



38TH PHILIPPINE SCOUTS SECTION B, PLOT 1F, GRAVES 11-12 E-H



These our eight Philippine Scouts of the 38th Philippine Scouts Company all died on 10 November 4, 1904. They were killed in action that occurred on the island of Samar. It is suspected that there are five of their comrades also buried at Clark but marked as Unknown. What follows is an extract of an engagement of the 38th Company based on the Master's Thesis of Mathew Parker, Baylor University. This passage is based on a book entitled the *Jungle Patrol: The Story of the Philippine Constabulary*. Specific references are highlighted in yellow below.

Pulajanes (Samar)

The Pulajanes and the terror they inflicted on the residents of Samar was the gravest security challenge for the Scouts and Constabulary since the end of the insurgency in 1902. The term Pulajan has its root in the word pula from the local dialects on Samar and Leyte. Pula is red in English and it describes the color of the clothing of the hill tribes on the islands. The Pulajanes on Samar lived as poor rice and hemp farmers in the mountains and traded their crops in the markets in the coastal towns. The traditionally peaceful tribesmen lacked the type of financial education or business skills fielded by the coastal merchants and the shipping interests. As a result, the Pulajan was usually cheated out of the fair market value for his product, often receiving less than half of what it was worth. If he attempted to argue the injustice of a transaction, the unlucky mountain man was arrested and thrown in jail without trial or legal representation. For generations, the Pulajanes tolerated the abuse out of a sense of powerlessness and fear of a larger world they knew little about. This situation changed by 1904 as the hill tribes united under religiously militant leaders who used Christian rhetoric and symbolism to turn a fight for justice into a holy war against enemies viewed as antichrists. The Pulajanes soon formed sizable fighting forces of up to 1,000 bolo-wielding warriors. Eventually, some 7,000 to 10,000 Pulajanes on Samar joined these forces.

The mountain men fought the Scouts and Constabulary with simple but devastating tactics. Foregoing detailed ideas of offense or defense, they attacked with numerically-overwhelming human waves shouting cries of "Tad-Tad," "Chop to Pieces." Scout or Constabulary units unlucky enough to face a Pulajan charge were literally engulfed and crushed as their superior firepower was often not enough to avert a butchery of cold steel. The defenseless families living in the towns and villages along Samar's shores never had the chance to fight back; entire towns were massacred and burned to the ground. Many became long-suffering captives of the hill tribes bent on revenge.

The Pulajanes revolt erupted in July 1904. The town of Taurian was one of the first victims. The warriors murdered twenty-six people, slashing them to pieces with bolos. July 10th, the village of Cantaguio was raided by a band of Pulajanes under the leadership of Julian Caducay. The local teniente (Filipino representative of the Philippine Commission) was severely burned with a torch made from the village's American flag doused in kerosene. To add further insult to the government representative, the Pulajanes removed the teniente's lips in a gruesome surgery with a bolo. The lieutenant of the municipal police, also Filipino, along with several of his officers, was summarily executed. Cantaguio was then set afire and fifty villagers became captives. They were marched off to the mountains. Most were girls driven into a life of sexual slavery; the hill tribesmen's designated them as their new concubines.

The force presence on Samar in July of 1904 was too small to secure the towns or go on the offensive against the Pulajanes. On an island encompassing a territory of 5,000 square miles, the U.S. Army maintained several garrisons whose only mission was guarding their posts. In addition, these units operated under strict rules of engagement preventing them from conducting operations outside their immediate areas. This policy allowed the Philippine Commission to claim that the security situation on Samar was calm and did not justify declaring martial law. Such an action would indicate to Washington that it had clearly failed to do the job of pacifying the island's inhabitants.

The Philippine Scouts on the island were only slightly stronger than the Army, which garrisoned its regimental headquarters in the town of Calbayog with a small force, while a full company ran missions out of its base in Laoang. The Constabulary patrolled the island from far-flung stations unconnected by a viable road network (five miles in 1904) with less than 400 hundred men. The latest intelligence reports on the Pulajanes greatly underestimated their size and their effectiveness. The Commission believed the small combined presence of U.S. and HNSF forces on Samar was large enough to handle what was perceived to be small bands of renegades numbering no more than twenty men each. In fact, the mountain tribes were gathering thousands of armed followers, showcasing a previously unknown and unrecognized ability to organize quickly and efficiently.

Constabulary patrols began to come under ever increasing attacks by the fall. Pulajan warriors in large bodies, often numbering 200 to 300, ambushed and virtually wiped out many of the patrols they engaged, and no prisoners were taken. The red-clothed victors then took the policemen's weapons and ammunition to supplement their arsenals of bolos. Even after receiving incoming reports describing events such as these, the Commission was not prepared to declare martial law.

By November of 1904 the Philippine Scouts took the field against the Pulajanes. They too became the victims of the blood-curdling human waves. On November 10 Pulajan warriors overran a small element of Scouts guarding the town of Oras, killing thirteen and capturing a significant supply of weapons. On December 12, 1904, another detachment of the 38th Philippine Scouts, commanded by Lieutenant Hayt, was conducting a reconnaissance patrol near the village of Dolores when they were attacked by a mass of about 1,000 armed tribesmen under their leader, Pedro de la Cruz. Lt. Hayt and his Scouts fought valiantly, killing 300 Pulajanes, almost a third of the attacking force. But, like many Constabulary patrols before them, they were exterminated. Only one man escaped. The rest of the Scouts died surrounded by the bodies of the enemy they killed. The 37th PS suffered the same fate on the 26th. The entire company, under Lieutenant Morton Avery, was cruelly extinguished after being caught patrolling swampland close to Oras. Only two men from the 37th PS escaped. The Pulajanes seized the opportunity from both victories to take sizable stockpiles of weapons and ammunition.

After the annihilations of the 37th and 38th Scout companies, the Philippine Commission realized the extent of the deteriorating situation on Samar and immediately put the Scouts and Constabulary under a united command under Chief Henry Allen. However, the Army itself did not yet field its own units to restore the island's security. The Commission hesitated to declare martial law. A declaration of martial law would have required the Army to take over the security effort, and the Commission was still unprepared to admit its fallings to the military or to Washington. Fifty-three towns and villages ceased to exist on Samar in 1904 after the Pulajanes finished raiding them, 50,000 people were now refugees.