

OF  
THREE YEARS SERVICE  
IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY

CHARLES W. VAUGHN  
CO. H  
12th U. S. INFANTRY  
JUNE 2, 1898--JUNE 1, 1899

The narrative as herein set down is divided into two parts.

The first part, covering the period from June 2 to February 11, 1899 consists of a summary of memories of events which took place prior to and including the campaign in Cuba.

The second part is copied direct and with but few alterations from the original manuscript which Mr. Vaughn kept in the form of a diary from February 2, 1899 to August 3, 1899 and which he has so kindly placed at our disposal.

Cleo Sutphin Vaughn

Wallace R. Winkler

## PART I

June 2, 1896--February 11, 1899

The desire for adventure is one of those innate desires which all men must at one time or another satisfy. On June 2, 1896, Mr. Charles W. Vaughn of Mount Airy, North Carolina, at the age of 22, driven by his own feelings and influenced perhaps somewhat by friends, joined the United States Army at Lynchburg, Virginia. Lynchburg, Virginia, located about 100 miles northeast of Mount Airy happened to be the nearest Army Recruiting Office. Mr. Vaughn was assigned to Co. H, 12th U. S. Infantry and left immediately by train via Chicago, Illinois to Fort Niobrara, Nebraska where the 12th was at that time stationed. Fort Niobrara was located on the Niobrara River just south of South Dakota. Colonel John N. Andrews (later Brig-General) was the commander of the 12th U. S. Infantry and Captain Harry L. Haskell (later Major) was in command of Company H.

Since the Indians had been pacified several years before and Nebraska was no longer a frontier, service at Fort Niobrara was relatively quiet and most duties which the Regiment was called upon to perform were routine.

These months of inaction were ended suddenly in April of 1896, for on the 19th day of that month, Congress declared war upon Spain. The reasons for the war were numerous and included

such events as the tragic and destructive sinking of the U. S. Battleship, Maine, in the Havana Harbor and the insulting letters of the Spanish Minister, De Lome. Also very important was the sympathetic attitude of the American people for our poor, struggling neighbor on the South, Cuba. It was an established fact that the Cubans had suffered bitter and painful oppression for years at the hands of the thoughtless Spanish Monarchs, when, in the course of relations among nations, the wrangling of politicians fails to decide an issue, it is inevitable that the citizen soldiers of the nations concerned must meet on a common battleground and decide the issue. The United States had reached this position, and soon many thousands of men were on their way to newly constructed encampments. One such camp was on the site of the old Chickamauga Battleground at Chickamauga, Tennessee. Among these Regiments out here was the 12th U. S. Infantry which left Fort Niobrara probably in the latter days of April, 1898.

It is well to state at this time that the 12th U. S. Infantry, armed with the modern Krag-Jorgensen rifles, calibre 30-~~40~~, was considered one of the crack Regiments of the Regular Army. For this reason, it was ordered within just a few days to Tampa, Florida to prepare for embarkation to the war area. On June 10th, the boys of the 12th loaded themselves on an old sugar boat, The Cherokee. The voyage took 14 days which were relatively uneventful other than the fact that most of the men spent a couple of hours, sooner or later, in hanging over the rails.

Major General Nelson A. Miles of Indian War fame was commander-in-chief of the American armies. Feeling sure that the major part

of the land engagements would take place on the island of Puerto Rico, he reserved this area for his immediate command and sent the portly, yet able Major General William S. Shafter to command the campaign in Cuba.

On the morning of June 22, 1898, the Cherokee anchored about a mile off the southern coast of Cuba, somewhere east of the city of Santiago. The troops landed in rowboats, and the Spaniards did not contest the landing. It was at about this time that Captain Haskell was promoted to the rank of Major, and Lt. Willis Uline was placed in command of Company H. After the landing, the 12th Regulars spent eight busy days in bringing up supplies and munitions and in preparing for the siege of Santiago. On July 1, 1898, General Shafter ordered his little army forward, and the 12th Infantry moved toward the enemy in the Battle of El Caney. On July 2 and 3, the 12th was engaged at San Juan Hill. It was on July 3, while Co. H was engaged in helping set up the siege guns around Santiago that Admiral Sampson destroyed the Spanish fleet under Admiral Cervera. The reverberations of that great naval battle were so intense that the Island itself was literally shaken. The 12th Regulars took part in the bombardment of Santiago on July 10 and 11, and the Spanish surrendered on July 17, 1898.

With Spanish resistance broken, the Regiment was engaged in cleaning up activities and finally in September, it was embarked again and headed for the army barracks at Montouk Point, Long Island. After reaching Long Island, Mr. Vaughn was granted a 30-day furlough. The furlough was later extended to 60 days, and so Charles W. Vaughn returned home after an absence of 28 months.

## PART II

February 11, 1899--August 3, 1899

At the close of the war with Spain, the American government was perfectly willing to fulfill all agreements, and so gave Cuba her freedom. Such was not the case with certain other former Spanish possessions. Off the southeastern coast of China is a chain of rich islands known as the Philippines. For years, the Filipinos, under such men as Emilio Aguinaldo, had been fighting Spanish rule. They, of course, helped American forces defeat the Spanish, but then they wanted the Americans to leave. The American Government felt that the citizenry of the Philippines was not capable of intelligent home-rule and adopted a colonial policy for those Islands. A brief revolution followed in which American forces were used to quell the uprising.

In December, 1898, Mr. Charles W. Vaughn returned to his Regiment which, in the meantime, had been ordered to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri. The Regiment wintered here, and then in February, 1899, was ordered to the new field of action on the other side of the world, the Philippines. At this point, we take up the manuscript.

2.  
February:

11--We left Jefferson Barracks. We had dinner in Washington, D. C. at the National Hotel. We had to lay over in Cumberland, Maryland about 40 hours on account of snow storms.

19--Left New York.

March:

2--Arrived at Gibraltar 5:45 a.m.

4--Left Gibraltar.

8--Landed in Malta.

9--We went all over town. We had a grand reception from all English soldiers, and the natives showed us some great scenes.

12--Left Malta at 9:15 a.m.

16--Had some very rough sea and arrived at Port Said which is at the entrance of the Suez Canal on this day. We left Port Said at 4:30 p.m.

17--Arrived in Suez Town at 10:30 a.m. and left at 8:00 p.m.

22--Arrived in Aden. Stayed only about ten minutes.

25--Bracket of Co. G. died of pneumonia and <sup>was</sup> buried at sundown.

29--Arrived in Colombo, Ceylon at 7:30 a.m.

30--Twenty of us received a six hour pass. We hired a hack and rode around pretty much all over town. Saw the mansions of the city and Queen Victoria's garden. We enjoyed the trip fine. Colombo is on the island of Ceylon which is at the southern coast of India in the Indian Ocean.

31--We went to town again and had quite a pleasant time although it was very hot. McGuire of Co. F. was drowned and buried today.

April:

1--I received two letters from my mother. One was written on the 21st and the other on the 28th of February. Left Colombo at 5:30 in the afternoon. I have been having a chill about every two weeks since we started and I had a very hard one today.

April (continued):

2--I had two chills today and an awful hot fever afterward.

7--Arrived at Singapore.

8--I was on guard.

9--Left Singapore at 6:00 a.m.

10--Lt. Myres of Co. D. it is supposed jumped overboard on this night. Some say he and his girl split up before he left the States. It is not known for certain what became of him.

14--Arrived at Manilla Bay and was told by some soldiers that they were fighting night and day.

15--We went on shore with all preparations of going into battle but went into camp for the night as soon as we were landed.

16--We marched about two miles from Manilla and pitched camp and remained there till the 19th.

17--Mailed one letter to mother on the 15th and one to my girl on this day.

18--Mailed another letter to mother.

19--Broke camp and marched about eight miles up the Pasig River and went out on post duty. For the first two nights I was on patrol with three other fellows up and down the river. We had no difficulty.

21--On the night of the 21st we were moved up on a hill and put on picket duty and there was one fellow on horseback who tried to go through our lines but failed. We remained here two days.

23--We moved down on the river again and myself and 7 other fellows were sent down the river to guard the road. Four of us to guard till midnight and the other four till daylight. It rained pretty much all night.

April (continued):

24--A detail was sent up the river about one mile to guard the road running down the river.

25--We were at the same place today but did not have any fighting to do except with mosquitoes, ants, cats, and dogs.

May:

2--We were still guarding the river road. I mailed my girl a letter. I heard on this morning that the insurgents had until 10:00 to surrender.

3--Received a letter from my girl.

5--Received a letter from / <sup>my</sup> mother.

6--We were informed that there was going to be a general attack and about noon we were ordered into the firing line to the right of Cutaros. We had a very warm march and remained there till near night without seeing the enemy and returned to our bamboo shacks down on the Pasig River.

8--Gwyn was discharged and I went with him to Manila. I returned back to camp about 5:00 and went on patrol for the night.

9--On this day we got paid for March and April. I deposited thirty dollars with the paymaster and in the evening I washed a suit of clothes for myself.

10--While out on patrol on this night, I heard two shots fired on Post No. 2. After an investigation, I found that a fellow by the name of McCunne had shot himself through the leg.

12--The flag of Truce went up in the insurgent's lines for some cause not known at the present. I took my trousers off for the first time on the island and slept soundly in bed. Today is Friday. I received a letter from home. It was written on the 28th of March.

21--Our lockers were brought up from town and all seemed to enjoy looking over their contents.

23--I took the cart and pony to Manila and got some bread for the company and a box for myself to take my things home in. On my return from town, I heard that six men from Co. G. were drowned while crossing the Pasig River in a ferryboat.

May (continued):

24--This being the Queen's birthday, the gunboats fired a salute, she being 82 years old and a queen 63 years.

30--This being Memorial Day, it was a great day for all in Manila. We received orders at noon not to leave camp under any circumstances. We did not know why, but had our ideas that there was something near hand. However, everything passed off quietly.

June:

1--I received my discharge. Sgt. J. O. Wilkinson carried me to Manila in the pony cart. I was busy pretty much all day getting my checks cashed which amounted, transportation and all, to \$350. I was attached to Co. C. for rations till I could get a boat. I spent the time looking around over the town.

5--I was busy nearly all day fixing up for my long journey to the States. I went on board at 3:00 and we pulled out at 6:30 p. m. on the ship Esmyralda. I had first class passage, but was not well the whole way to Hong Kong.

8--Arrived at Hong Kong at 7:00 in the morning and found that we would have to lay over till the 19th, so I put up at the Stag Hotel at \$3 per day. I did not like it, but it was the best I could do. I put in my time very pleasantly as this is a most interesting city.

9--It rained nearly all day and I kept in pretty close. I paid up my board till the 13th and got my ticket so I would be all ready to go as soon as the boat sailed.

11--My weight was 157. I weighed at Hong Kong. I visited the Peak which is one of the grandest scenes in the world. I went up on the electric tram.

12--Myself and four other fellows employed a Chinaman and his rickshaw and rode out about three miles to a summer resort and had ice cream.

June (continued):

- 12--(continued) Robert M. Smith bought the ice cream as it was his birthday. I enjoyed the trip very much.
- 13--At 10:00 a.m. I went on board the American Maru which was a Japanese ship. Speed 16 knots per hour. Sailed at 1:00 p.m.
- 14--Arrived in Amoy at 9:00 a.m. and sailed at 7:30 p.m. I did not go ashore there, but some of the boys went and said it was an awful dirty town, narrow streets, and boys running all over them.
- 15--I was sailing on the China Sea and it was raining so hard it seemed that there was also a sea above.
- 16--We were anchored near the mouth of the Yangtse River, waiting for the tide to go up the river so we could get near Shanghai and about 1:00 we sailed up the river near the city. After we were all examined by the quarantine doctor, several of the passengers went on shore to spend the night. I did not go for I was not feeling very well. Shanghai is in China, but it has English, French, and German sections.
- 17--The boys all came back and claimed to have had a fine time. I commenced to read The Double Event by Nat Gold. We sailed at 3:30 p.m.
- 18--I finished reading the novel and it was a daisy. The Y.M.C.A. boys all met at 4:00 p.m. and had a nice sing while sailing on the Pacific. We anchored just outside the harbor of Nagasaka at 8:30 p.m. near the Massacre Island where 500 missionaries had been killed.
- 19--We were all permitted to go on shore and I spent the biggest part of the day in the city seeing many curiosities. Nagasaka is in Japan. We pulled out about 7:30 p.m.
- 20--We were sailing through an inland sea for we were in sight of land most of the time. Small towns and villages were passed practically all the way. They were very interesting to us. I also commenced to read a novel named Marian Gray written by Mary J. Homes. We arrived in Kobi at 12:00 p.m.
- 21--We were all examined by the quarantine doctor and we were all permitted to go on shore. I did not go. We sailed at 5:00 p.m.

June (continued):

- 22--We had some very rough sea, sprays flying all over the top deck. It was a day of general uproar. We anchored in the bay of Yokohama at 4:00 p.m. We were examined by the quarantine doctor and one Chinaman was found sick with the Black Plague they claimed.
- 23--We were quarantined and were in sight of the snow-covered peak of Mt. Fuji. We were all taken to shore and given a good bath and all of our clothes were disinfected. Quarantine officer said we would have to remain there for seven days. Very bad indeed--it couldn't be helped.
- 24--We tried to content ourselves for a while but could find nothing much to do.
- 25--We were called on to fall in to be examined. We thought our time was going to be shortened some, but found it was not. At 6:00 p.m. we had services held by Mr. Lamar who is a missionary who has been in Japan 27 years.
- 26--I borrowed \$10 from Robert M. Smith for which I promised to pay in San Francisco. The day was spent without anyone getting sick.
- 27--I began reading a novel the title of which was His Wife's Judgment. We are to leave for Honolulu Saturday at 5:00 p.m. and we are all very anxious for that time to come and if nobody else takes the Bubonic Plague I guess we will sail at that time.
- 28--Rev. H. Luomis gave me a gospel chime book to remember him by.
- 29--Everything passed off lovely. We will sail tomorrow. I finished reading His Wife's Judgment.
- 30--We were all examined again and all was found in good condition. A quarantine flag came down at 5:00 p.m. and we were all allowed to go up to Yokohama.

July:

- 1--I went to the city for a few hours and had a very nice time. We left for Honolulu at 4:00 p.m. carrying 600 Japanese.
- 2--We were sailing on the Pacific waters which were tolerable rough. Some few were a bit seasick.
- 3--The waters were very rough. I was in bed most all day. I was a little seasick, I guess.
- 4--The waters were still rough. It being the 4th of July, we tried to enjoy ourselves the best we could. Mostly we thought of a good time coming.
- 5--The sea was very calm and everyone was feeling better.
- 6--I played checkers pretty much all day. We crossed the 180th meridian which set us back 24 hours. The number of my ticket is 1303.
- 8--The sea was very rough. At times the waves would nearly lap over the top of the ship.
- 9--Passed in sight of Bird Island which is nothing more than a big rock. I would suppose about 50 feet above the water.
- 10--We anchored in the bay at Honolulu and the doctors came out and put us under quarantine for four days.
- 11--I washed out some of my things and fished some for sharks. I caught one six or seven feet long, but he broke the line and got away. The water here in the bay was very thick with fish.
- 12--There was a boat came out with all kinds of fruit and tobacco and we enjoyed ourselves very good during that day eating fruits and chewing tobacco.
- 13-- Us soldiers, 41 in all, were presented with a lot of fine aples by a couple of ladies on board which we appreciated very much. We left Honolulu at 9:00 p.m. and we celebrated the departure with a loud cheer.
- 14--We passed the Nifrau Maru at 9:00 a.m. and we had a very nice sea.
- 15--Had a nice sea and all was well.

July (continued):

- 16--This was Sunday and it was a very nice day and we were all pleased to think that the next Sunday we would be on our native land. At 10:00 p.m. we passed a transport on its way to Manila.
- 17--We passed a sailboat. The sea was very nice.
- 18--It turned very cold. The sea was quite rough, but we could say that if nothing happened we would land tomorrow. In the afternoon, I was taken sick, aching all over. I was not able to eat any supper.
- 19--Was not any better, but ate a little breakfast. The sea was terribly rough. At noon we were 76 miles from shore and we went through the Golden Gate at 5:00 p.m. We were sent to Angel Island till morning.
- 20--The doctors reported two suspicious cases on board, but at 5:00 p.m. we went on shore. Myself and two other fellows put up in the Golden Eagle Hotel for a dollar a day.
- 21--I walked around over the city some and bought a pair of shoes for \$2. I got a shave and a haircut, took a bath, and cleaned up a little in general.
- 22-- I was not well. Had a headache and a hot fever and was in bed part of the day.
- 23--I was very sick. Went to a doctor and got some medicine.
- 24--Was feeling some better.
- 25--I bought my ticket. It cost \$64.50. The number 2715.
- 26--At six p.m. I was on the train, waiting for it to start. At 6:30 the train pulled out.
- 27--We passed several nice little towns and some very fine looking country.
- 28--We arrived at Ogden, Utah at 4:00 p.m. Left at 8:00 by way of Salt Lake City over the R. G.
- 29--Arrived in Denver at 11:45 a.m. Left at 1:40 p.m. over the Burlington Railroad.
- 30--Arrived in Kansas City, Missouri at 10:25 a.m. and remained there till 9:15 p.m.

July (continued):

31--Arrived at St. Louis at 7:00 a.m. Remained there till 8:20 when I pulled out for Cincinnati over the B&O. Arrived in Cincinnati at 6:00 p.m.

August:

1--Arrived at Oakdale at 4:00 a.m. Pulled out at 5:00 and arrived in Greensboro at 8:00 p.m. Stayed there all night.

2--At 5:15 p.m. I started for Mount Airy, arriving there at 8:15.

3-- I went over to Mount Airy, brought my trunk, and bought me a suit of clothes.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY MILITARY HISTORY RESEARCH COLLECTION  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013



USAMHRC

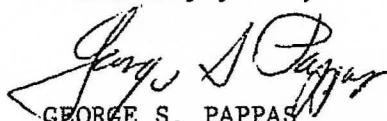
Dear Madam:

For the past year and a half we have been in touch with all the surviving Spanish-American War period veterans, requesting their donation of diaries, photographs, documents, letters, and other items related to their service between 1898 and 1907. Through this project, we have gathered the largest and most useful collection of research materials on the 1898-1907 period for the use of military and civilian historians, writers, and students. Not only are these materials safely preserved here at the US Army Military History Research Collection, but they are also carefully organized for research use by those writing on many Spanish-American War period subjects now and in the years to come.

This letter is being sent to all the ladies, who, like yourself, are widows of men who served in the Armed Forces of the United States during the Spanish-American War, Philippine Insurrection or Boxer Rebellion. From you we also are urgently seeking the donation or loan (for copying) of diaries, letters, photographs, documents, drawings, and other papers and items related to your late husband's service between 1898 and 1907. Materials sent to us will be included in our research files in the names of the veteran and the donor.

If you have materials related to your husband's Spanish-American War period service, please use the enclosed self-addressed envelope to let us know what these items are, if you will donate them, or if you will lend them to us for photocopying. If you have records, available, we would also like to know what unit your husband served in. Your assistance in this project is most earnestly requested, and will be deeply appreciated.

Faithfully yours,

  
GEORGE S. PAPPAS  
Colonel, US Army  
Director

Encl  
as

7110 Lory Lane  
Lanham, Maryland  
April 28, 1971

U.S. Army Military History  
Research Collection  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

Attn: Col. George S. Pappas

Dear Sir:

This is in response to your recent letter of inquiry addressed to my mother, Mrs. Charles W. Vaughn of Mount Airy, North Carolina.

Mother has asked that I send you a copy of my father's war diary which my husband and I transcribed and edited a number of years ago from the original.

If the enclosed recollections are of interest to you, please place them in your collection.

I remember that throughout his life, my father always retained the fondest memories of his 3 year enlistment in Co. H, 12th U.S. Infantry.

Sincerely yours,

(Mrs) Cleo Vaughn Winkler



*The United States of America  
honors the memory of*

CHARLES W. VAUGHN

*This certificate is awarded by a grateful  
nation in recognition of devoted and  
selfless consecration to the service  
of our country in the Armed Forces  
of the United States.*

*Lyndon B. Johnson*  
President of the United States