

September 10, 2020

Harrisburg Boy Serves in Spanish American War

(Pennsylvania Military Museum, J. Gleim, Museum Curator)

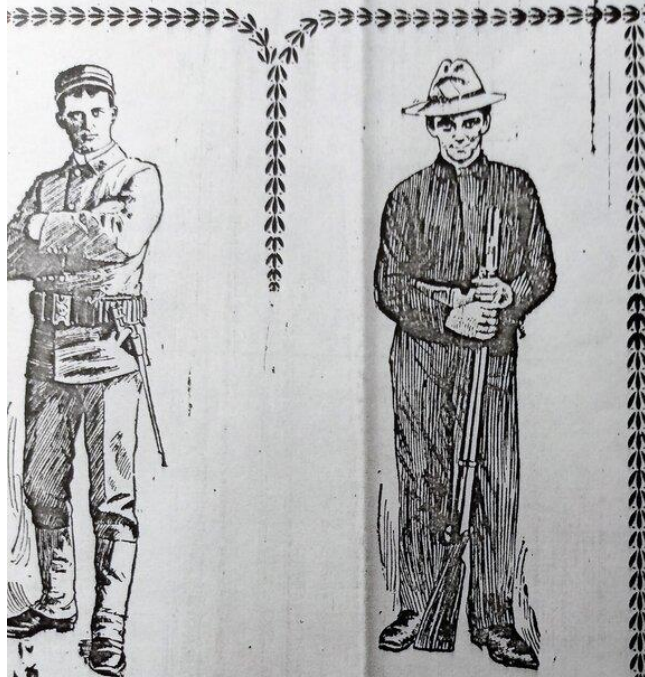


Charles H. Delaney (1884-1954) of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania was fourteen years old when he carried this drum for the Army. Painted on the drum is “10th REGIMENT DRUM CORPS”. The calfskin head of the drum is decorated with a roster of Company H, 10th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry (PVI). Also listed on the head are the names of those who died there. Likely decorated by Delaney to commemorate his service, the drum head is a moving tribute to his comrades and their service.

Charles Delaney was born to a well-known Harrisburg family. His father, John Carroll Delaney fought with the 107th Pennsylvania Infantry during the Civil War. He participated in 26 battles, was captured and escaped 6 times, and was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry in 1865. Following the war, he declined a military appointment and instead worked in politics. Likely inspired by his father’s service, Charles enlisted with the 10th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry May 1, 1898. Just a short time later, the unit

was mustered into federal service and departed for the Philippines. They arrived in early July and participated in the battle of Malate July 31-August 1 and in the advance on and capture of Manila August 13.

HARRISBURG, PA., THURSDAY EVENING, AUGUST 31, 1899.



Boys Who Fought in The Phillipins

AMERICANS

They Drive the Hill
 Manila, Aug. 31. - 5:30
 Just received from Cebu
 American troops under
 with two field pieces, r
 into the hills against
 who recently ambushed
 diers, and who have be
 blissome. The America
 natives entrenched and
 their trenches, furthe
 There were no casualtie
 side, though there wer
 trations. The natives
 The United States e
 landed men, who guar
 the absence of the tro
 The Fourth infantr
 to give the insurgents
 the latter have ceased
 for an attack on Imau.

CAPITOL

At the close of bu
 Treasury will have ad
 general fund, which i
 most \$1,500,000 over
 There have been some
 tions made, notably on
 of \$1,100,000, but par
 back was personal tax,
 have been paid to the
 triets about \$700,000.
 districts have received
 Treasurer Beacom says
 triets as soon as the
 sented and he is satis
 needed.

Governor Stone left
 New York where his
 arrive from Europe t

Col. Lamb
 Colonel James H.
 ance Commissioner, a
 of the Philadelphi

Frank L. Wall.

Wall, son of J. Sutton and
 Wall, was born in Monongahela
 Sept. 24th, 1878; came with his
 family to Harrisburg in 1888,
 attended in the public schools of this
 city; a member of the junior class
 of the public schools when he enlisted in
 the Tenth Pennsylvania
 at Camp Hastings, Mount
 Pleasant, Pa., Sept. 11th, 1898, under the first
 President for volunteers. He
 joined the regiment, which arrived
 in Manila on July 17th, participated in
 the battle of Malate with the Spaniards
 and in the advance on and
 capture of the city of Manila, August
 13th, 1898. In September he was detail-
 ed to a division hospital camp, where

Charles Delaney.

This young man is about the youngest
 volunteer who bore arms in the late war.
 He is a son of Captain John C. Delaney,
 former Superintendent of Public Grounds
 and Buildings, and was scarcely 14 years
 of age when he joined the Tenth Penn-
 sylvania in this city as a drummer boy,
 attaining his 14th birthday May 25th,
 1898. He was educated at the public
 schools and the Harrisburg Academy,
 being a student at the last named insti-
 tution when the war with Spain began.
 At the time of his enlistment he was first
 sergeant of the Harrisburg Zouaves.
 Young Delaney was a great favorite with
 Colonel Hawkins and the men of the
 regiment, and he had not been long in
 the Philippines until he was made an
 orderly. The above cut of the lad repre-
 sents him while on the firing line a short
 distance from Manila.

On August 31, 1899, the Harrisburg Telegraph newspaper featured young Charles on its front page as part of a spread entitled "Boys Fought in the Philippines":

"This young man is about the youngest volunteer who bore arms in the late war. He is a son of Captain John C. Delaney, former Superintendent of Public Grounds and Buildings, and was scarcely 14 years of age when he joined the Tenth Pennsylvania in this city as a drummer boy, attaining his 14th birthday May 25, 1898...At the time of his enlistment he was first sergeant of the Harrisburg Zouaves. Young Delaney was a great favorite with Colonel Hawkins and the men of the regiment and he had not been long in the Philippines until he was made an orderly."

Armies throughout the world used drummers for hundreds of years to keep men marching in step and to communicate signals and commands from officers to troops. By the 18th century, drummers were often accompanied by fifers and were trained to play a standardized set of marches and signals. While the image of young drummer boys persists in popular culture, most military drums were played by adult men. However, during the American Civil War and despite age limits, boys as young as 13 did enlist as drummers. By the time Charles carried his drum in 1898, drummers were being replaced by buglers. With the advent of reliable telegraph communication, the US Army abolished drummers in the field in 1917.