From what he has been told about this fever by the Cubans he met he thinks he would rather take his chances with it than with the typhoid fever, many cases of which he saw while at Fort McPherson. The rations supplied to our men in Cuba were very good, only there was not enough, probably because so many outsiders had to be fed. Mr. Kappes, though yet a young man, is quite a veteran in the service. This is his seventh year in the regular army. From his first enlistment he was discharged as a corporal. He has declined appointment as a non-commissioned officer during his second term, preferring to soldier as a private rather than assume the responsibilities attending the wearing of the chevrons.²⁹

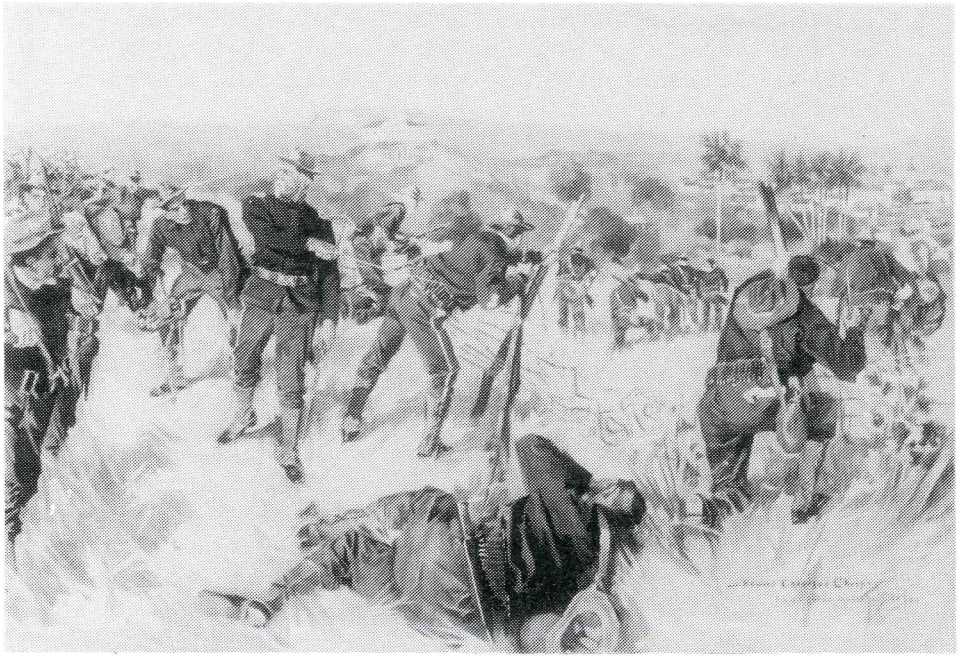


Fig. 4: The 7th United States Infantry in their advance on El Caney (*Harper's Pictorial History of the War with Spain*).

Another Gettysburgian involved in the fighting at El Caney on July 1, 1898, was Samuel Linah. He was a member of Company D, 12th United States Infantry which was also assigned to Caffee's 3rd Brigade, 2nd Division, 5th Army Corps. The 12th lost 45 men killed or wounded in the fight. On July 7th while still in trenches around Santiago, Samuel wrote a letter to his mother. According to the *Star and Sentinel*,

He did not have any paper nor envelopes, so he used an old letter and wrote cross-wise, then doubled it up sewing the ends together, making a rather ingenious envelope....in regard to the fighting, we have had, it was something terrible, the men dropping down all around me, and to hear the wounded and dying men, their groans are terrible to hear. I have been to the extreme front ever since we landed, and have escaped without a single scratch. I hope I may be as lucky as this the whole way through. You will know if I am killed or mortally wounded, but I shall not shirk or play sick, as some have done. There is no use for me to conceal anything from you, as you know all, but do not worry yourself, as I am trusting in God to go through safe.

I saw John Weigle the second day after we landed. Watch the newspapers and you will see the movements of the 12th Regiment. Send

me some writing paper the next time you write. With a kiss and much love. Your son, Samuel L. Linah.³⁰

On July 30th Samuel wrote to his mother from Santiago de Cuba:

It seems a year ago almost since I heard from you. I wrote you several letters since I came here, yet I have received but one from you and that so long ago. I had one from sister Laura and was delighted of course to hear from you through her, but while I know it is some trouble for you to write, you may imagine that I am anxious to have a letter from you, be it ever so short. We do not have paper nor envelopes ourselves, but some good Christian friends furnish them when we fell able to write.

Do not let the stories you may see in the papers alarm you about me. Your boy has been so sick that he thought he would surely die. He had what is called the "break-bone" fever. The pain he suffered for three days it would be useless to try to describe. In all I was sick eight days. My iron constitution has served me well, but I fear it is almost broken through exposure. I was one of the very last to get the fever. A few, but a very few, did not get it at all. I am now convalescing, (the surgeons call it) so do not have any fear. (I would like to tell you of the fights I was in, but my duties as a soldier are so tiresome in this climate that it is hard work for me to write this much. I trust that God may spare me to see you all again and then I can tell you how we fought at El Caney, and of our terrific Work in front of Santiago. Two companies, A and D, and a part of Co. F, of the 12th Regiment did great work there, but the papers have not given us credit; but History will make it right. Our 1st Sergeant, Daniel Mulkey, was shot whilst standing by my side and fell against me. When I got a chance, I helped the poor fellow back to shelter. He was bleeding so much that my left side was covered with blood and my shirt was saturated. Some of the blood dried on me and the next day I scraped it off with my bayonet.

Oh Mother! I can understand, and so can all of the boys understand, what those brave men, soldiers of the Civil War, suffered and endured for their country, and the glory of the Stars and Stripes. If I am spared to again get to the States, I feel that I shall never pass an old soldier, without feeling like taking off my hat. What we have done here we would do again, if called upon, but I do hope that we will not be compelled to lay around in camp - so long, for there is where so many of our poor boys get sick.

Santiago De Cuba, August 9th. Dear Mother - The reason I did not finish this letter sooner was because I could not. I had another spell of sickness; such terrible pains in my back and head, I was so weak that I could not raise my head for several days, but since we have had news that there is good prospects of our going to the States, we are all rejoicing, and to many a poor fellow the news is better than all

the medicine. I hope the news is correct, for if it is not it would be terribly disappointing to us all. As some of the troops have already started I guess that we too may be moved, and in due time again reach God's Country, or perhaps I would better say God's favored Country; the United States of America.

Mother dear, we were all anxious to get to the front and see active service, yet when we did get there everything moved so quickly that we had hardly time to catch our breath between the hard spells of fighting, that made men and heroes of many a sturdy Yankee boy. Mother, when I went into battle I resolved to do my duty, and if it was God's will that I be killed or wounded, it might never be said, that I shirked in front of the enemy. I have witnessed such strange sights since I came here that I feel 10 years older in experience, yet I know that I have been here but a little over two months.

Dear Mother, all Americans love the dear old Stars and Stripes, but here among the dead, wounded and sick, we soldier boys have learned lessons in patriotism and how very dear to our hearts the old flag is. There are boys in my company that to look at you would hardly think fighters; but when the ping, ping, of the Mauser bullets was heard, and Old Glory was moved forward, they were right there taking their "medicine" like "vets."

When I came here supplies were very scarce. I saw one man offer \$15 for a bag of tobacco. I had \$4, and one of them I gave for a cigarette and you can imagine how I enjoyed it. Please thank John for the articles he sent me, especially the cigarettes. Tell him that I have some relics for him, which I trust I may be able to deliver soon. Among them is an American Cartridge belt, some Spanish and American bullets, a piece of barbed-wire and the shell of the first cartridge that I fired at the Spaniards. Tell him that it seemed odd to me at first that I could not shoot, as I pleased, and only on command. Well, this has become quite a newspaper so I will send my love and kindest wishes to all inquiring friends. From your loving and devoted son, Samuel D. Linah, Company D, 12th Infantry.³¹

Within a few weeks of his letter Samuel was sent stateside to recover from his illness. He was given a furlough and made his way home towards Gettysburg to regain his health at the home of his sister Mrs. John L. Sheads. On August 28, his train passed through Philadelphia. A year earlier, he had enlisted at the army recruiting station at Juniper and Filbert streets in Philadelphia. He accordingly sought the officers of the recruiting station, where he was given a most hearty welcome and for a time related many of the heretofore untold horrors of the soldier's life in Cuba and in camps. Linah "wore a fatigue blouse and trousers which bore evidence of the hardships which he had endured." To a reporter for the Philadelphia *Inquirer* Samuel related the following:

We were in the thick of the fight at El Caney block house, and before Santiago, he said, "but won't get due credit until the official history of the war is printed. A man who has gone through the suffering endured in Cuba during the three days fight and even after hostilities had ceased is prepared to face any death. There was no choice of horrors, and death from a Mauser bullet was not one of the worst of them. I saw the slaughter of the Rough Riders [at Las Guasimas on June 24, 1898] and there is no use trying to hide the facts, for we all shuddered. I did not mind viewing dead bodies as they lay un mutilated. Hamilton Fish's body was one of the first we passed and as we went further we came across the men who had been caught by the brass-covered bullets of the shorter range rifles of the Spaniards. I had one of these bullets which killed a poor fellow, but when I was taken ill the Cubans rifled my knapsack and the only curio I have left is a piece of the Spanish flag from the block house.

When it became known among us that brass bullets were being used we all presented a gruesome spectacle. The wounded who lay in the path of our march presented a sickly sight. We never faltered, as the fight would indicate, but for a time our courage was of skim-milk order. The slaughter of the Rough Riders [Las Guasimas] was a sickening sight, and had it not been for the Tenth Cavalry, there would not been one of them left to-day. I tell you, those colored cavalymen and infantrymen are the cream of the army. It is true they are picked men, but it shows what a well organized body of men can do. We were proud of the chance to fight side by side with them.

We fought to save the lives of the Cubans and rescue the reconcentrados from starvation, while at the same time Cuban soldiers tried to starve us. If a United States soldier threw off his knapsack a Cuban soldier came up and rifled it of all he had. They were armed, and it was at first hoped that they would be able to assist us in routing the Spaniards until we became familiar with the Spanish method of fighting in ambush. I was going to say they caused us as much trouble as the Dons, and they did all but shoot us.³²

While these Adams countians were engaged in the fighting for El Caney, two others were involved in the attack on the height of San Juan. Although much is made of the charge of the "Rough Riders," they were not the only unit in the charge, and did not single handedly take the Spanish position as popular tradition records. The brunt of this assault was borne by the United States Regulars (including Colored Regiments) from the divisions of Jacob K. Kent and Samuel Sumner. Much as the exaggerated stand of the 20th Maine has overshadowed the other units that fought at Gettysburg, history has forgotten these heroes of San Juan Hill.

Walter Tipton, whose brother was aboard of *USS Columbia*, served with Company C, 3rd United States Cavalry, during the Santiago campaign. On July 1, 1898, his unit was part of the 1st Brigade of the Cavalry Division and was pushed directly up the main road leading to Santiago over San Juan Hill. On July 21, 1898, he wrote to his father, Lee Tipton, from Santiago, Cuba:

I will endeavor to answer your letter which was received yesterday. Well, since I wrote to you I have had the fever again, this being the second attack since the 5th, and the feeling is an awful one, you don't care whether you live or die, you can't eat, and it is a disagreeable disease; it strikes you very sudden, as you may be standing talking to some one and fall over like a log. Every man in our troop except two has been sick. At one time there were 185 of our Regiment in the hospital; but thank God, not one died.

Sam Linah and the rest of our boys are all right; that is they came through the fight all right, so some of his company informed me. We had 48 wounded, 4 killed and 6 missing. It was awful to see the dead and wounded lying around. I was lying beside one poor fellow for several hours before I knew he was dead. There were 3 of my comrades shot beside me. When I look over the fighting ground I don't see how we ever got them out of their trenches, as it looks almost impossible, but it was done, for I saw them get out, leaving their trenches filled with dead. The most ghastly sight I think it possible to conceive, I witnessed after the first day's fight. We changed positions about 10 o'clock that night, and passed a block-house that had been entrenched all around, and the moon shone down on a frightful scene; the dead Spaniards were lying around in every conceivable position, and they being so dark complected, and the pale of death gave them a sickening look, almost too horrible to look upon.

Father, whatever you see in the papers in regard to the Cubans fighting, put it down as a lie, as the only thing they did was steal our rations, and everything they got their hands on. They are so used to running to the rear when they hear a shot fired that they cannot be broke of it. We are feeding them now but they are really not worth the salt in their hard-tack. Please tell the rest of the family who have written to me that I will answer their letters as soon as I get some stamps and paper. I hear there is some talk of moving us to Long Island, but I don't know how true it is, but I do know that if they keep us here many months there won't be any of us to move. I must close for this time; hoping to hear from you soon, your loving son, Walter Tipton, Troop C, 3rd U.S. Reg. Cav.³³

Another countian present in the fighting for the heights of San Juan was John Nicholas Weigle. He was born on March 16, 1870, the son of John Nicholas and Lucinda Snyder Weigle. Lucinda was the daughter of

Conrad Snyder and grew up at that family's residence which no longer stands, replaced years ago by the Gettysburg Tour Center's parking lot. In August of 1888, he enlisted in the regular United States Army and by the time of the Spanish American War was a sergeant of Company L, 9th United States Infantry attached to the 3rd Brigade (commanded by Charles A. Wikoff, KIA July 1st) 1st Division (Kent), 5th Army Corps.³⁴ During the campaign, Sergeant Weigle was on detached service with Lieutenant John Henry Parker's Battery F, 2nd United States Artillery and given charge of one of Parker's Gatling Guns. We are fortunate that much information is known on his activities during the battle of July 1st, from a number of sources. As the artillery opened fire on the morning of the battle, Weigle was described as being very excited:

Serg. Weigle, who had brought along a small portable camera, with a large supply of film-rolls, requested permission to photograph the next shot fired by Grimes' Battery. It was granted. He climbed to the top of the hill, stepped off to the left of the battery, and calmly focused his camera. Grimes fired another salute, and Weigle secured a good picture. A Spanish shell came whistling over the hill; Weigle, judging where it would burst from previous observations, focused his camera, and secured a picture of the burst. He then rejoined his detachment, and photographed it as it stood. He seemed chiefly worried for fear he would not get a picture of everything that happened.³⁵

Soon after, however, Weigle's gun was detached from the rest of the battery by a Lieutenant Miley, and sent to a hill near the San Juan farm-house. Lieutenant Parker described Weigle's reaction.

Weigle, whose only idea of battle, at this time, was a chance to shoot, had been, to his intense disgust, restrained from opening fire. Then the piece had been taken down from the hill and around to the left of the line, where Lieut. Miley's duty as aide had carried him, to observe the progress of the battle, and Weigle had been again denied the privilege of "potting" a Spaniard.³⁶

Meanwhile, at a very critical moment in the fight, Parker pushed his other guns forward and poured a deadly fire into the Spanish trenches, allowing the pinned down regulars to advance and take the hill. From the position of the left flank of the United States forces, Weigle would have had an excellent view of his battery's service. With the fall of San Juan Hill, his gun was sent back to the battery where he reported to Lieutenant Parker for duty. Parker described the scene:

He was the most disgusted man in the American Army; he was furious; he was white-hot; he was so mad that the tears rolled down his cheeks, as he reported with a soldierly salute, "Sir, Serg. Weigle reports, with his gun. Lieut. Miley did not allow me to open fire. I would like to have orders." In spite of the critical condition of the engagement, it was extremely ludicrous; but the reopening of the fire at this moment presented an opportunity to accommodate the sergeant to his heart's content. He was directed to run his piece up on the firing line, report to the officer in charge there-of, and go into action as soon as he pleased. Within thirty seconds he was getting his coveted opportunity. He fired until his gun became accidentally jammed, pulled it down behind the crest of the hill and removed the defective cartridge, returned it and repeated this operation, actually bringing the gun down three times, and returning it into action, doing very effective work, and all the time displaying the utmost coolness and good judgment. A sharpshooter began to make a target of Weigle's gun, and "potted" a couple of men belonging to the cavalry near it. This made Weigle so mad that he turned the gun, for a moment, upon the tree in which the sharpshooter was concealed. That sharpshooter never shot again. Finally, Weigle's gun got so hot, and he himself so cool, that he concluded the piece was too warm for further firing. So he ran it down behind the hill, and ran his detachment back on the hill with rifles, and during the remainder of the evening, the members of this crew practiced with "long Toms" upon the Spanish soldiers.³⁷

Shortly after the fight, John was taken ill. On July 7, 1898, Lieutenant Parker wrote from "the trenches at Santiago, Cuba" to John's aunt in Gettysburg, Mrs. J. Louis Sowers, to inform her of her nephew's condition.

Sergeant J. N. Weigle, 9th Inf. who has charge of one of my Gatling guns, has asked me to write you, and let you know that he is alive and all right. He is suffering a little from an attack of Gastritis, but it is nothing serious, and the doctor assures me that he will be well in a couple of days. I must say to you that he has been with me in all the fighting in front of Santiago, under fire all the time, and has so greatly distinguished himself by his coolness and daring, that I have written a special letter to the Commanding officer of the 5th Army Corps to ask that Sergeant Weigle be promoted to Second Lieutenant of the regular army for extreme gallantry, coolness and courage in action near Santiago, Cuba, July 1st, 1898. I sincerely hope the fighting is over and that after the war is over I may have the pleasure of making your acquaintance personally. Very Sincerely, John H. Parker, Lieut. U.S. Army, Commanding Gatling Gun Department 5th Army Corps, and Rapid Fire Guns, 1st U.S. Vol Cavalry (Rough Riders).³⁸

On the same day John wrote a few lines to his uncle, J. Louis Sowers:

While the flag of truce is flying I will try and write you a few lines and let you know that I'm all O.K., and in the land of the living, but a land that is very hot, especially for the last few days. We had a hot fight on the 1st, 2d, and 3d, of July. I haven't had my clothes or shoes off for the last week. I have been sick for the last three days, but feel better now. I will have to close. Give my regards to Mrs. Homan and tell her there was a hot time in the old town. John N. Weigle.³⁹

On July 16th John sat down and wrote to his aunt from the "trenches fronting Santiago, Cuba." His detailed letter on the campaign was reprinted in the *Star and Sentinel* on August 23, 1898:

Santiago has surrendered to the United States forces and the 5th Corps enjoys, for the time being, immunity from attacking the works of our friends, the enemy, and the possibility of Spanish good faith, that freedom which gives one time to send a few words home. It must be realized by intelligent people that the 5th Corps did sail from Tampa Bay on the evening of June 14th, and after eight days and nights of deprivation, not deserved by Uncle Sam's soldiers, the Corps disembarked at Baiquiri [Daiquiri] on the 22nd, in the small boats of Sampson's fleet, and Maj. Gen. Joe Wheeler's Cavalry division including Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders and Gen. Lawton's 2nd Division of Infantry.

Gen. Wheeler, with the 1st and 10th U.S. Cavalry and Rough Riders, at once took the highway through the mountainous valleys from Baiquiri to Santiago, in pursuit of the enemy fleeing from Baiquiri and Siboney which Admiral Sampson had also shelled out the evening of the 22nd, Gen. Lawton's division closely following and resting to guard the mountain passes about Siboney. During the night Gen. Wheeler learned from Cuban Scouts that the Spaniards were concentrated across the highway in strong force and position (numbering about 4,000). Gen. Wheeler with Gen. Young commanding U.S. Cavalry Brigade, and Col. Wood Commanding the Rough Riders, formulated a plan of attack, which being carried out during the night resulted in the entire routing of the enemy by our total force of 900 men. This battle [Las Guasimas], the first between the Spanish and United States troops on Cuban soil, has been described in the Army and Navy Journal by General Wheeler's official report. It was as gallant a charge through the dense jungle of this mountainous country as it was successful. Gen. Lawton's Division was immediately moved to the front, as matters looked more critical than at first anticipated, and Gen. Shafter saw the necessity of at once sending Parker's Gatling Gun Battery, as they are constructed for rapid movement and death-dealing propensities. On the 25th Lieut. Parker equipped his battery

for the field, and that afternoon the first and the finest outfit of machine guns and determined men known to our army, moved to the front. That night we camped on the tall rich grass, after a march of five miles over rocky roads with the novel sensations of having for the first time seen growing coconuts, and the luxuriance of drinking the milk in the young coconuts.

On the morning of the 26th we passed through Siboney where the remainder of our expedition had disembarked, stocked up and again took the highway for the front. Our march during the day being through a rich overgrown country. We camped, as the previous night, with the difference of a mango instead of coconut grove nearby. This camp we occupied until 5 A.M., when Lt. Parker's orders took the Gatlings through columns of troops, moving to the front to El Poso (a mission house) about 14 miles from Baiquiri.

At El Poso we were halted to await further orders, as we were virtually to the front. Gens. Garcia and Castillo with their army of Cubans marched by, as did successively the U.S. troops taking the position assigned them in the dense jungle through which the narrow roadway led direct to Santiago, two miles distant. Meanwhile Capt. Grimes' light battery took position on the right of the high hill immediately to our left, and proceeded to find the enemy by sending shell after shell at his presumed forts, in front of a long, low building, which later, by the display of red cross flags, was taken for the Spanish hospital, but as the enemy didn't seem disposed to isolate either the fort or hospital Grimes continued firing greatly to the delight of staff officers and yellow journal war correspondents, from 6:30 to 7:30 A.M., when we heard the whistle of (what the soldiers called a dinner pot) the enemy's first shell. This exploded directly above the hill slope and sent the delighted aggregation to the shelter of twigs and to the possibility of their legs. Several artillery horses were killed. The next shell broke over the Gatling gun Battery, killing several Cubans and wounding many soldiers in the column at foot of hill.

Lieut. Parker (by order) moved his battery thus saving for the successful result of that ever to be remembered day's battle, his outfit intact. Gen. Sumner dashing forward ordered the cavalry to move to the front, and when the fourth shell broke over Grimes' battery killing privates Helme and Underwood, and wounding Sergrts. Kewig, Viell and Comford, Corporals Keen and Pat Bair. There were none but Corporal Gresham and the Army and Navy Journal Corresponded to care for wounded. The shelling lasted nearly an hour before Grimes' battery silenced the enemy's guns.

Lieut. Parker received orders to follow the 71st N.Y. Vol. Inf. into action (this regiment was moving forward) he got Captain Starr, of Gen. Shafter's staff to ride forward and open the ranks of the 71st, so that he could take his guns forward. After going 3/4 of a mile under the fire of sharp-shooters Lieut. Parker was again forced to halt for orders, meanwhile the infantry and dismounted Cavalry were heavily

engaged. During this halt we were submitted to a tremendous rifle fire from the enemy on our left front and right flank which was brought about by the cheers of the green volunteers, as the battery rattled through, their open ranks exposing to the enemy in the jungle, the position of the U.S. troops.

Can you imagine, being thus unnecessarily baptized in the enemy's fire by the boweryism of the 71st N.Y. Vol. submitting to the galling fire which caused more of the casualties of that morning (July 1), as few of our troops could locate the enemy, who had virtually ambushed the invading forces. During this continuous rifle fire the enemy were raking our positions by sending succeeding shells of the shrapnel. The 16th U.S. Inf. pushed forward passing (the gallant 71st N.Y. by this time had found shelter in the border) into the teeth of the fire.

Lieut. Parker obtained discretionary orders to go forward and use his guns to the best advantage. This he done by galloping forward and put his guns into play on the Spanish entrenched position on the right of road leading to Santiago. From this hill the Spanish were pouring a murderous fire on our Infantry and Cavalry on the banks of the Guama River [a stream that branches off of the San Juan River], moving his guns across the river he placed them in position and started to play a tune. Oh, of what great delight to their hard-pressed comrades. A tune pitched to one thousand shots per minute, was a key higher than the high perched could stand, and with a cheer the whole line charged the hill and the third line of the enemy's lines were in the hands of the U.S. forces.

Lawton's men were now deep in their attack on El Caney, about two miles on our right. This was about 7 o'clock, A.M. [it must have been later]. Lawton was really the advance on the extreme left of the enemy's Santiago defenses. The capture of the hill virtually drove the enemy from Lawton's left and front into his last ditches within a mile of Santiago, so that when Chaffee's gallant brigade made its bold charge at 4 P.M. the enemy fled.

The maps will show San Juan, El Caney and Santiago. It will seem that to capture El Caney meant simply giving a position on the right flank, leaving the enemy's line about Santiago intact. By taking San Juan the enemy's center was broken and to save his (now cut off) left wing only retreat or surrender presented itself, as the Cavalry (dis-mounted) with the 6th, 9th, 13th and 16th Regular Infantry [the 16th lost more men than any other unit in the battle], with the aid of the Gatling guns, had forced and captured the enemy's right and cut him off from communicating with Aguadores. He crawled into his holes under the shades of numerous Red Cross flags to surrender after having received another drubbing July 10-11.

The Spanish sharpshooters occupied the first three days in wounding and killing the wounded passing along the roads to the hospitals, being hid in tree tops. When their lines retreated they were left in our lines. Red Crosses were seemingly their favorite marks. The buz-

zards are feeding off the remains of the assassins for our boys dropped many of them out of the trees. American losses in the battle being estimated in killed, wounded and missing, 1,000; Spanish losses reported in Madrid, killed, wounded and missing, first two days' fight, 4,000; since about 600. The American troops engaged were: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25 U.S. Infantry; 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10 U.S. Cavalry; 1st U.S. Vol. Cavalry [Also engaged were the 2d Massachusetts at El Caney, the 71st New York at San Juan Hill and the 33rd Michigan Volunteers at Aguadores]. This leaves me very well; with best regards to all, I remain as ever, Your nephew, J. N. Weigle, 1st Sergt., Co. L, 9th U.S. Inf., 3d Brig., 1st Div., 5th Army Corps, Island of Cuba.⁴⁰

No evidence could be found that John Weigle got his promotion to 2nd Lieutenant. In 1904 he took up permanent residence in Westminster, Maryland, and was appointed 1st sergeant of Company H, First Infantry, Maryland National Guard. In 1906 he was made captain and was in command of his company on the Mexican border in 1916. His unit saw extensive duty in 1917 and 1918 and eventually became Company C, 112th Machine Gun Battalion, 29th Division. Soon after, Captain Weigle received a discharge due to disability. Following his military service, he served as Westminster's bailiff and street commissioner. He died in Westminster on December 30, 1945, and was survived by his wife Rufina Trostle Weigle and four children.⁴¹

The Puerto Rican Campaign

One of the brightest spots during the Spanish American War was the effectiveness of American forces in Puerto Rico. Although the campaign was short and relatively bloodless, the results were very successful. On July 25, a short time after the surrender of Santiago, 16,000 U.S. troops under command of Nelson A. Miles began landings in southern Puerto Rico. The army was divided into three different columns, and soon were pushing through the country. The Puerto Ricans welcomed the invaders and the Spanish troops, for the most part, fell back. There were several skirmishes and two small battles. But before a major confrontation could be brought about, an armistice was signed, and at 7 o'clock on the morning of August 13, 1898, hostilities ended.

Several Adams countians are known to have served in the campaign, and a few of their letters were printed in the local papers. The 4th Pennsylvania Volunteers was of the few Pennsylvania outfits involved in the campaign. Among its members were John L. Schick, Jr. (Gettysburg) of

Company B, Harry M. Badders of Company C (Littlestown) and Guy Wisotzki (or Wisotzkey) of Gettysburg of Company E.⁴²

On September 6, 1898, an undated Letter was published in the *Star and Sentinel* from Guy C. Wisotzki to his family in Gettysburg. The letter, from Arroyo, Puerto Rico, was undoubtedly written at some point prior to the Armistice:

At last I have been able to write. We landed on the island of Porto Rico the third of August, at Arroyo, and are stationed a little way out of town. We had a very smooth sea the whole way down, although the first night out it was a little rough, but nothing to what it gets sometimes. The only ships we sighted were about four sailing vessels. I got sea sick the second day out, but after that I felt very well, only we did not have very much to eat. Everything was cold until the last three days when we were given boiled potatoes with the jackets on once a day. The other rations we received were canned horse, baked beans, coffee and hard tack for breakfast; baked beans, canned horse and hard tack for dinner; tomatoes, canned horse, coffee and hard-tack for supper. That was our bill of fare for every day. We became so tired of them that they went down like medicine at last. I lived mostly off of hot water and hard tack with pepper and salt.

Now for our landing. We sailed into the harbor sometime in the afternoon and laid there until almost dark, when we received orders to land. We were still about a mile from shore. Only two companies could be landed at one time, as they had to be taken over on rafts. A little steam launch would tow them with in about one hundred yards of the shore then we had to pole ourselves in with long poles. Imagine the trouble we had to get ashore with no one to show us where to land and a lot of smart jays on who would not keep quiet so we could hear the Captain. We landed in safety. After landing, we lay along side of a building until all of our regiment had landed. We were then marched a short distance out of the town and encamped in a field. Two days later we moved camp a little nearer the town, where we are stationed now. As soon as we pitched Camp, picket posts were stationed on three sides out toward the mountains in which the Spaniards are camped. Our company struck picket duty the second night. I did not get to go out as I was on regimental guard. We (our Company) go out every twenty-four hours. We came in last evening. Now we will go out to-night again. That means no sleep for twenty-four hours. We expect to get a position that will take us almost up in the mountain. We have not had any shots at any Spaniards yet, but expect to if they don't surrender soon. The war ships in the harbor have been shelling the mountains to some extent. Our wagon train was attacked by Spaniards but were driven off by our cavalry. I hope we will get in a fight soon, as I would like to see a Spanish soldier. I was a guard over a supposed Spanish spy the other day, which we captured.

Talk about Porto Rico being fine, it is simply magnificent. I think the longer I stay the more I will fall in love with it. We are lying in a strip of land between the mountain and the sea. I cannot say how long, but about five miles wide, composed of as rich soil as any in the world. The soil is a dark brown; all kinds of fruit are raised around here. Coconuts to burn and all other kinds too numerous to mention. The mountains are certainly beautiful. They say the Alleghenies in the U.S. are beautiful, but they can't tough these. Our mountains seem to run along smooth on the top whilst these mountains look as jagged almost as a field after being plowed. I do not think they are very rocky, they are as high if not higher than the Alleghenies. The natives I don't think much of. I never saw or heard of a more corrupt race of Human beings in my life.

We buy the best coconut candy down here that I ever tasted. I have been eating some of it while writing. This certainly is a healthful county. I am growing heavier, still I have not felt badly since I landed here. I can't complain of a thing that is the matter with me. I will have to close as it will not be long before we will have to go out on duty again. By the way, we have received our new rifles and cartridges (Krag Jorgensen Rifle) every person carries one hundred and twenty rounds of ammunition. All the boys wish to be remembered to you and the girls. Close with lots of love. Guy C. Wisotzki, Co. E, 4th Regt., Penn'a Vol. Inf., 2nd Brig., 1st div., 1st Army Corps.⁴³

Another who served in Puerto Rico was Charles A. Williams of Gettysburg who was a member of Company E, 1st United States Volunteer Engineers. Charles was born on February 14, 1871, one of 13 children of Marion (a Civil War veteran) and Sarah Utz Williams. When just a boy, his family moved to Gettysburg. In his youth he and his brother M. F. "Max" Williams were employed by William H. Tipton, the famous photographer.⁴⁴ Little did he know at the time but the skills he learned would be valuable in his Spanish American War service. On July 28, 1898, he wrote a letter to his brother, H. G. Williams, from his training camp at Peekskill, N.Y:

Your favor of the 25th enclosing other data, at hand. We are all enjoying a good rest in our tents. It has been raining since midnight, and, of course, the boys all feel good over it as they have been working us hard; keep us on the jump from 5 A.M. till 8 P.M. Our first drill is setting up exercise, then company drill, battalion drill, target practice and engineering work, but the boys do not kick; they know it is for their own good.

I received word to call on Col. Griffin yesterday. He asked me how I would proceed to photograph from a [reconnaissance] kite. I told him, and after he finished examining me he told me I would be the

Regimental photographer and be furnished with ten assistants. He also asked me if I objected to going up in a balloon. I told him it was the height of my ambition to photograph from one, and he then told me we would likely be equipped with one. I do not know what my pay will be, but will find out when we get our money next pay day, which will be about August 1st. We expect to leave on the 2nd from New York direct to Porto Rico. The papers contain full accounts of our work here and our expected departure, hence I presume you are fully informed.

You ask me if I would enlist again, if I were free to do so, knowing what I do of army life. I certainly would, but, of course, prefer the Engineer Corps. The boys all hope the war will last long enough for us to see some active service. Our Regiment is composed of the best people of the country: Fitz Hugh Lee's son and a nephew of J. Pierpont Morgan being lieutenants of my Company, "E."

I must close, get my plate, knife and fork and go to the kitchen in a few minutes for my dinner. Each man takes his own plate to cook, gets his dinner, (which will consist of baked beans and pork), have his canteen filled with coffee and go to the company mess tent to eat, after which he will wash his own dishes. We have Japanese cooks. Your Brother, C. A. Williams, Co. E., 1st Reg. U.S. Vol. Engineers.⁴⁵

On August 23, 1898, Charles wrote a letter to his parents from a "Camp near Ponce, Puerto Rico." The Armistice was just a week old:

I am enjoying fairly good health. It is impossible for one to feel good in this climate at this time of the year, as the wet season is at its worst. We have rain every two or three hours. It is very low and marshy where our camp is located. Between showers it is very hot and sultry. The natives are similar to our Negroes in looks and disposition. Our camp is about a half mile from Ponce. The 19th Regular Infantry joins our camp on the north and the 7th Cavalry on the east; the Governor's Troop and the Sheridan Troop two miles north. Gen. Miles' 32 miles north. We will move sometime this week, the 2nd Battalion, about 40 or 50 miles north to rebuild some bridges the Spaniards burned. The Q.M. is packing 30 days' rations for us. The 3rd Battalion left yesterday on a 20 mile march to get some artillery out of a swamp, which is periodically covered with mud. We do not know whether it is fight or not for us, as we hear nothing about peace being declared. You people know more about what is going on in the island than we do. As soon as peace is declared this entire Regiment will apply for its discharge, as they are treating us shamefully; only about half enough to eat and most of the boys confined to camp. I am at liberty to go where and when I please. Have been in Ponce several times doing photographing for the Government. Sunday I made a plate of the Spanish prisoners which the 16th Pa. captured and who

are now in the barracks - 163 of them. They are a tough looking lot of soldiers. They sell the buttons and insignia off their clothes to our boys. I have a number of buttons, & etc., which I bought off them, and I expect to get a fine collection of relics when we get into the interior, as well as a full set of views.

Our money is worth \$1.75 in Spanish for an American dollar; but the natives are very shrewd and have raised the price about double for everything so as not to lose anything by the exchange. The restaurants charge \$1.50 for dinner, and that is not fit to eat. Our camp is surrounded with coconuts, bananas, limes, mangroves, sugar cane and Indian corn, but the fruit is poisonous to the boys and we do not eat of it. The natives use oxen and ponies to do their work.

One of our boys had just come into camp from the wharf and reports that there is a Spanish schooner in the harbor flying the Spanish flag, so I presume peace has been declared. All the boys are anxious to get back to the states. The *Chester*, which brought us down, left yesterday, and before going threw away a lot of meat and provisions which had spoiled and which the Relief Association of New York had put aboard for us to keep us from starving. We live about half the time on two hardtacks and three spoons of beans. I take up about an inch in my belt every day; don't think I weigh over 135 lbs.

I have just been over to see one of the four-mule teams which ran off and hurt one of the drivers. Three of the Regulars have been shot since we are here for rape. They don't consider a man's life worth much here. Good-bye, Love to All. Your Son, Charles A. Williams, Co. E., 1st Reg., U.S. Vol. Engineers.⁴⁶

On January 25, 1899, Charles was mustered out of service and returned to Gettysburg where he was again employed by William Tipton. Later he went into the real estate business, and in 1933 was appointed as postmaster of Gettysburg, a post which he held until his death in 1943.⁴⁷

The Philippine Islands

On May 1, 1898, just a week into the war, the victory at Manila Bay by Admiral Dewey's Asiatic Fleet filled the nation with confidence. His crushing victory made the Americans masters of seas. The Spanish had some 45,000 troops on the ground in the Philippine Islands (13,000 stationed around Manila), and it was unlikely that they would give up without a fight. It would take some time, however, before an American expeditionary force could be organized and moved 7,600 miles across the Pacific Ocean. In the meantime, there was little Admiral Dewey could do but hold on to the advantage he had gained and wait. As in Cuba,

there had been several insurrections in the Philippines in the years prior to the war. On the 16th of May, Emilio Aguinaldo, exiled leader of the insurgents' army, boarded a United States vessel at Hong Kong and three days later was delivered to Cavite just south of Manila. It was thought that Aguinaldo and his insurgents would keep the Spanish busy for awhile.

The first convoy for the Philippines set sail from San Francisco on May 25, 1898, and reached Manila with some 2,500 men on the 30th of June. The second convoy arrived on July 17, bringing nearly 3,600 men, including the 10th Pennsylvania Volunteers. More ships arrived over the next few weeks, bringing the total American force to over 10,000. The commander of these troops was Major General Wesley Merritt (who at the Battle of Gettysburg was a brigade commander under General John Buford). On August 13, the United States forces, supported by Dewey's warships and unaware that an armistice had been signed, advanced in two columns against the Spanish fortifications. There was little resistance, and the Spanish quickly capitulated, preferring to surrender to the Americans than the Filipinos who had the city under siege for the better part of three months. The only Adams countian known to have served in the Philippine Islands during the Spanish American War is John T. Bigham who served in Company E, 10th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. It is not known what role John may have played in the fighting, but his unit was present in the Battle of Manila on August 13, 1898. On arriving in the Philippines, John wrote to his mother in Cashtown. His letter is dated July 20, 1898:

I wrote you from Mt. Gretna, Pa., that I had volunteered in the U.S. Army. Since that time I have gone to San Francisco, Cal., and from there by steamship across the Pacific ocean. To-day I am in Manila Bay, Philippine Islands, between 9,000 and 10,000 miles from home. We have been on the ship 37 days, and I do not think we will get off for two or three days yet. This is a lovely country. It rains here every day and is just about as warm here all the year as it is at home in the summer. But, old Pennsylvania is good enough for me, if I live to get back. Do not worry about me, for I have the belief that I am for a good cause. I am fighting for God, my country, and for the heroes of the Maine. We have not had any fighting yet, and I do not think we will have much of it to do. Tell the people that I am well and send my best regards to all. I expect to get home before next Christmas. I am with the oldest regiment of the State of Pennsylvania. I cannot get any stamps here so don't think I am broke. I get two Mexican dollars for one dollar of U.S. money, and I can buy as much for one of these dollars here as I could for one of the others in the U.S.

There will be 20,000 of our soldiers here to fight 8,000 Spanish soldiers. I have not the least fear but what I will get back safely. Hoping to hear from you soon, I remain Your Son, John T. Bigham Co. E, 10th U.S. [actually Pennsylvania] Vols. Inf., Col. Hawkins, in command.⁴⁸

Peace

Even before the war began, peace negotiations were under way between the United States and Spain. On August 12, both parties concluded an agreement to hold negotiations, and an armistice was agreed upon, taking effect at 7 o'clock in the morning on August 13, 1898: this ended the Spanish American War. A peace treaty was signed in Paris on December 10, 1898. Among the terms were independence for Cuba (after a short period of American occupation), annexation of Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines, for which the United States paid \$20 million dollars. Also added to the emerging American empire was Hawaii, portions of Samoa and the area that was soon to become the Panama Canal.

Throughout the war, however, the United States had a precarious relationship with Aguinaldo and his insurgents. By the end of the war the Filipino army had grown into a sizable force (30,000 men by some estimates). On June 12, Aguinaldo proclaimed a Philippine Republic hoping for American recognition. But when the "Treaty of Paris" was signed, in December of 1898, the Philippines was made a colonial possession of the United States and many in that country felt betrayed. Relations soon deteriorated and on February 4, 1899, Emilio Aguinaldo's forces attacked the American army stationed around Manila. The war that followed, known as the Philippine Insurrection, was long and bloody. Some have gone so far as to call it "America's first Vietnam." Although this war is today given very little attention, many more Americans died in the insurrection than in the Spanish American War. While not part of this story, one Adams countian has left us with a vivid account of his service in the Philippines during this period. John McCleary was a member of Company E, 1st Washington Volunteers, and his letters appear in the Gettysburg newspapers throughout the year 1899.⁴⁹

As a result of the Spanish American War, Spain, was virtually destroyed as a world power. Civil unrest and civil war racked the country for the next 40 years. After the war, Americans would become increasingly active in the politics of foreign nations. For the United States, the war marked the country's arrival on the world stage and firmly established her as a major power.

Roster of the Adams Countians in Spanish American War

Company M, 5th Pennsylvania Volunteers

Beitler, Frank A., Gettysburg	Bennett, Marion A., Seven Stars
Bushman, Samuel M., Gettysburg	Butt, Harry J. Gettysburg
Carson, Oscar W., Bendersville	Cope, John B., Gettysburg
Corwell, James S., Fairfield	Cullison, Asa C., Gettysburg
Currens, John E., Gettysburg	Dally, William P., Gettysburg
Diehl, James F., Gettysburg	Fenstermacher, Wm. L., Gettysburg
Geiselman, John W., Fairplay	Gladhill, James L. Fairfield
Homan, William L., Gettysburg	Hospelhorn, James L., Fairplay
Howard, Dwight L., Bendersville	Jobe, Marion E., York Springs
Kappes, Frederick W., Gettysburg	Keime, Urban, Gettysburg
Koch, William J., Gettysburg	Kreider, Oscar B., Gettysburg
Lawrence, John I., McSherrystown	LeFever, Curtis A., Littlestown
Lott, Harry G., Gettysburg	Low, Andrew L., Fairfield
Martin, George A., Gettysburg	McClean, Robert B., Gettysburg
McDonnell, James W., Gettysburg	McIlhenny, James G., Gettysburg
Miller, Charles E., Orrtanna	Musselman, Clarence J., Fairfield
Musselman, George W., Fairfield	Noel, William J., Gettysburg
Richstein, John, Littlestown	Robinson, William B., Gettysburg
Roth, George H., New Oxford	Rummel, John F., Gettysburg
Sandoe, Ralph F., Biglerville	Schriver, Robert S., Gettysburg
Sell, Charles H., Littlestown	Shadel, William, Littlestown
Shields, George E., Gettysburg	Sitizel, John A., Bendersville
Steffy, Wm. M., Gettysburg	Staley, Augustus E., Kingsdale
Staub, Louis R., McSherrystown	Stonesifer, Joseph B., Gettysburg
Tate, Frederick M., Gettysburg	Warner, George M., New Oxford
Watson, Robert W. K. Fairfield	Weirick, Frank X., Gettysburg
Welty, Charles R., Gettysburg	Williams, Maurice, Gettysburg
Wise, James, Gettysburg	Yeagy, William F., Gettysburg
Zercher, John W., Littlestown	Ziegler, Charles F., Gettysburg



Fig. 5: Charles Welty (1875-1900), Company M, 5th Pennsylvania Volunteers. "This Photo was taken just before Co. M. left G'B'H 1898" (ACHS).

Other Adams countians who are known to have served during the Spanish American War. The following was developed by information taken from various sources and is by no means a complete listing.⁵⁰

Badders, Harry M., Littlestown	Co. C, 4th Pa. Volunteer Infantry
Bigham, John T., Cashtown	Co. E, 10th Pa. Volunteer Infantry
Buehler, Ralph, Gettysburg	Co. C, 18th Pa. Volunteer Infantry
Gettier, H. E., Littlestown	2nd Div. Hosp., 3rd Army Corps
Hamil, William F., Gettysburg	Co. B, 1st Md. Volunteer Infantry
Hart, J. Frank, Mummasburg	Co. B, 1st Md. Volunteer Infantry
Kappes, Herman, Gettysburg	Co. H, 17th U.S. Regular Infantry
Keith, John, Gettysburg	Co. H, 5th Pa. Volunteer Infantry
Keller, William, Gettysburg	Co. B, 1st Md. Volunteer Infantry
Linah, Samuel, Gettysburg	Co. D, 12th U.S. Regular Infantry
McCullough, Albert, Gettysburg	Co. B, 1st Md. Volunteer Infantry
McIlhenny, John K, Gettysburg	Co. B, 1st Md. Volunteer Infantry
Mizell, Chatiam, Gettysburg	Co. F, 5th U.S. Regular Cavalry
Oyler, Clinton, Gettysburg	Co. B, 1st Md. Volunteer Infantry
Schick, John L. Jr., Gettysburg	Co. B, 4th Pa. Volunteer Infantry
Shields, Charles, Gettysburg	Co. C, 2nd Pa. Volunteer Infantry
Simpson, J. H., Littlestown	Co. H, 3rd Pa. Volunteer Infantry
Smith, Samuel, Gettysburg	Co. D, 5th Md. Volunteer Infantry
Smith, Samuel J., Gettysburg	Co. B, 1st Md. Volunteer Infantry
Snyder, George, New Oxford	Pvt. ?
Snyder, H. D., New Oxford	Captain ?
Snyder, John J., New Oxford	Ensign ?
Snyder, Wm. Ruff, New Oxford	Pvt. ?
Tate, Clinton, Gettysburg	Co. B, 1st Md. Volunteer Infantry
Tipton, Robert, Gettysburg	USN, <i>USS Columbia</i>
Tipton, Walter, Gettysburg	Co. C, 3rd U.S. Regular Cavalry
Williams, Charles A., Gettysburg	Co. E, 1st U.S. Volunteer Engineers
Wisotzki, Guy, Gettysburg	Co. E, 4th Pa. Volunteer Infantry
Weigle, John N., Gettysburg	Co. L, 9th U.S. Infantry
Welty, William, Gettysburg	USN, <i>USS Minneapolis</i>

Notes

1. General information concerning the war will not be footnoted in this article. It was gathered through articles in the Adams county newspapers as well as the *New York Times*. A wide variety of books was also consulted, including: *The West Point Atlas of American Wars* (New York, 1959), 1:62, Map 155-158, James Rankin Young, *History of our War with Spain* (1898); Henry B. Russell, *History of Our War with Spain including the Story of Cuba* (Hartford, Conn., 1898); David Woodward, *Armies of the World* (New York, 1978), pp. 129-152; Albert A. Nofi, *The Spanish American War, 1898* (n.p., 1996). A most helpful source was an article that ran in the *Adams County Independent* on August 20, 1898, entitled "Correct Diary of the War."

2. A sampling of articles from Adams county papers that highlight the suffering inflicted by the Spanish in Cuba are: "A Picture of Cuba," *Gettysburg Compiler*, November 30, 1897; "Appeal for Cuba, *Compiler*, December 28, 1897; "The Cuban Republic," *New Oxford Item*, December 31, 1898; "The Horrors of Cuba," *Item*, January 14, 1898; "Destruction of Life in Cuba," *Gettysburg Star and Sentinel*, February 22, 1898; "Starving Cubans," *Star and Sentinel*, March 8, 1898; "Cuba, Its Products and People," *Compiler*, March 15, 1898; "Pathetic Beyond all Description," *Star and Sentinel*, March 22, 1898; "Plan to Care for Cuban Children," and "Cuba," *Compiler*, March 29, 1898; "The Golden Matter," *Star and Sentinel*, April 5, 1898.

3. "Pennsylvania will help Cuba," *Compiler*, January 18, 1898.

4. "Washington Letter," *Star and Sentinel*, February 22, 1898.

5. "The Maine Disaster and its Consequence," *Star and Sentinel*, March 1, 1898. The front page of that paper included a full page article on the sinking of the *Maine* by an eyewitness, entitled "Hawthorne on Disaster."

6. "The Crisis and its Lesson," *Star and*

Sentinel, March 22, 1898.

7. "The Cuban Matter," *Star and Sentinel*, April 5, 1898.

8. "What does War Mean?" *Item*, April 22, 1898.

9. *Item*, April 29, 1898. See also "Patriotism At Gettysburg," *Adams County Independent*, April 30, 1898.

10. "War," and "The Maine," *Star and Sentinel*, April 12, 1898.

11. "Spain's Military Strength," *Star and Sentinel*, March 22, 1898. This article reported that the force in Cuba numbered about 135,000 regulars and 30,000 Cuban volunteers scattered throughout the country. It also estimated the Spanish forces in the Philippines at 32,000 (including 15,000 native troops) and in Puerto Rico at 5,000 Spanish and 4,000 native volunteers. Its reserve forces in around Spain numbered more than 100,000. It was also thought that Spain would call more of her men to arms to meet the American threat. Some estimated that the enemy force could number over 600,000 before all was said and done.

12. Russell, p. 305.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 405.

14. "Quotas of the States," *Star and Sentinel*, May 31, 1898.

15. Thomas J. Stewart, *Record of Pennsylvania Volunteers in the Spanish American War, 1898* (N.P., 1901), p. 212. "The Adams County Company," *Star and Sentinel*, July 19, 1898.

16. See for example: "Liars or What," and "Basely Deceived," *Star and Sentinel*, July 26, 1898; "Same Feeling Here," *Independent*, July 30, 1898. Ironically, Captain Evan Russell was a veteran of the Civil War and had served in the 5th Pennsylvania Reserves at the battle of Gettysburg.

17. "Adams Co. Boys," *Star and Sentinel*, July 26, 1898.

18. *Ibid.* See also "Company M, 5th Regiment, Penna. Volunteer Infantry," *Compiler*, June 26, 1898.

19. A few of the letters from Company M, 5th Pennsylvania Infantry that appear in local papers include: Robert B. McClean, *Compiler*, July 26, August 2, and August 23, 1898; George Martin, *Star and Sentinel*, July 26, 1898; William M. Steffy, *Star and Sentinel*, August 2, 1898; William B. Robinson, *Star and Sentinel*, August 2, 1898; Marion Edwin Jobe, *Star and Sentinel*, August 2, 16, 23, and 30, September 6, and 13, 1898; George H. Roth, *Item*, August 5, 1898; John Richstein, *Independent*, August 6, 1898. John Zercher, *Independent*, August 6, 1898. "M," *Star and Sentinel*, August 9, 1898; James Diehl, *Compiler*, August 16, 1898.

20. Stewart, pp. 212-3. The two Adams countians of Company M who died of disease were Sergeant William M. Steffy and Private John B. Cope.

21. *Star and Sentinel*, April 26, 1898.

22. Tipton Family File, Adams County Historical Society; Obituary of Robert Lee Tipton, *Compiler*, February 10, 1923.

23. "Letters from Robert E. Tipton," *Star and Sentinel*, July 26, 1898.

24. *Ibid.*

25. "Letters from the Boys," *Star and Sentinel*, August 9, 1898. (*Porto Rico* was a common spelling for *Puerto Rico* by American soldiers during the war.)

26. "Soldiers' Letters," *Star and Sentinel*, August 23, 1898.

27. "From the Boys," *Compiler*, July 12, 1898.

28. "Soldiers' Letters," *Star and Sentinel*, July 19, 1898.

29. "A Hero's Story of El Caney. Experience of a Gettysburg Boy with Spanish Sharpshooters," *Star and Sentinel*, August 9, 1898.

30. "Soldiers' Letters," *Star and Sentinel*, July 19, 1898.

31. "Letters from Samuel Linah," *Compiler*, August 30, 1898.

32. "From the Boys," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 29, 1898 and reprinted in the *Compiler*, August 30, 1898. A member

of Company C, 12th U.S. was J. W. Trimmer of Hanover, Pennsylvania. The *Star and Sentinel* of July 26, 1898 reported that Trimmer sent home to his father "a Spanish Flag captured by himself...."

33. "Soldiers' Letters," *Star and Sentinel*, August 23, 1898.

34. "Death Takes Captain John Nicholas Weigle," *Times* [Westminster, Maryland], January 4, 1946.

35. John H. Parker, *History of the Gatling Gun Detachment, Fifth Army Corps at Santiago* (Kansas City, Mo., 1900), p. 121.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 144-5.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 145-6.

38. "Soldiers' Letters," *Star and Sentinel*, July 19, 1898.

39. *Ibid.*

40. "Soldiers' Letters," *Star and Sentinel*, August 23, 1898.

41. "Death Takes Captain John Nicholas Weigle," *Times*, January 4, 1946. (Thanks to the Carroll County Historical Society for this information.)

42. A letter written by Guy C. Wisotzki from their training camp at Chicamauga appears in "From the Boys," *Compiler*, July 12, 1898.

43. "Letter from Guy C. Wisotzki," *Star and Sentinel*, September 6, 1898.

44. "C.A. Williams, 72, Postmaster Here Nine Years, Dies," *Compiler*, March 20, 1943.

45. "Letters from the Boys," *Star and Sentinel*, August 2, 1898.

46. "Letter from C. A. Williams," *Star and Sentinel*, September 13, 1898.

47. "C.A. Williams, 72, Postmaster Here Nine Years, Dies," *Compiler*, March 20, 1943.

48. "From John T. Bigham," *Compiler*, August 30, 1898.

49. An article on the outbreak of the Philippine insurrection appears on the front page of *Star and Sentinel* of February 14, 1899, and the first of John McCleary's letters was published in that

paper on February 28, 1899, and the series ran almost weekly through that summer.

50. Letters from Adams County soldiers not printed in this article include those by Clinton Tate, *Star and Sentinel*, July 12, 1898; Ralph Buehler, *Star and Sentinel*, July 19, 1898; John Keith, *Compiler*, July

12, 1898; Chatiam Mizel, *Compiler*, July 12, 1898; J. H. Simpson, *Independent*, July 30, 1898. A diary kept by Harry M. Badders of Company C, 4th Pennsylvania Volunteers, is in the collection of the Adams County Historical Society. Unfortunately, it covers only the time period of April 28 through May 6, 1898.