

# Fighting Missionaries-- Personal Experiences

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The events of the summer of 1900 in North China afford an excellent opportunity for a study of the "Church Militant." The "ambassadors of peace" were compelled by force of circumstances to lay aside the work of preaching the gospel and take up the temporarily more necessary work of defending their own and others' lives against the fierce attacks of an enemy who would show no quarter. For some time before the siege actually began we had all carried revolvers as we went about the streets, hardly expecting to use them, but not knowing what a day might bring forth. Then on June 8, when we gathered together in the Methodist Episcopal mission, there was an instant call to arms. A list was made of all the firearms in our possession. The British minister, who had promised ten marines to help in our defense, in consideration of our protecting also the London

time was on the galvanized iron roof of the great church. From this point of vantage we could occasionally see armies with banners entering or leaving the city and had a fine view of the great fires in which the Chinese consumed everything foreign which they could find undefended in the city. Here I watched, through much of that awful night of June 13, all our mission houses with their contents and every material element of our work go up in flame and smoke, and thought of the probable accompanying massacres. So constantly was one or another of us seated on the ball of the cupola of the church that, as we learned from outside Chinese, the Boxers had announced that they would do nothing until a certain day, when the "black spirit" should no longer sit astride the dome. Those of us who were not carrying a rifle on sentry duty were busily engaged day after day in the digging of

and a cannon fire from the city wall would soon render our position untenable.

### Exodus from the Mission District.

The foul murder of Baron von Ketteler saved us from an optimism which would have been fatal. Our captain of marines sent instant request to be relieved, the ministers abandoned the thought of a march to Tien Tsin and we were ordered to march at once to the legations, there to make a last stand for life. The German marines came for their wounded interpreter and led the van of our retreat; then followed our women and children, flanked by us volunteers. The long procession of 800 native Christian refugees, guarded by American marines and more volunteers, brought up the rear. We passed within 120 yards of the Hai Tai gate and saw on the tower and by the gate hundreds of Chinese soldiers, who might have mowed us down at any moment. It was an anxious passage until we reached the Italian barricade. Eager to save something of the stores of clothing and food left in the mission compound on our hasty retreat, we begged the marines to return with us. But they would not consider it. Rev. W. S. Ament, D. D., of the American Board mission, brave even to rashness, making no announcement of his intention, set off with no other companion than one Chinese servant, found the property still undisturbed and brought off his bicycle in safety. Emboldened by this deed of daring, fifteen or twenty of us missionaries, taking fifty or sixty Chinese refugees, with ropes, poles, spears and rifles, spent the afternoon in running the gauntlet of the Chinese soldiery, bringing in load after load of the indispensable clothing and food which we had abandoned. Before we had finished the attack had begun in another quarter; but we met with no interference, except that some of our number were compelled, at the last, to repel certain would-be looters, who could not wait till we were through. Rev. W. B. Stelle of the Mission to the Higher Classes had been stationed on the corner of the great street near the Hai Tai gate. Within 120 yards were the Chinese soldiers, yet he challenged at will any who entered the gate and ordered the suspicious appearing to withdraw, and they withdrew. Presently twenty-five or thirty rough fellows came in on the half-run, evidently bent on mischief, disregarded the challenge of the single trembling, but determined sentinel, and continued their advance. Mr. Stelle leveled his rifle. They hesitated, turned and fled. Had they had the courage to attack him, the lives of our party would have been worth very little between them and the soldiers, who would, doubtless, have supported the attack.

### Constantly Under Fire.

With our settlement in the British legation, the active military career of most of the missionaries came to an end. We took ourselves to the work of food supply, the charge of Chinese labor, or the digging of trenches, filling of sandbags and building of barricades, in all of which work, however, we were almost constantly under fire. In spite of our almost constant exposure to shot and shell no missionary was killed, and but one received a wound which rendered him hors du combat. Two of us were wounded very slightly, my own escape from serious injury or death being narrow in the extreme. Working behind a barricade on the city wall, I was suddenly felled by bricks dislodged from that barricade by an unexpected shell from the enemy's gun. My heavy pith hat saved me from more than a slight scalp wound, which speedily healed.

If our missionary women were not "fighting men" they were the next thing to it. Calmly, courageously, they carried on their work of feeding us, caring for the wounded, making clothes for the soldiers and thousands of sandbags which undoubtedly saved many a life. And our children made mud forts and fought many a little battle of their own and gathered up the real fallen bullets by the basketful.

I believe others will bear testimony to the fact that the missionary as a fighting man is not to be despised; nevertheless there were none more joyful than he when the days of his fighting were over. Yet I am proud to possess a lasting souvenir of my fighting days in a fine Mannlicher rifle, presented to me when I left the city by the first secretary of the United States legation, who had seized a number in a Chinese magazine.

COURTENAY HUGHES FENN.

### Carpenter's Letter

(Continued from Sixth Page.)

they began at 6 in the morning and will not stop until 5.

Later on I visited the tobacco factories. Some of these in Macao are large, employing hundreds of women and girls. Everything is done by hand. The women squat on the floor and pull the leaves from the stems and sort them into round baskets. I asked about wages, and found that a good, likely girl could make 6 cents in eleven hours. I noticed that there were many old women at work, and some were mothers with babes at the breast.

In another room in this same factory I saw how the Chinese make fine-cut tobacco. The leaves are first pressed into great plates or plugs, which are then fastened to a board and shaved off with a plane much as we plane boards. The planers were half-naked and some held the tobacco between their bare legs as they shaved it. This factory employs 200 men and 100 women and girls.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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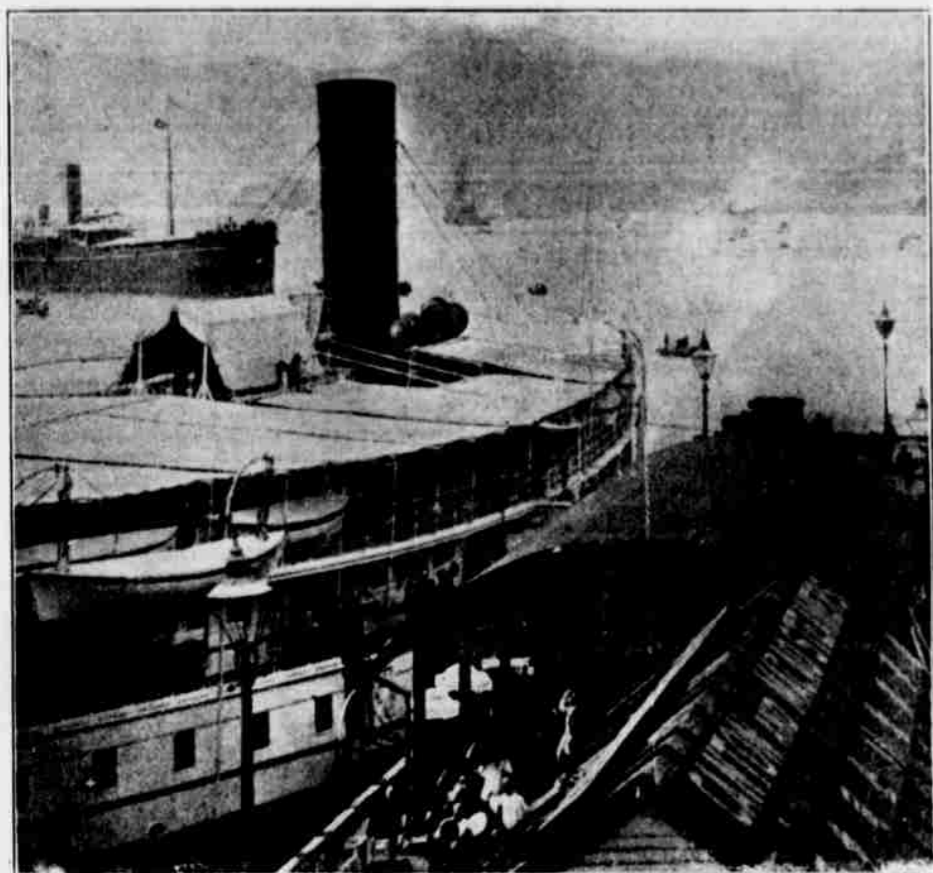
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CARPENTER GOES TO MACAO ON THE STEAMER.

mission converts, sent us instead ten rifles and there was no difficulty in finding ten men to carry them. Raw recruits indeed we were, most of us totally without military training, but the American marines took hold of us and each day at evening put us through the drill, while the unarmed and the women sitting by laughed at and cheered "the awkward squad." We forward marched, we right-about faced, we charged the barbed wire fence with such vigor that we nearly got tangled up in it. We fired countless rounds of imaginary cartridges at an enemy so accommodating as to let us have things our own way. We took our turns on guard with the marines, playing sentinel for six to ten hours of the twenty-four, on walls and roofs.

### On Guard Duty in the Streets.

My own guard duty the greater part of those strange days at the Methodist Episcopal mission was from 12 to 3 a. m. and 12 to 3 p. m., in the lane leading from the main compound to the university about one-eighth of a mile in length, and in the large open space between the university and the city wall. There were several chances of being cut off here by an enemy rushing down a side street, so across these streets we strung barbed wire and posted native sentinels at every corner to give the alarm. A few of these men had revolvers or blunderbusses, but most of them were armed with either spear or sword. Occasionally it was necessary for one of us to take a position removed from the rest to oversee the clearing away of rubbish piled against our walls and rendering them too easy to scale. At such times it was curious to see the awe which one inspired, some of the natives going around several blocks to avoid the awful foreigner with a rifle, while that poor foreigner was longing for the end of his watch and hoping that he might not fall a victim to a sudden attack on his exposed position. And then at night the moonlight and the darkness each had its own shadowy possibilities, and we were glad enough to have the "moral support" of ditches, barbed wire and barricades, with which we hoped to prove more familiar than the mob whose onslaught we awaited. It seems now a great pity that we had to leave all that wire when we went to the legations, for not only would it have proved very useful there, but we missed the fun of seeing the Boxer make his first acquaintance with that interesting American invention. One of our chief occupations during the night watches was that of keeping our Chinese sentinels from going to sleep. Their hours were long and their flesh was weak. To work all day and then watch a part of the night was more than many of them were equal to, yet they were in the main most faithful. It was a great relief to some of us to know that the Chinese did not know how little we knew of the use of a rifle.

Another position which I occupied for a

ditches, the building of barricades, the stretching of wire and the blocking of windows.

### A Sally to the Markets.

One of the most venturesome yet ridiculous performances of this preliminary siege was the exploit of four of our number, who escorted our servants to the great street to buy provisions one morning after a night of fires and massacres. The presence of four foreigners with rifles was quite sufficient to awe the hitherto unwilling shopkeepers into disposing of their goods at market prices, and we soon had all we needed for the time. Then one of our number proposed that we should produce a "moral impression," which we proceeded to do by "holding up the street," i. e., halting each cart and horseman, examining the former for foreign goods and questioning the latter as to his business. Two of us held up three suspicious looking horsemen, who, on being questioned, fled in terror in three different directions. We held a quarter of a mile of the street in absolute cringing subjection for nearly two hours and then withdrew. That afternoon our escapade was surpassed by that of four of our number, who went out at 6 o'clock, with two marines, and directed the keeper of the Hai Tai gate of the city to carry out the wish of Minister Conger and close the gate two hours before the usual time. After brief demur he did so and turned over the great iron key, about two feet long, to the keeping of the missions. It was returned to him early in the morning, but the next evening retaken and a foreign padlock affixed to the gate for greater security.

I have often wished that we could see ourselves just as the Chinese saw us during those days. It was most fortunate for us that a certain awe of the foreigner pervaded people and officials and held them in check until we had put ourselves in a position of comparative safety. In those days even a high official accepted our refusal to permit him to use his own city gates at the usual hours as final and made his exit by another way. We were not interfered with in absolutely isolating ourselves in our limited district, though it involved barricading four small streets, to the serious interference with the business and domestic pursuits of divers residents. During the twelve days spent in the Methodist mission we so intrenched and fortified and trained ourselves that we had little fear of a Boxer attack. Our walls, ditches, barbed wire and rifles would have been more than a match for the far more numerous knives of the Boxer hordes, for at that time the rifle, as an invention of foreign devilry, was strictly tabooed among them; but we feared the onslaught of legions of imperial soldiers with their Mausers and Mannlicher and Krupp guns. And at last the day came when we knew with a certainty that their forces would be arrayed against us,



THE ROSE.



DOLORES.



EASTERTIDE.



THE NEW BABY.



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