

Spanish-American War vets' sacrifice recalled

By Gordon B. Seavey

Veterans Day, a time to pause and remember those who fought in all wars in which the United States participated, has come and gone.

Perhaps the veterans least remembered are those who fought and died in the Spanish-American War of 1898-1902.

A tablet on the decorous war memorial at the apex of the Common tells of three local men who died in this conflict, which overall took the lives of almost 7,000 U.S. men, most of whom died of disease. Three were remembered for all time on the bronze tablet in the center of town. They are Sgt. Maj. Fred P. Collins, Frank D. O'Brien and Philip R. Prescott.

It was "Not a war for conquest, or for military glory, but a righteous war fought by American volunteers to succor the weak and oppressed against for-

eign tyranny, and to give to Cuba and the Philippines a place among the free peoples of the earth," reads the marker.

A faded clipping from the *Lowell Courier Citizen*, the area's daily newspaper published at that time, announced that Philip Reginald Prescott had died in the Philippines "about six weeks ago." It said that he saw a good deal of service in putting down the insurrection, being in a number of engagements and passed through them without injury.

Letter tells story

The account says that he was in a hospital only 13 days and his death was caused by meningitis. In all probability, however, it could have been malaria. He was only a boy, really, dying at 19 years and eight months. The date was May 20, 1900.

It is recalled that this sad news was a shock to the community, to his close-knit family and

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