

# THE DAY BOOK

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## YOUNG MONTENEGRIN WARRIOR THE FIRST REAL HERO OF THE BALKAN WAR

An authentic story from an eyewitness of a recent engagement between the Montenegrins and the Turks reads like the famous tale of Arnold Winkelreid, who lived and died over five centuries ago.

A small band of Montenegrins were crossing the border into European Turkey when the killing fire from a Turkish blockhouse near Berane stopped them.

Either the Montenegrins must turn back, defeated, or they must drive the Turks from the blockhouse.

To try to take the blockhouse by assault meant sure death for the attacking soldiers, and yet no other way seemed possible, until—

A young Montenegrin warrior darted from the firing line and rushed straight for the blockhouse. It seemed to mean certain death. As he came into the open, within easy rifle range, he was greeted by volley after volley from the Turks' guns.

He was hit, but staggered on until he reached the blockhouse, and pressed close to the wall, so as to be out of reach of the rifles

thrust through the portholes. Then the young Black mountain hero tore off his shirt, set it afire and swung the blazing torch, at the end of his gunstock, to the thatched roof.

In a moment the dry roof was on fire. Part of the roof, falling in, set off a quantity of powder the Turks had stored, and some of the Turks perished in the ruins; the rest were forced to surrender.

It took unadulterated heroism to fire the blockhouse, but it is merely a sample of the courage displayed by the Montenegrins during all their centuries of war against the Turks.

It is the kind of daring that "made way for liberty" July 9, 1386, when a few hundred miles northwest of Berane, a small band of Swiss patriots faced the solid phalanx of an Austrian tyrant.

Then, as James Montgomery years afterwards wrote:

So still, so dense, the Austrians stood,

A living wall, a human wood;  
Impregnable their front appears,  
All-horrend with projected spears.

It meant death to fall upon that living line of pointed spears,