

Major Bryon M. Cutcheon Medal of Honor 20th Michigan Infantry

Deeds of Valor Introduction Page

DEEDS OF VALOR

FROM RECORDS IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

HOW AMERICAN HEROES WON THE MEDAL OF HONOR

HISTORY OF OUR RECENT WARS AND EXPLORATIONS

FROM PERSONAL REMINISCENCES AND RECORDS OF OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN WHO WERE REWARDED BY CONGRESS FOR MOST CONSPICUOUS ACTS OF BRAVERY ON THE BATTLE-FIELD, ON THE HIGH SEAS AND IN ARCTIC EXPLORATIONS.

AMONG OTHER RECORDS THE STIRRING ADVENTURES OF:

Admiral W. S. SCHLEY

Admiral GEO. DEWEY

Lieut-Gen'l [sic] NELSON A. MILES

Mai.-Gen'l [sic] WM. R. SHAFTER

Admiral D. G. FARRAGUT

Admiral D. D. PORTER

Admiral GEO. W. MELVILLE

Lieut. G. W. DeLONG

General A. W. GREELY

Commander W. D. CUSHING

Hon. L. P. di CESNOLA

Gen'l [sic] F. J. BELL

Hon. WM. F. CODY, (Buffalo Bill)

Gen'l [sic] MARION P. MAUS

Gen'l [sic] ARTHUR McARTHUR, Jr.

Gen'l [sic] DELEVAN BATES

Gen'l [sic] JULIUS STAHL

Hon. JOHN C. BLACK

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INTRODUCTION BY

BRIG.-GEN'L H. M. DUFFIELD, U. S. V.

Illustrated

COMPLETE In Two Volumes

VOLUME I

The PERRIEN-KEYDEL COMPANY

DETROIT, MICH., U. S. A.

1907

ROUTED MORGAN'S RAIDERS

[image: Picture of Bryon M. Cutcheon with caption: Bryon M. Cutcheon Major 20th Mich.

Infantry. Highest rank attained: Brevet Brig.-Gen. U.S.V. Born at Pembroke, N.H. May 11, 1836]

The Twentieth Michigan Infantry under the command of Lieutenant W. H. Smith, formed part of a provisional brigade which included three regiments of Kentucky cavalry and the Thirteenth Indiana Independent Battery, and was commanded by Colonel Richard T. Jacob. The gallant regiment from Michigan, was sent with this provisional brigade south of the Cumberland River, to hold the Confederate general, John Morgan, in check. How this was accomplished Major Byron M. Cutcheon describes as follows:

"After some skirmishing at Monticello, Ky., we had fallen back to the Cumberland River on May 9, 1863, and were waiting for a scouting party to come in, to recross, when Morgan's advance attacked our outpost at Horse Shoe Bend, that evening. I hastened back to the Bend to take command of the companies stationed there, while Colonel Smith remained behind to hurry up the rest of the regiment. That night the regiment came up, and on the morning of the 10th we were re-enforced by a small body - a squadron I believe - of the Twelfth Kentucky Cavalry, dismounted, and armed with Henry repeating rifles.

"Before their arrival, Morgan's men made a dash and succeeded in seizing the 'Coffey' house, a large log house on the east side of the road, so called after its owner. We had occupied it as a picket post through the night. The house, out-buildings, and garden were filled with rebel sharpshooters, who, though they harassed us throughout the day, did not attempt to advance.

"About 4 o'clock P. M., - it was Sunday - Colonel Jacob having been re-enforced by a piece of Captain Sims' battery, resolved to take the aggressive, and to drive the rebels out of the house and grounds. To me was assigned the command of four companies, A and D, on the left of the road in the field, and C and K, in the road and

[Foot note at bottom of page: Morgan's Raid. - In the summer of 1863, General John Morgan conducted his famous raid through Kentucky into Indiana and Ohio. Starting from Sparta, Tennessee, with a force of 3,000 men, he made his way northward to the Ohio at Brandenburg, and crossed into Indiana. He was stopped at various points by local forces, but made his way into Ohio, made a circuit to the north of Cincinnati, and attempted to recross the river. He was driven back by Federal gunboats, and passed on to New Lisbon, where he was captured by the brigade of General Shackleford. He was held a prisoner for four months, then made his escape into Kentucky, and finally reached Richmond.]

to the right. At the signal we went forward at our very best pace. I was then just six feet two inches tall, one half of the length in legs, and an expert runner from practice in college. I took a course directly down the road to the south in front of the companies, - one could hardly say 'line', for there was no line; it was a 'go as you please' foot race - with Captain George C. Barnes, an old fireman from Battle Creek, Mich., a good second, a rod behind me. The distance was about 150 yards, and we made it on the jump. There were three steps up to the porch, but I made only one of them. With my sword in my right hand, and a big Colt's navy revolver in my left, I threw myself against the weather-beaten door. A moment later, Captain Barnes came to my side, and the door yielded.

"Why we were not both shot down then and there, I have never been able to understand. The rebels certainly missed their opportunity. Instead, we saw the Johnnies going out of the back doors and windows, and making for the woods, while the companies coming up right and left of the house, poured volleys into the retreating foe.

"The charge was a complete success, but Lieutenant William Green and two enlisted men were killed, and quite a number wounded."

[image: Illustration of Cutcheon throwing himself against the door with soldiers following him. Caption: "I threw myself against the weather-beaten door."]