

Stories of the Victoria Cross: Told by Those who have Won it.

NO tales of heroism are more thrilling and exciting than the narratives of the exploits which have gained the coveted reward of the Victoria Cross ; and a story never has so much reality and vividness as when it comes firsthand from the performer of the deed. Accordingly, we have asked a number of the heroes of the Victoria Cross—a truly noble army—to relate in their own language how they came to win the most glorious decoration open to a soldier, the plain bronze cross “For Valour.” The narratives which follow require no further introduction, and will, we think, be found to possess an interest which is all their own—the interest and impression of reality.

SERGEANT ABLETT.

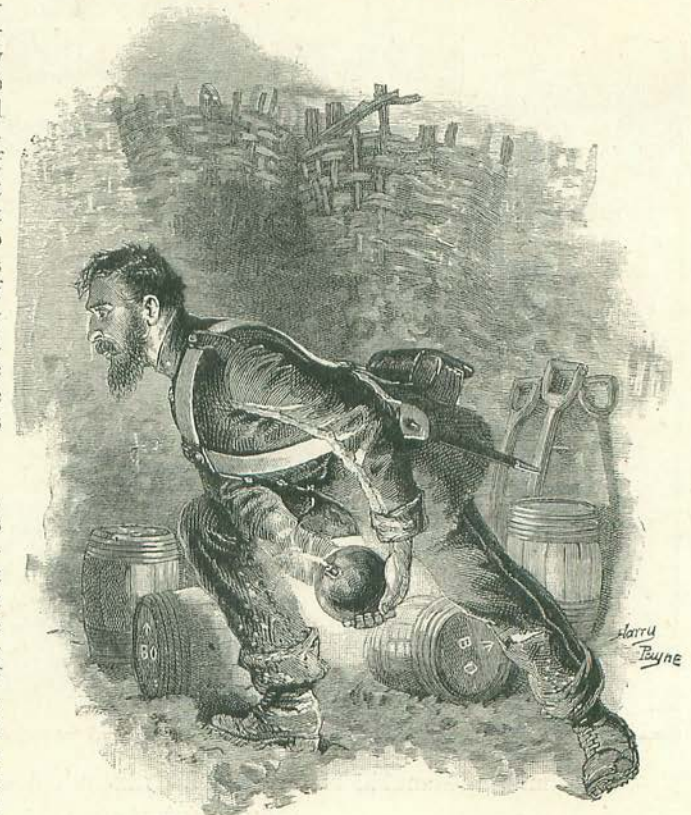
One of the most gallant acts which can be conceived is the seizing a live shell and casting it away, so as to prevent mischief from its explosion. A second's delay may be fatal, and the man who picks up the shell cannot tell whether the second in question will be allowed him. If it bursts in his hands it means certain death. Not only the greatest, but also the promptest, courage is needed for such an act of courage. Among the few who have performed such a feat is Sergeant Ablett, late Grenadier Guards, whose own modest account is as follows :—

On the 2nd September, 1854, when in the trenches before Sebastopol, the sentries shouted “Look out there !” a shell coming right in the trenches at the same moment and dropping amongst some barrels of ammunition. I at once pulled it from them. It ran between my legs, and I then picked it up and threw it out of the trench ; it burst as it touched the ground.

From the force of it I fell, and was covered by its explosion with gravel and dirt.

Sergeant Baker and others picked me up, and asked if I was hurt. I said, “No ; but I have had a good shaking.” There was a great number in the trenches at the time, but I am glad to say no one was hurt. The Sergeant reported the circumstances to the officer in charge.

On coming off duty I was taken before the commanding officer, and promoted to the rank of Corporal, and then Sergeant. He also presented me with a silk necktie made by her most gracious Majesty. I was at the battles of Alma, Balaclava, Inkerman, and the capture of Sebastopol after eleven months' siege. This is all I think I need say as to myself and the Victoria Cross. My likeness is to be found in Victoria Cross Picture Gallery, Crystal Palace, and Alexandra Palace.



“I THREW IT OUT OF THE TRENCH.”

MAJOR JOHN BERRYMAN.

Among those who won the Victoria Cross at Balaclava none gained it more worthily than Major John Berryman, who served in the Crimea as Troop-Sergeant Major in the 17th Lancers. This is how Major Berryman describes the charge of the Light Brigade :—

“Gallop!” was the order as the firing became general. And here a discharge from the battery in our front, whose guns were doubly shotted, first with shot or shell, and then with case, swept away Captain Winter and the whole division on my right. The gap was noticed by Captain Morris, who gave the order, “Right incline,” but a warning voice came from my coverer in the rear rank (Corporal John Penn), “Keep straight on, Jack; keep straight on.” He saw what I did not, that we were opposite the intervals of the guns, and thus we escaped, for the next round must have swept us into eternity. My attention here was attracted to James Melrose, a Shakespearian reciter, calling out, “What man here would ask another man from England?” Poor fellow, they were the last words he spoke, for the next round from the guns killed him and many others. We were then so close to the guns that the report rang through my head, and I felt that I was quite deaf for a time. It was this round that broke my mare’s off hind leg, and caused her to stop instantly. I felt that I was hit, but not till I dismounted. Seeing that the mare’s leg was broken, I debated in my own mind whether to shoot her or not, when Captain Webb came up to me, and asked me, was I wounded? I replied, “Only slightly, I thought, in the leg, but that my horse was shot.” I then asked, “Are you hurt, sir?” He said that he was, and in the leg, too; what had he better do? “Keep to your horse, sir, and get back as far as you can.” He turned, and rode back. I now caught a loose horse, and got on to his back, but he fell directly, the brass of the breast-plate having been driven into his chest. Seeing that there was no hope of my joining the regiment in the *mêlée*, and the 11th Hussars being close upon me, I moved a little to the right, so as to pass through the interval between the squadrons. Both squadrons closed in a little, and let me pass through. I well remember that Sergeant Gutteridge was the right guide of the 2nd squadron. Finding that Captain Webb

had halted, I ran to him, and on inquiries found that his wound was so painful that he could not ride any further. Lieutenant George Smith, of my own regiment, coming by, I got him to stand at the horse’s head whilst I lifted the captain off. Having accomplished this, I assisted Smith to mount Webb’s horse, and ride for a stretcher, taking notice where we were. By this time the Russians had got back to their guns, and re-opened fire. I saw six men of my own regiment get together to recount to each other their escapes. Seeing their danger, I called to them to separate, but too late, for a shell dropped amongst them, and I don’t think one escaped alive. Hearing me call to these men, Captain Webb asked what I thought the Russians would do?

“They are sure to pursue, sir, unless the Heavy Brigade comes down.”

“Then you had better consult your own safety, and leave me.”

“Oh no, sir, I shall not leave you now.”

“Perhaps they will only take me prisoner.”

“If they do, sir, we will go together.”

“Don’t mind me, look to yourself.”

“All right, sir; only we will go together, whatever happens.”

Just at this time I saw Sergeant Farrell coming by. I called to him. He asked, “Who is it?” When told, he came over. I said, “We must get Captain Webb out of this, for we shall be pursued.”

He agreeing, we made a chair of our hands, lifted the Captain up, and found that we could carry him with comparative ease. We had got about 200 yards in this manner, when the Captain complained that his leg was very painful. A private of the 13th being near, Malone, I asked him would he be good enough to support Captain Webb’s legs, until we could procure a stretcher? He did so, and several of the officers passed us. Sir G. Wombwell said, “What is the matter, Peck?” (Captain Webb’s nickname.)

“Hit in the leg, old fellow. How did you escape?”

“Well, I was unhorsed and taken prisoner, but when the second line came down, in the confusion I got away, and, seizing the first horse I could, I got away, and I find that it is Morris’s.”

Sir W. Gordon made the same inquiry, and got the same answer. He had a very nasty cut on the head, and blood was then running down his face. He was carrying

his dress cap in his hand. We had now reached the rear of the Greys, and I procured a stretcher from two Infantry band boys, and a young officer of the "Greys" gave me a "tourniquet," saying that he did not know how to apply it, but perhaps I might. I put it on the right thigh, and screwed it up. Doctor Kendal came here, and I pointed out what I had done, and asked was it right?

"Ah! and you sergeant?" looking at the stripes on my arm.

"Yes."

"Ah! If you were in French service, I would make you an officer on the spot." Then, standing in his stirrups and extending his right hand, said:—

"Oh! it was grand, it was *magnifique*, but it is not war, it is not war."

This officer was General Morris. We re-



"I LIFTED THE CAPTAIN OFF."

"I could not have done it better myself; bring him along."

I and Farrell now raised the stretcher and carried it for about fifty yards, and again set it down. I was made aware of an officer of the Chasseurs d'Afrique being on my left by his placing his hand upon my shoulder. I turned and saluted. Pointing to Captain Webb, but looking at me, he said:—

"Your officer?"

"Yes."

sumed our patient, and got to the doctors (Massy and Kendal). I saw the boot cut off and the nature of the wound, the right shin bone being shattered. Farrell made an exclamation, and I was motioned to take him away. I told him that I should go and see the end of it. He said that he was too exhausted to do any more. Finding a horse in the lines, I mounted him, although the animal belonged to the 4th Light Dragoons, and thus dropped in behind

the Duke of Cambridge, and heard what passed. The Duke, speaking to Lord Cardigan, said :—

“Cardigan, where's the Brigade, then?”

“There,” said Cardigan.

“Is that all of them? You have lost the finest Brigade that ever left the shores of England.”

A little further on he spoke to Captain Godfrey Morgan (Lord Tredegar) :—

“Morgan, where's the regiment, then?”

“Your Royal Highness, that is all of them!”

“My poor regiment, my poor regiment!”

I now took my place in the ranks, and, in numbering off, being on the extreme left, I counted 22. We fell back during the night, and, being dismounted, I, with my servant, was left behind. I suffered intensely with my head, and got a napkin and tied it as tightly as possible round my brows. I also had time to examine my wound, which was inside the calf of my leg. A small piece about the size of a shilling had been cut clean out of my leg; but except that the blood had run into my boots, I felt but very little inconvenience from it. Cold

water bandage was all I used; but, unfortunately, scurvy got to it, and it was a long time healing.

PRIVATE WILLIAM NORMAN.

Private William Norman, of the 7th Regiment, in a true modest and soldier-like style thus describes the exploit which won for him the Victoria Cross :—

On the night of December 19, 1854, I was placed on single sentry at some distance in front of the advanced sentries of an out-lying picquet in the White Horse Ravine—a post of much danger, and requiring great vigilance. The Russian picquet was posted 300 yards in our front. Three Russian soldiers advanced under cover of the brushwood for the purpose of reconnoitring. I immediately fired my rifle, which was the signal of alarm, and then jumped into the trench almost on the top of the three Russians, two of whom I succeeded single-handed in taking prisoners, and marched them into our lines, the other one having fled back to the Russian lines.

My feelings I can hardly describe, as what I did was on the spur of the moment. But



“I JUMPED ALMOST ON THE TOP OF THREE RUSSIANS.”

it was no doubt the means of saving our position.

PRIVATE JAMES DAVIS.

The attack on Fort Ruhiya on April 15, 1858, gave an opportunity for much display of courage and devotion. Among those who conspicuously distinguished themselves was Private James Davis, of the 42nd Highlanders. This gallant soldier, who had previously served throughout the Crimean War, also saw much fighting during the Indian Mutiny, and for his conduct at Fort Ruhiya was awarded the Victoria Cross.

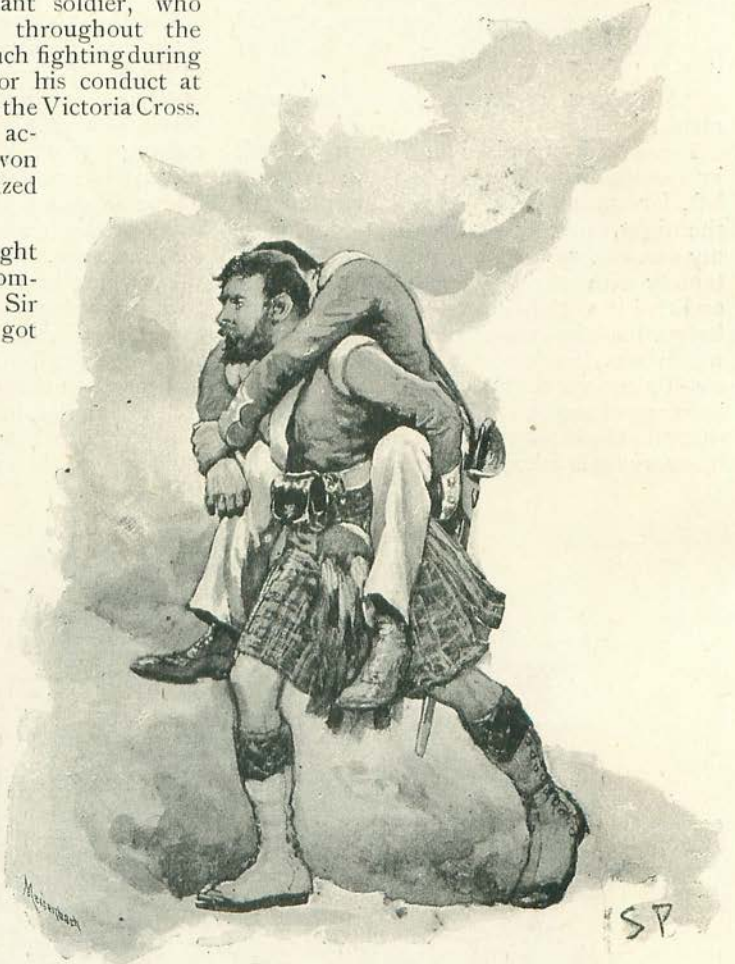
The following is his account of the feat which won for him the much-prized honour :—

I belonged to the Light Company, under the command of Captain (now Sir John) Macleod. We got orders to lie down under some trees for a short time. Two Engineer officers came up and asked for some men to come with them to see where they could make a breach with the artillery. I was one who went. There was a small garden ditch under the walls of the fort, not high enough to cover our heads. After a short time the officers left. I was on the right of the ditch with Lieut. Alfred Jennings Bramley, of Tunbridge Wells, as brave a young officer as ever drew sword, and saw a large force coming out to cut us off. He said, "Try and shoot the leader.

I will run down and tell Macleod." The leader was shot, by whom I don't know. I never took credit for shooting anyone. Before poor Bramley got down he was shot in the temple, but not dead. He died during the night.

The captain said, "We can't leave him. Who will take him out?" I said, "I will." The fort was firing hard all the time. I said, "Eadie, give me a hand. Put him on

my back." As he was doing so he was shot in the back of the head, knocking me down, his blood running down my back. A man crawled over and pulled Eadie off. At this time I thought I was shot, the warm blood running down my back. The captain said, "We can't lose any more lives. Are you wounded?" I said, "I don't think I am." He said, "Will you still take him



"I RAN ACROSS THE OPEN SPACE."

out?" I said, "Yes." He was such a brave young fellow that the company all loved him. I got him on my back again, and told him to take me tight round the neck. I ran across the open space. During the time his watch fell out; I did not like to leave it, so I sat down and picked it up, all the time under a heavy fire. There was a man of the name of Dods, who came and took him off my back. I went back again

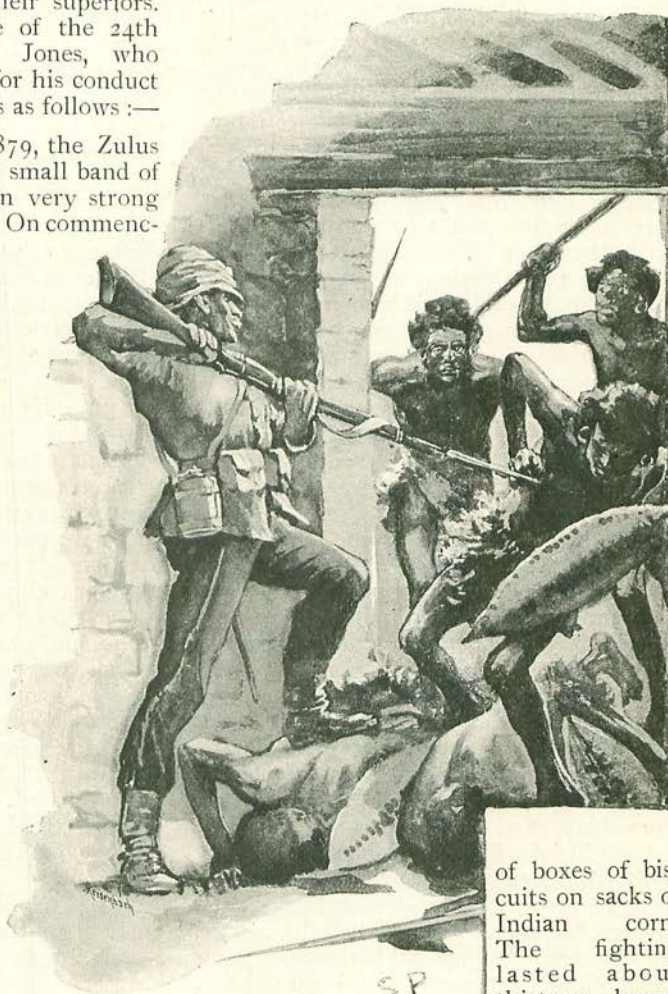
through the same fire, and helped to take up the man Eadie. Then I returned for my rifle, and firing a volley we all left. It was a badly managed affair altogether.

PRIVATE ROBERT JONES.

At the gallant defence of the fort at Rorke's Drift, every man fought like a hero, but some were fortunate enough to attract the particular attention of their superiors. Among these was a private of the 24th Regiment, named Robert Jones, who obtained the Victoria Cross for his conduct on the occasion. His story is as follows:—

"On the 22nd January, 1879, the Zulus attacked us, we being only a small band of English soldiers and they in very strong and overwhelming numbers. On commencing fighting, I was one of the soldiers who were in the hospital to protect it. I and another soldier of the name of William Jones were on duty at the back of the hospital, trying to defeat and drive back the rebels, and doing our endeavours to convey the wounded and sick soldiers out through a hole in the wall, so that they might reach in safety the small band of men in the square. On retiring from one room into another, after taking a wounded man by the name of Mayer, belonging to the volunteers, to join William Jones, I found a crowd in front of the hospital and coming into the doorway. I said to my companion, 'They are on top of us,' and sprang to one side of the doorway. There we crossed our bayonets, and as fast as they came up to the doorway we bayoneted them, until the doorway was nearly filled with dead and wounded Zulus. In the meanwhile, I had three assegai wounds, two in the right side and one in the left of my body. We did not know of anyone being in the hospital, only the Zulus, and then after a long time of fighting at the door, we made the enemy retire, and then we made our escape out of the building. Just as I got outside, the roof fell in—a complete mass of flames and

fire. I had to cross a space of about twenty or thirty yards from the ruins of the hospital to the leagued company where they were keeping the enemy at bay. While I was crossing the front of the square, the bullets were whishing past me from every direction. When I got in, the enemy came on closer and closer, until they were close to the outer side of our laager, which was made up



"FIGHTING AT THE DOOR."

of boxes of biscuits on sacks of Indian corn. The fighting lasted about thirteen hours, or better. As to my feelings at

the time, they were that I was certain that if we did not kill them they would kill us, and after a few minutes' fighting I did not mind it more than at the present time; my thought was only to fight as an English soldier ought to for his most gracious Sovereign, Queen Victoria, and for the benefit of old England."

GUNNER JAMES COLLIS.

Gunner James Collis tells his story in these words:—

On the twenty-seventh of July, 1880, we were encamped at Khushk-i-Nakhud, in Afghanistan. At 4 a.m. that day we—Battery E, Battery B Brigade—marched with the rest of the force on Maiwand to meet Ayub Khan. About 9 a.m. we came in sight of him in position under the hills. We were on the open plain. Major Henry Blackwood, commanding my battery, gave the order "Action front." I was a limber gunner that day. We began firing with common shell from the right of the battery. After we had fired a few rounds, their artillery replied. The first shot struck the near wheel of my gun, killing a gunner, wounding another, and Lieutenant Fowler.

The limber box upon my gun was smashed by a shell which also killed the wheel horses, but did not touch the driver. Several riding horses of my battery were killed, and a good deal of damage done to guns and carriage. Four gunners and Sergeant Wood, the No. 1 of my gun, were killed, and two men wounded, leaving only three men to work the gun. I took Sergeant Wood's place.

At about 1.30 p.m., some of Jacob's Rifles, who were lying down about ten yards in rear of the trail, began to be panic-stricken, and crowded round our guns and carriages, some getting under the carriages. Three got under my gun. We tried to drive them away, but it was no use. About that time we ceased firing a little, the enemy having set the example. During that pause the enemy on the left got pretty close. To check them, General Nuttall formed up the 3rd Bombay Cavalry and the 3rd Scinde Horse to charge. Gunner Smith of my gun, seeing what was going to be done, mounted his horse and joined the cavalry. General Nuttall led the charge, Gunner Smith being at his side. After going about 300 yards, the enemy being about 200 yards off, the whole line, with the exception of the General, the European officers, and Gunner Smith, turned tail, forming up when in line with the guns. General Nuttall with the officers, finding themselves deserted, returned, General Nuttall actually crying from mortification. Gunner Smith dashed on alone, and was cut down.

About 4 p.m. a large body of the enemy's infantry charged the left of the battery, the

men of the left division 5 and 6 being compelled to use their handspikes and charge staves to keep them off. Major Blackwood on this ordered the battery to limber up and retire. When Lieutenant Maclaine heard this order he said, as I was afterwards informed, "Limber up be damned! Give them another round." We limbered up and retired at a gallop about 2,000 yards. In the meantime Major Blackwood remained behind with Lieutenant Maclaine's guns and was killed, Lieutenant Osborne by his side, Lieutenant Maclaine fighting to the last. At length, seeing no use in stopping, he galloped after us—we had got separated from the right division—and called out to us, only two guns, "Action, rear." We fired two rounds with shrapnel. Captain Slade, who had been in temporary command of the smoothbores, finding Major Blackwood dead, came up with his smoothbores and took command of all the guns. Colonel Malcolmson a moment later ordered Captain Slade to retire, saying, "Captain Slade, if you and the Lieutenant keep those two guns, he will lose them the same as he has lost his own." We then limbered up and went off. Just then a shell burst open our treasure chest. Many of the troops and camp followers stopped to pick up the money and were overtaken and killed. Just after that some of the enemy's cavalry caught up the guns. One of them wounded me on the left eyebrow as he passed. He wheeled round and came at me again; I took my carbine, waited till he was within four or five yards, and let drive, hitting him on the chest and knocking him off his horse. As he fell his money fell out of his turban, and Trumpeter Jones jumped off his horse and picked it up. He escaped, and is now corporal R.H.A., and wears the Distinguished Service medal for his conduct at Maiwand.

It was now beginning to get dusk, and I got off to walk by the side of my gun. Seeing a village close by, and some men at a well, I followed them and got some water. Just as we got to the well the enemy charged and drove us off, killing a good many.

On my return I missed my gun, and picked up with No. 2, which I stuck to till I reached Candahar. It was now dark, and we were with a stream of men of all regiments, camp followers, camels, and waggons. Going along I saw a lot of sick and wounded lying by the side of the road, and I picked them up and put them on the gun and

limber. I had about ten altogether; they were all 66th men, and a colonel whose name I do not know and never heard of.

We had been fighting all day, marching all night and next day without a bit of food or a drink of water. I did not feel it so much, as I was so occupied, but I saw several dying by the roadside from thirst and fatigue. About four in the afternoon of the 28th, we came to a place called Kokeran, $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Candahar; I saw a village where I could get water for the men who were with me. I went off and brought the water back and the men with me. On going to

saddle. I shot one horse and two men. After firing about thirty-five rounds General Nuttall came up with some native cavalry, and drove them off. When I first saw the enemy they were about 300 yards off, when they left they had got 150 yards. General Nuttall asked me my name, saying, "You're a gallant young man, what is your name?" I said, "Gunner Collis, of E. of B, R.H.A." He entered it into a pocket-book and rode off. I then followed up my gun, which I found some 500 yards distant by the side of a river. The enemy's fire, which had been going on all the way from Mai-



"I TOOK MY CARBINE AND LET DRIVE."

the village I saw Lieutenant Maclaine mounted; when I came back I saw two horses without a rider. I then went again for more water. I was about 150 yards from the gun when I saw ten or twelve of the enemy's cavalry coming on at a slow pace towards the gun. The gun went off and I lay down and allowed the gun to pass me, and began firing with a rifle which I had got from a wounded 66th man, in order to draw their fire upon myself, and stop them from going forward with the gun. I was concealed in a little nullah, and I fancy they thought there was more than one man, for they stopped and fired at me from the

wand, now became hotter, the surrounding hills being full of them. Some of the garrison of Candahar met us about four miles from the Fort and escorted us in. I arrived about seven p.m.

On the occasion of the sortie from Candahar in the middle of August, 1880, the fighting was going on in the village situated about 200 yards from the edge of the ditch of the fort. I was standing by my gun on the rampart, when General Primrose, General Nuttall, and Colonel Burnet came up. I heard them talking about sending a message to General Dewberry,

who had succeeded General Brooke, who had been killed. I spoke to Colonel Burnet and said that I would take the message over the wall. After a little hesitation General Primrose gave me a note. I was let down a distance of about thirty or forty feet to the bottom of the ditch by a rope. When half down I was fired at but not hit by matchlock men about 250 yards distant, and I scrambled up the open side of the ditch and ran across to the village. I found the officer commanding in the middle of it, and fighting going on all round. I delivered the

note and returned. When half way up the rope I was fired at again, one bullet cutting off the heel of my left boot. General Primrose congratulated me and Colonel Burnet gave me a drop out of his flask, for what with not having recovered from the fatigues of Maiwand and the exertion and excitement of this trip, I was a bit faint.

I was recommended for the Victoria Cross without my knowledge about September 10, by Sir F. Roberts, on the report of General Nuttall and Colonel Burnet. It was given to me July 28, 1881.

(To be continued.)



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DEPUTY INSPECTOR-GENERAL J. JEE,
C.B., V.C.



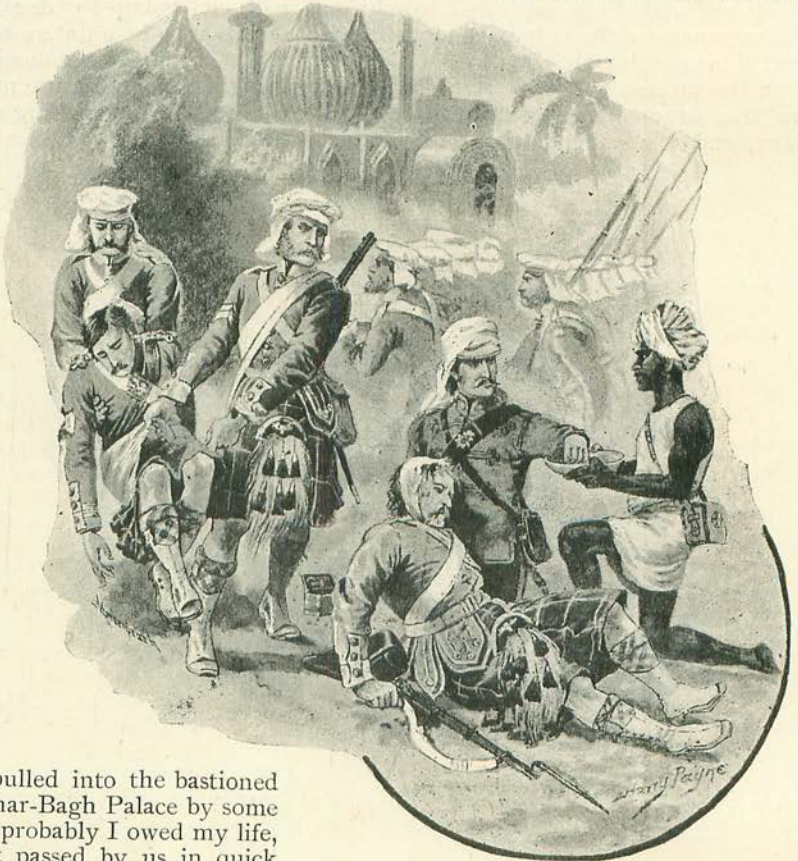
THOUGH military surgeons are technically non-combatants, yet practically they are as much exposed to peril as other officers, and frequently have to perform work demanding the greatest care and calmness under the most disturbing dangers. In gallantry and devotion to duty no other class of soldiers has surpassed them. The following is the story of the exploit of one of these brave men, Surgeon Jee, as told in his own words:—

On the advance of the force to relieve the garrison of Lucknow, under Generals Havelock and Outram, my regiment, the 78th Highlanders, led the way. General Outram's order on leaving Lucknow ran as follows:—"I have selected the 78th Highlanders for covering the retreat of the force; they had the post of honour on the advance, and none are more worthy of the post of honour on leaving it."

There was very hard fighting from the Alum Bagh till we arrived close to Lucknow, when I was told an officer was severely wounded. I dismounted from my horse to attend him, and found he was dead. At that moment a very rapid ordnance and musketry fire commenced close to us, and I was pulled into the bastioned gateway of the Char-Bagh Palace by some soldiers, to whom probably I owed my life, as the round shot passed by us in quick

succession. Captain Havelock (now Sir Henry Havelock) then rode up to me, with a bullet hole through his topee, and said, "We have taken that position, at all events, at the point of the bayonet." That proved to be the bridge over the canal at the entrance of Lucknow, defended by heavy guns, which had evidently been well served, judging by the numbers of dead lying around them.

When the main body of the force arrived and crossed to the other side of the bridge, the Generals heard that the streets in the city, leading direct to the Residency, were entrenched and barricaded. It was, therefore, decided to take the outside route by the very narrow road to the right by the canal, leaving the 78th to hold the position until ordered to advance after the column. Captains Drummond-Hay and Lockhart were then ordered to proceed with their companies to a pagoda some little distance



SURGEON JEE DRESSING THE WOUNDED.

up the street leading from the bridge. All was pretty quiet for some time, and the force had got some distance away, when a message was sent down to the Colonel by Captain Drummond-Hay that the enemy were coming down upon them in great force with two guns. The Colonel sent up an order for them to charge them, which they did, and spiked the guns and brought them down and threw them into the canal, all the while hotly pursued by the enemy. I then got between twenty and thirty wounded men in a few minutes.

I was then informed that the regiment had disappeared round the corner of the canal after the force, and that we should all be killed if I remained to dress the wounded upon whom I was engaged, as the enemy was firing at us from the corner of the street. So I sent to the Colonel for men to carry the wounded on their backs till we came up with the dhoolies. I was thus enabled to save them for a short time. It appeared that Captain Havelock, the Assistant Adjutant-General, had been sent back by his father to order the 78th to follow the force, when he was badly wounded in his arm. Luckily I came across two dhoolies, in which I placed him and a lieutenant of the 78th, who was mortally wounded. The rest I put into sick-carts drawn by six bullocks; but shortly after all of them were massacred within sight of us, as unfortunately a native hackery containing round shot fell over, and completely blocked the road. One poor fellow, Private Farmer, held his watch out from one of the carts, asking his comrades to come and take it rather than the enemy should get it, but no one responded, as the danger was too great.

One man had his lower jaw blown off by a round shot, whom I am seen dressing in my V.C. picture at the Crystal Palace.

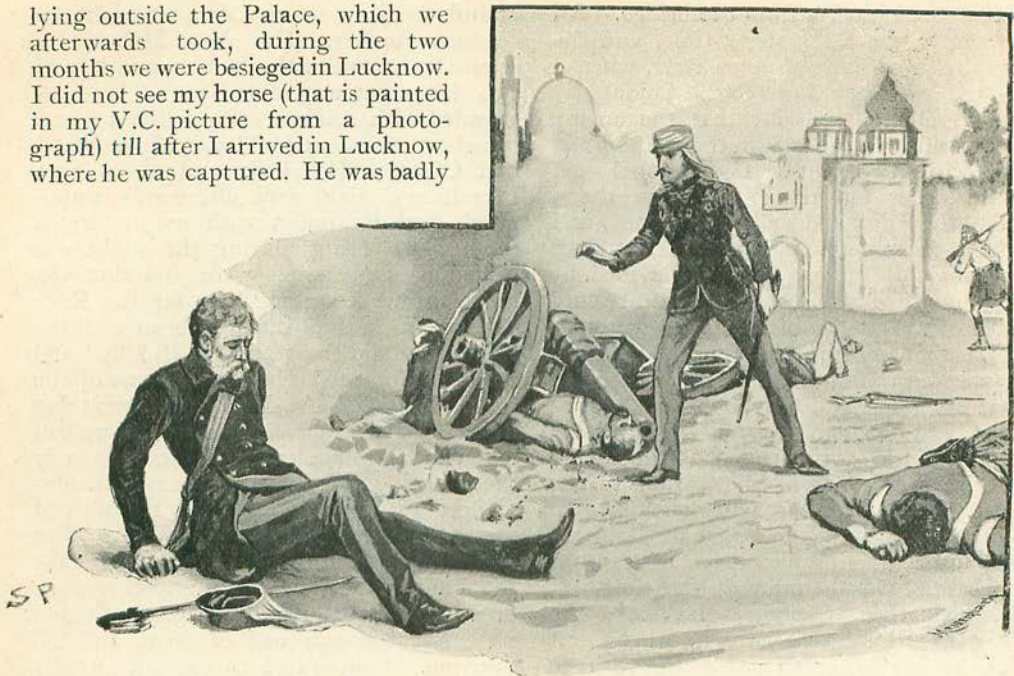
When we reached the force Captain Halliburton, 78th Highlanders (afterwards killed in Lucknow), took charge of the wounded with his company. We lost our way in the city, and were led by a guide, who showed us the way to the Residency into the enemy's battery, where we suffered considerable loss. After this we wandered about the suburbs of the city, under an awful cannonading and shelling from the opposite side of the River Goomtee, being fired at from loopholes in the houses of the streets when we entered them, from which parties of natives, clothed in white, often issued. We took refuge in the Mote-

Mahul, as it was too late at night to advance further. The Mote-Mahul is a square courtyard with sheds round it, and two large gateway entrances. This was crowded with soldiers, camp followers, and camels, so that you could scarcely move. I had Captain Havelock and Lieutenant Woodhouse (right arm afterwards amputated), 84th Regiment, with me under the shed. The firing during the night was deafening, and gongs were sounding the hour, and we knew not how far the Residency was. Some who had been with the main body said the 78th were all killed, and they could not tell what had become of the rest of the force. At daylight the next day Brigadier Cooper gave us some tea, as we had taken nothing since leaving Alum Bagh early the morning before. Our men then commenced making loopholes in the wall of the shed to shoot the enemy on the other side, and I heard them told not to make too many or they would be shooting some of us, and soon afterwards Brigadier Cooper was shot through one of them, and fell over me. I often had to cross a gateway that was being raked up by bullets, to dress the wounded of both the artillery and my own men, against the remonstrances of my apothecary, Mr. de Soura, and others.

I then volunteered to attempt to get the wounded into the Residency, and was told by Captain Halliburton, if I succeeded, to tell General Outram to send him reinforcements or they would all be killed and the guns lost. I soon came across Colonel Campbell, wounded in the leg (afterwards amputated in Lucknow, and he died), and I got one of his men to carry him on his back (who would have been recommended for the V.C. if he could have been found, but he was supposed to have been killed). I then wandered on, and had to cross a shallow stream under fire of the guns of the extensive Palace of the Kaiser Bagh, where the enemy were said to have 20,000 men. I was then hailed by an European sentry at the gate of a very high wall, which I had the unpleasant feeling was the Kaiser Bagh, and that I was on the wrong road, but to my great relief he told me it led to the Residency, and that I must keep well under the wall on the way to it, to avoid the firing that was going on. On arriving at the Residency I delivered my message to General Havelock, who congratulated me on my escape, as I was reported killed.

Of course I lost a great many of my wounded, and one could see their skeletons

lying outside the Palace, which we afterwards took, during the two months we were besieged in Lucknow. I did not see my horse (that is painted in my V.C. picture from a photograph) till after I arrived in Lucknow, where he was captured. He was badly



"I CAME ACROSS COLONEL CAMPBELL."

wounded by a large slug or bolt about two inches long (which I have now) entering deeply on the side of the chest, and which was afterwards found most difficult to extract with bullet forceps. Yet the horse lived to aid Outram's relief outside Lucknow, and afterwards was sold as a very valuable charger for £160.

LANCE-CORPORAL WILLIAM GOATE.

The following account, written by himself, of the military career of William Goate, and of the heroic act of devotion for which he was rewarded with the V.C., speaks for itself and needs no introduction:—

My father died when I was only five years old, and left mother with a family of eleven of us, so as I grew up I had to work in the fields till I was big enough to mind horses. Then after a bit I got tired of the country, although it was a pretty village in Norfolk, called Tritton, close to Norwich; so I thought I would go to Norwich and get a job as a groom, which I did, and stopped till I was 18. Then I thought I would like another change, so up to London I went, and I had a wish to be a soldier. I was a smart lad and fresh-looking, so I went to Westminster in November, 1853, and enlisted in the 9th Lancers, and being a

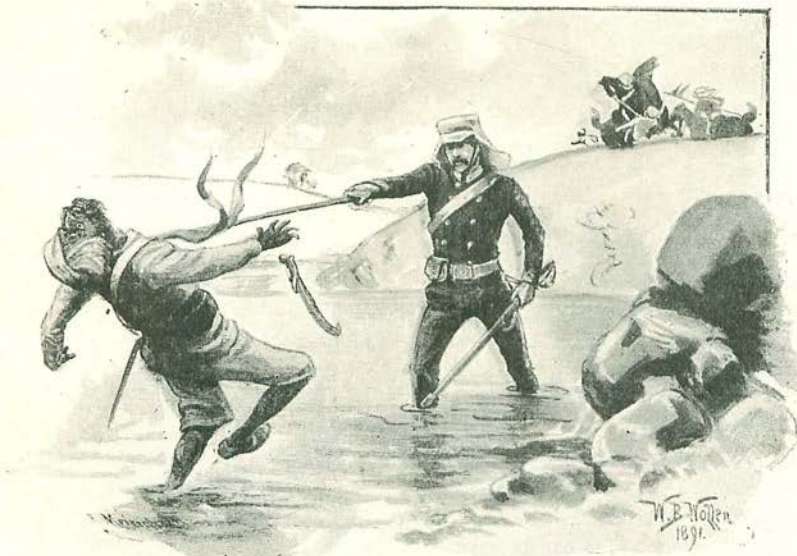
groom I was quite at home in a cavalry regiment; and I confess to being proud of our gay uniform and fluttering pennons. Well, after serving four years I was destined to ride in many a wild charge and see men and horses go down like ninepins, but I never thought of danger. When we got the order to charge, away we went determined to win, and I can tell you it must always be a terrible sight for any troops, let alone Sepoys, to see a regiment of cavalry sweeping down upon them.

Our fighting began at Delhi. We were at Umballa when the Mutiny broke out, and we were ordered to join in the operations against Delhi. I was present at the siege and capture of that city. I will tell you of a little adventure of my own at this time. Before the city was taken I was on despatch duty at an advanced post with orders to fetch reinforcements when the enemy came out. One day I saw six men trying to steal round by the river into our camp. Believing them to be spies, I asked the officer in charge of the picket to allow me and two men to go and ascertain what their intentions were. He gave us leave. We had a very difficult job to get down to the riverside on account of the rocks, and when we got up to the men they showed fight. We shot three of them with our

pistols—one each. Being on horseback we then attacked them with the lance. One daring fellow struck at me, and I couldn't get at him. He slightly wounded my horse and then made a run for the river. I jumped from my horse, and, going into the water after him, ran him through with my lance. Meanwhile, the other two of my companions had settled the two remaining men. All this while a heavy fire had played on us from the enemy's battery. We had now to ride for our lives. On getting back to the camp, the officer in command sent me to the camp with a note to the Colonel of the regiment, who made me a lance-corporal then and there.

Lucknow, having dismounted in the presence of the enemy and taken up the body of Major Percy Smith, 2nd Dragoon Guards, which I attempted to bring off the field, and after being obliged to relinquish it, being surrounded by the enemy's cavalry, going a second time, under a heavy fire, to recover the body, for which I received the Victoria Cross.

I will try and describe the fight, and what I saw of it. The enemy appeared in great force on the race-course outside Lucknow, and the 9th Lancers, the 2nd Dragoon Guards, and two native cavalry regiments were ordered to charge. The brigade swept on in grand style, and clashed into the enemy. We had a fierce hand-to-hand fight; but our troops behaved splendidly, and at last we broke them up. Then we were obliged to retire under a heavy fire. As we did so Major Smith, of the Dragoons, was shot through the body, and fell from his horse. Failing to catch him, I sprang to the ground, and, throwing the bridle-rein over my arm, raised the Major on to



"I RAN HIM THROUGH WITH MY LANCE."

I might say I was two years in the saddle, almost continuously fighting. I was with Sir Colin when he retook Cawnpore from the Gwalior rebels. We went to the aid of General Wyndham, who had been repulsed. We crossed the bridge of boats under a heavy fire, but forced our way in. As soon as our brave leader got his men in position, he carried everything before him. We could still see traces of Nana Sahib's atrocity in June, and every soldier vowed vengeance. The affair that I was in when I gained my Victoria Cross was before Lucknow, the second time. Early in 1858 the rebels had strongly fortified the place, and it became necessary for Sir Colin to take it. Our regiment had some hot work. It was on March 6 that I won the Cross, in action at

my shoulder; in this manner I ran alongside of my horse for some hundreds of yards, until I saw the enemy's cavalry close upon me. Clearly I couldn't get away with my burden, so I determined to do what I could for myself.

Springing into my saddle, I shot the first Sepoy who charged, and with my empty pistol felled another. This gave me time to draw my sword, my lance having been left on the field. The Sepoys were now round me cutting and hacking, but I managed to parry every slash and deliver many a fatal thrust. It was parry and thrust, thrust and parry all through, and I cannot tell you how many saddles I must have emptied. The enemy didn't seem to know how to parry.

Taking advantage of this, I settled accounts with a jolly lot. I was determined not to be taken alive. At last some of the Lancers saw me and came to my rescue. Thinking the major might still be alive, I went again to rescue him, but it was not until the enemy's forces were driven back that we got his body.

After the action, General Sir Colin Campbell, General Sir Hope Grant, and some of the cavalry officers shook hands with me and complimented me.

In regard to the sword and lance, I certainly prefer the lance; the lance is so keen, it goes through a man before he

knows it. I was always very careful never to let a swordsman get under my lance, and in fighting with cavalry I made full use of the pennon to baffle an enemy's horse.

The weapons of troops on active service are made as keen as razors, and it was a common thing during the Mutiny to see a party of soldiers under the shade of a great tree waiting their turn to get their blades sharpened and the dints removed, ready for the next fight with the rebels. Our gallant little army was like a ship cleaving its way through the sea, for wherever we went, the enemy, like the waters, closed in behind.

(To be continued.)



LANCE-CORPORAL GOATE WINNING THE V.C.

Stories of the Victoria Cross : Told by Those who have Won it

PRIVATE W. JONES.



NO action in recent warfare is better known than that of the heroic defence of Rorke's Drift. We are here able to give the narratives of two soldiers who gained their

Cross for bravery in that day's gallant

and with such material as we had at hand formed a slight barricade around us ; this was formed of sacks of mealies (Indian corn), boxes of sea biscuits, &c., of which we had a good supply. We also loopholed the walls of the two buildings. We had scarcely completed our work when the Zulus were down upon us.

The hospital being the first building in



PRIVATE JONES DEFENDING THE HOSPITAL DOOR.

struggle. Here, first, is Private Jones's account of the affair :—

About half-past three o'clock on the afternoon of the 22nd of January, 1879, a mounted man came galloping into our little encampment and told us that the Zulus had taken the camp at Isandlwana, and were making their way towards us at Rorke's Drift. We at once set to work,

their line of attack, they surrounded it. Having twenty-three sick men in the rooms, our officer, Lieutenant Bromhead, ordered six men into the hospital, myself being one of the number, to defend and rescue the sick from it. We had scarcely taken our post in the hospital when two out of our number were killed in the front or verandah, leaving four of us to hold the place and get

out the sick. This was done by two (viz., Privates Hook and Williams) carrying the sick and passing them into the barricade through a small window, while myself (William Jones) and my comrade (Robert Jones) contended each door at the point of the bayonet, our ammunition being expended. The Zulus, finding they could not force us from the doors, now set fire to the thatched roof. This was the most horrifying time. What with the blood-thirsty yells of the Zulus, the cries of the sick that remained, and the burning thatch falling about our heads, it was sickening. Still we kept them at bay until twenty out of the twenty-three sick men were passed into the barricade under the fire of our own men; the other three sick I have every reason to believe must have wandered back into one of the rooms we had cleared, as they were men suffering from fever at the time. By this time the whole of the hospital was in flames, and as we could not stay in it any longer, we had to make our own escape into the barricade, by the window through which the sick had been passed. This we did, thank God, with our lives.

PRIVATE HENRY HOOK.

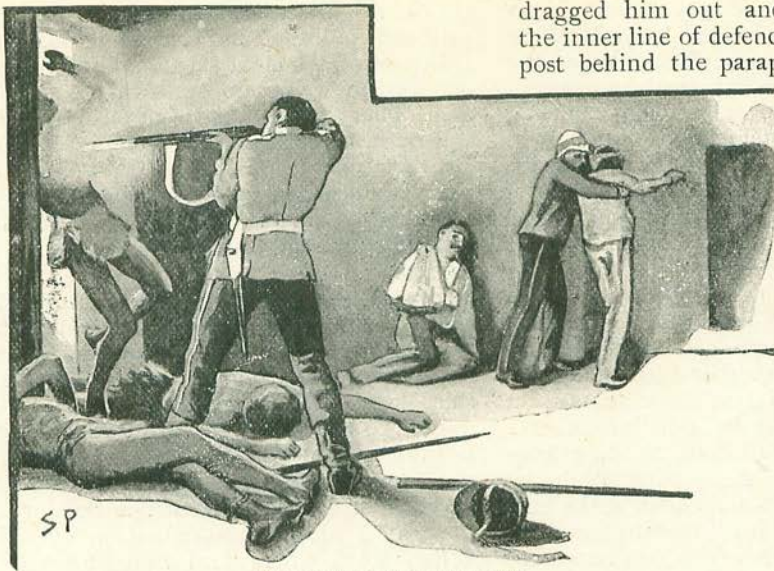
On January 22nd, 1879, Private Henry Hook, with his company, under Lieutenant Bromhead, was stationed at Rorke's Drift, to guard the ford and hospital and stores. He thus tells his gallant story:—

Between three and four in the afternoon, when I was engaged preparing the tea for the sick at the out-of-door cooking place, just at the back of the hospital—for I was hospital cook—two mounted men, looking much exhausted, and their horses worn out, rode up to me. One was in his shirt sleeves, and without a hat, with a revolver strapped round his breast; the other had his coat and hat on. They stopped for a moment and told me that the whole force on the other side of the river had been cut up, and that the Zulus were coming on in great force. They then rode off. I immediately ran to the camp close by and related what I had heard. We were at once fallen in and set to work to strengthen the post by loopholing the windows of the buildings, and to make breastworks of biscuit boxes and mealie bags. About half an hour later the Zulus were seen coming round a hill, and about 1,200 yards off. We were then told off to our posts. I was placed in one of the corner rooms of the hospital.

About this time Captain Stevens and all

his men, except one native and two Europeans, non-commissioned officers, deserted us, and went off to Helpmakair. We were so enraged that we fired several shots at them, one of which dropped a European non-commissioned officer. From my loophole I saw the Zulus approaching in their thousands. They begun to fire, yelling as they did so, when they were 500 or 600 yards off. They came on boldly, taking advantage of anthills and other cover, and we were soon surrounded. More than half of them had muskets or rifles. I began to fire when they were 600 yards distant. I managed to clip several of them, for I had an excellent rifle, and was a "marksman." I recollect particularly one Zulu. He was about 400 yards off, and was running from one anthill to another. As he was running from cover to cover, I fired at him; my bullet caught him in the body, and he made a complete somersault. Another man was lying below an anthill, about 300 yards off, popping his head out now and again to fire. I took careful aim, but my bullet went just over his head. I then lowered my sight, and fired again the next time he showed himself. I saw the bullet strike the ground in a direct line, but about ten yards short. I then took a little fuller sight, aimed at the spot where I knew his head would come out, and, when he showed himself, I fired. I did not then see whether he was struck, but he never showed again. The next morning, when the fighting was over, I felt curious to know whether I had hit this man, so I went to the spot where I had last seen him. I found him lying dead, with his skull pierced by my bullet.

The Zulus kept drawing closer and closer, and I went on firing, killing several of them. At last they got close up, and set fire to the hospital. There was only one patient in my room with a broken leg, and he was burnt, and I was driven out by the flames, and was unable to save him. At first I had a comrade, but he left after a time, and was killed on his way to the inner entrenchment. When driven out of this room, I retired by a partition door into the next room, where there were several patients. For a few minutes I was the only fighting man there. A wounded man of the 24th came to me from another room with a bullet wound in the arm. I tied it up. Then John Williams came in from another room, and made a hole in the partition, through which he helped the sick and wounded men. Whilst he was doing this,



"THE ZULUS BEAT IN THE DOOR."

the Zulus beat in the door, and tried to enter. I stood at the side, and shot and bayoneted several—I could not tell how many, but there were four or five lying dead at my feet. They threw assegais continually, but only one touched me, and that inflicted a scalp wound which I did not think worth reporting; in fact, I did not feel the wound at the time. One Zulu seized my rifle, and tried to drag it away. Whilst we were tussling I slipped in a cartridge and pulled the trigger—the muzzle was against his breast, and he fell dead. Every now and again a Zulu would make a rush to enter—the door would only let in one man at a time—but I bayoneted or shot every one. When all the patients were out except one, who owing to a broken leg could not move, I also went through the hole, dragging the man after me, in doing which I broke his leg again. I then stopped at the hole to guard it, whilst Williams was making a hole through the partition into the next room.

When the patients had been got into the next room I followed, dragging the man with the broken leg after me. I stopped at the hole to guard it whilst Williams was helping the patients through a window into the other defences. I stuck to my particular charge, and

dragged him out and helped him into the inner line of defences. I then took my post behind the parapet where three men had been hit just before. One of these was shot in the thick part of the neck, and was calling on me all night to shift from one side to the other. On this side the blaze of the hospital lighted up the ground in front, enabling us to take aim. The Zulus would every quarter of an hour or so get together and make a rush accompanied by yells. We let

them get close, and then fired a volley—sometimes two. This would check them and send them back. Then after a time they would rally and come on again. About 3 a.m. day began to break, and the Zulus retreated. A party, of which I was one, then volunteered to go across to the hospital, where there

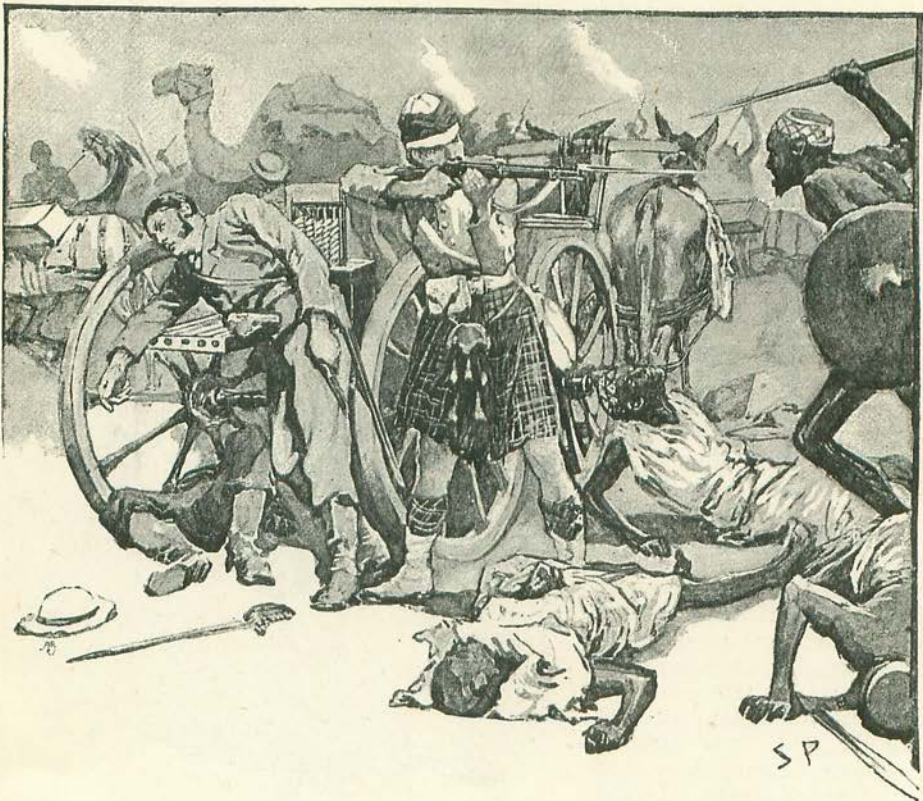


"WE HAD A SEVERE STRUGGLE."

was a water cart, and bring it in to the inner enclosure, where there was no water, and the wounded were crying for it. When the sun rose we found the Zulus had disappeared. We then went out to search for our missing comrades. I saw one man kneeling behind the outer defences with his rifle to his shoulder, and resting on the parapet as if he were taking aim; I touched him on the shoulder, asking him why he didn't come inside, but he fell over, and I saw he was dead. I saw several others of our dead ripped open and otherwise mutilated. Going beyond the outer defences I went, as I have said before, whither I had killed the man at whom I had fired three shots from the hospital. Going on a little further I came across a very tall Zulu, bleeding from a wound in the leg; I was passing him by when he made a yell and clutched the butt of my rifle, dragging himself on to his knees. We had a severe struggle which lasted for several seconds, when finding he could not get the rifle from me, he let go with one hand and caught me round the leg, trying to throw me. Whilst he was doing this I

got the rifle from him, and drawing back a yard or two, loaded and blew his brains out. I then was fetched back to the fort, and no one was allowed to go out save with other men. Then several of us went out together, and we brought in several wounded Zulus. By this time it was about eight or nine o'clock, and we saw a body coming towards us; at the same time Lord Chelmsford's column came in sight, and the enemy retired.

Lord Chelmsford, soon after he arrived, called me up to enquire about the defence of the hospital. I was busy preparing tea for the sick and wounded, and was in my shirt-sleeves, with my braces down. I wanted to put on my coat before appearing in front of the General, but I was told to come along at once, and I felt rather nervous at leaving in such a state, and thought I had committed some offence. When Lord Chelmsford heard my story he praised me and shook me by the hand. The Cross was presented to me on August 3, at Rorke's Drift, by Sir Garnet Wolseley.



"I SHOT THE SOUDANEE DEAD ON THE SPOT."

PRIVATE THOMAS EDWARDS.

Private Edwards thus recounts the valiant action which gained him, the sole survivor of three equally brave men, the honour of the Cross :—

At the battle of Tamanib, on the morning of March 13, I was on the Transport, having under my charge two mules loaded with ammunition for the Gatling guns belonging to the left half-battery, on the left of the battery. I was standing at No. 4 Gatling gun, and Lieutenant W. B. Almack was standing on the right of the gun, with a sailor, when the enemy rushed on us. I saw then that we were surrounded. The first of us three that was wounded was the sailor, who received a spear wound in the abdomen, and fell under the gun. I then saw two Soudanees making for me, and I put my bayonet through them both. Lieutenant Almack was then

standing on my right, with his sword in hand, and his revolver in his left. He then rushed on one of the Soudanees, and ran his sword through him. Before he had time to recover, his right arm was nearly cut off. I took my rifle and loaded it, and shot the Soudanee dead on the spot. There then ran on him three of the Soudanees when he was helpless, his revolver being empty, and ran their spears through his body. I myself received at that time a slight wound on the back of my right hand as I was making a stab at one of them. After that I took my two mules and retired, firing on the enemy as I did so.

And this is what I have to say : that Lieutenant Almack was one of the bravest officers on the field that morning, and I am heartily sorry for his losing his life ; but he lost it bravely. I tried all in my power to save him and the sailor, but the rush of the enemy was too strong for me to contend with.

