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Imperial Mobilization

The American Soldier and the Mobilization for War in 1898

Derrick Rowe

B.A. History, Alvernia University
M.A. Military History, Norwich University

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Letters (Research)

Department of History
School of Humanities
College of Art
University of Glasgow
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Abstract

1898 was an extremely important year in the history of the United States. The outbreak of war between Spain and the United States ushered the United States onto the world stage as a great power. At the end of the conflict with Spain, the United States created an overseas colonial empire consisting of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Simultaneously, the United States embarked on the war in the Philippines to suppress attempts by Filipino nationalists to achieve Philippine independence and impose American colonial rule. Literature on the War of 1898 and the subsequent American colonial experiments in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and other American possessions often focus on the military, domestic, and international aspects of these conflicts in the aftermath of the wars. However, few works have focused on the experiences of the soldiers during the mobilization process for the War of 1898. This project explores this aspect of the conflict. The United States Army in 1898 was extremely unprepared for any major military conflict. The Army was antiquated, reserve forces were disorganized, and support services were inadequate. The American soldiers' experiences during this war highlighted the obvious failures of the Army and forced the United States to begin the process of modernizing its ground forces.

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Abbreviations

American History and Heritage Center.....	AHHC
Church History Library.....	CHL
History Colorado.....	HC
Lancaster History.....	LCHS
Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.....	MDLC
Nebraska State Historical Society.....	NSHS
University of Oregon Libraries.....	UOL
University of Utah.....	UUSL
Pennsylvania State Archives.....	PASA
US Army Military History Institute.....	SAWS

Author's Declaration

“I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.”

Printed Name: Derrick Rowe

Signature: _____

Introduction: “A Splendid Little War”

“It has been a splendid little war, begun with the highest motives, carried on with magnificent intelligence and spirit, favored by that Fortune that loves the brave. It is now to be concluded, I hope, with that fine good nature, which is, after all, the distinguishing trait of the American character.”¹ John Hay, American ambassador to the United Kingdom, wrote this on July 27, 1898, in a letter to Theodore Roosevelt, who was then Lieutenant Colonel in the Rough Riders. Hay’s description of the Spanish-American War as a “splendid little war” encapsulates the popular view of the war held by Americans at the time. This remains unchanged today; by conducting aggressive naval and land campaigns in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, the United States military decisively and quickly defeated Spanish forces in all theatres of the war. Due to American successes, Spain sued for peace after only four months of war in July 1898. The Spanish-American War is remembered as a quick, victorious war that was essentially a bloodless affair. It demonstrated American military competency and ushered the United States onto the world stage as a great power. However, the actual war was far more complicated and problematic from the outset, particularly when examining the experiences the American soldier faced during the mobilization process. The American army was extremely unprepared to fight a modern war outside the borders of the United States, something largely forgotten by the public and in popular retellings of the War of 1898.

Standard histories of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars do not focus on the critical stages of mobilizing for these conflicts. This thesis examines the mobilization of troops in 1898 for the Spanish-American War who deployed to the Philippines and who subsequently fought in the opening stages of the Philippine-American War.

¹ Quoted in Schmidt, Donald E. *The Folly of War: American Foreign Policy, 1898-2005* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2005), 43.

Mobilization requires a more detailed examination due to the importance of the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars in laying the foundation for American military reform. The Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War were the opening stages of the United States' quest for global empire. Most studies examine other aspects of the conflict, such as racial issues, diplomatic issues, or the overall military activities of the conflict. Although many of them touch upon or briefly discuss the difficulties the United States faced in mobilizing for war, none study this problem in depth. The mobilization of American troops demonstrated that the United States Army had many significant issues in its structures and abilities to prepare for war. The Spanish-American War also revealed that state militia units, the so-called National Guard, had numerous structural issues that hindered them from being an effective reserve force for the Army. Other issues, including inadequate logistical systems to support large increases in the size of the American army, a critical lack of officers to fill necessary staff and field positions, and a limited ability to support American forces outside the continental United States also had to be addressed.² These issues, which were obvious to the military, the government, and the American population in the aftermath of mobilization, provided the impetus to implement the Root Reforms of 1906.³ The reforms allowed the United States Army to develop into a force that could successfully fight in the First and Second World Wars.⁴ The reforms also enabled the military to conduct imperial projects and enforce and reinforce American hegemony and influence abroad in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

This thesis explores the challenges of mobilization by exploring the personal experiences of the American soldiers serving in the War of 1898. Today, the American military

² Mathew S. Muehlbauer and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 275.

³ Ibid., 283-284.

⁴ Ibid., 285.

has become the most powerful armed force in the world. It is important to examine the first steps the institution took to be capable of worldwide deployments and become the dominant world military power during the twenty-first century. The United States was not always capable of complex overseas deployments. The following argues that these first steps undertaken by the military to achieve this objective were seriously flawed. Most of the issues associated with the deployment of troops to distant locations stemmed from the failure of the United States Army and the War Department to adequately modernize in the previous decades.⁵ The failure to modernize resulted from the American aversion to taxation and defence spending, both of which, when combined with the traditional republican fears of standing armies and few direct threats, hindered the development and modernization of the United States Army.⁶ Further, the successful outcomes of the Mexican War (1846-1848) and the American Civil War (1861 to 1865), and the prominent and successful role played by state volunteer units in both conflicts, appeared at the time to validate the American mobilization system and demonstrate there was no real need to develop the Army further.⁷ This assumption proved incorrect, as mobilization for the Spanish-American War and subsequent deployment of troops to the Philippines would illustrate.

Examining the experiences of soldiers who were mobilized for the War of 1898 provides crucial insights into both the failures of preparation for conflict against Spain and the early stages of the modernization of the United States military. Although the present-day military seeks to provide the best possible living standards for its personnel, this was not the case in 1898 and it had significant impacts on the soldiers' experience. Other works have

⁵ David J. Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire: The Philippine–American War, 1899–1902* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2008), 19-20.

⁶ Ibid. 19.

⁷ Steven Hahn, *A Nation Without Borders: The United States and its World in an Age of Civil Wars, 1830-1910* (New York: Penguin Books, 2017), 358-360.

political and social movement factors connected to reorganizing and modernizing the United States Army at the close of nineteenth century, but none have demonstrated how the connection between these failures and the personal impacts on troops subsequently lead to the push for modernization. These failures demonstrated the necessity of modernizing and reforming the United States Army due to the personal suffering of the American citizen-soldier volunteers. The suffering of the citizen-soldiers of the National Guard as well as the open failures of the United States Army and National Guard system provided the impetus for reform that had been lacking before the Spanish-American War. Exploring ground-level testimonies provides clear evidence of the fatal flaws in military structures. This sheds light on the development of the United States Army and shows how, in a short period, that army went from an underdeveloped force struggling to adequately train, supply and maintain its troops in the Philippines and Cuba to a nation that was able to fight a global military conflict. Further, these failures created justification for the United States to build the capacity seen today to rapidly deploy military forces around the globe in order to bolster its allies and clients. Understanding the experiences of the first American soldiers who helped establish the early stages of the American global empire will fill a critical gap and help us to understand the development of the US Army and its empire.

The project also illustrates reform in the National Guard. Despite the praise the volunteer veterans heaped upon themselves as an effective and successful military force and the only “all volunteer army” in American history, the problems they faced in the training camps and the troubled mobilization process of the National Guard regiments with their internal bickering, amateur leadership, and resistance to discipline demonstrated the need to thoroughly reorganize the National Guard. The National Guard needed to be managed better

as well as reorganized to demonstrate a strong ability to organize and mobilize for war.⁸ The prewar method of gubernatorial appointments of military officers or the election of officers by members of the National Guard proved to be problematic. Further, leaving the responsibility to the states to organize and equip the National Guard also proved to be suboptimal.⁹ When mobilized into federal service, it was quickly discovered that many National Guard units were understrength and they rushed to enlist enough men to maintain their unique unit identities.¹⁰ Additionally, most units did not have enough equipment to supply the increased numbers of troops that were brought into their organizations, and many of their officers had little to no experience with actual military matters.¹¹ The problems faced by the National Guard during its mobilization for the Spanish-American War led to its reorganization and improvement through federal funding and oversight as well as creating training regimens for their officers and enlisted personnel, which allowed the National Guard to become an effective reserve force for the United States.

History and Historical Memory

By the end of the nineteenth century, the United States of America was a burgeoning world power. It had completed its conquest of the North American continent, confined indigenous peoples to reservations, and introduced European settlement to all regions of the continental United States. However, while the settler nation was rapidly developing the economic capacity to influence not only the Americas and the world, there were still considerable flaws in the American military's ability to exert hard power beyond its borders.

⁸ Muehlbauer and Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, 284.

⁹ Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 10.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹¹ Thomas W. Crouch, *A Leader of Volunteers: Frederick Funston and the 20th Kansas in the Philippines, 1898-1899* (Lawrence, Kans.: Coronado Press, 1984), 5-16.

Neglect plagued every level of the army.¹² The full extent of this reality was not apparent until the outbreak of war with Spain in 1898 over the question of Cuban independence.¹³

The War of 1898, known as the Spanish-American War in the United States, was fought between Spain and the United States from April 21 to August 13, 1898. The war began with the sinking of the USS *Maine* in Havana Harbor which the United States blamed on the Spanish, leading to the United States intervening in the Cuban War for Independence and the Philippine Revolution. The war was fought mainly in Cuba with subsidiary actions taking place in both the Philippines and Puerto Rico.¹⁴ In all theatres, the United States swiftly and decisively defeated the Spanish leading to the American annexation of Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines and the establishment of an independent Cuba under strong American domination when the war ended.¹⁵ The American annexation of the Philippine Islands led to the Philippine-American War which lasted from 1899 to 1902. This war which began as a conventional military conflict would evolve into an insurgency by 1900 due to overwhelming American military force.¹⁶ After several years of irregular warfare, the United States was able to suppress the remnants of the Philippine army and assert full control over the northern Philippine Islands by 1907.¹⁷

Due to a previous failure to modernize and the general neglect of Army structures, the men who enlisted for war with Spain and who subsequently served during the early stages of the Philippine-American War endured conditions that were primitive and harsh. Further, the problems faced in mobilizing the Army and National Guard laid groundwork essential to reform the United States Army. The Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars were

¹² Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 28-29.

¹³ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 8-9.

¹⁴ A.G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 337 and 376.

¹⁵ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 138-140

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 225.

the first time a significant body of American ground forces were deployed beyond the Western Hemisphere. During the mobilization for the Spanish-American War, the numerous shortcomings of the United States Army and the National Guard became glaringly apparent to the American public and the American government.¹⁸ These failures set the stage for the Root Reforms which included a staff system for the United States Army that would prevent the logistical issues that plagued the American troops during the Spanish-American War.¹⁹ The reforms also included the development of improved training regimens for officers of the regular and reserve formations of the United States, as well as modernizing the structure, training, and monetary support of the National Guard.²⁰ These reforms were implemented with the introduction of the Militia Act of 1903, more commonly known as the Dick Act, after the chairman of the House Militia Affairs Committee.²¹ The Militia Act of 1903 significantly improved the ability of the United States military to mobilize and project power beyond its borders and, more importantly, beyond the Western Hemisphere.²² These reforms were fundamental in allowing the United States to effectively mobilize during the First World War, become one of the dominant Allied powers during the Second World War, and develop into one of the preeminent military powers of the Postwar Era.

Contrary to the popular view of the Spanish-American War, the United States was gravely unprepared for a military conflict with Spain. Today, this fact is generally not understood by the American public. Most Americans associate the Spanish-American War with the Battle of San Juan Hill, the Rough Riders, and Theodore Roosevelt, the commander

¹⁸ Ibid., 283.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 284.

²¹ “Key Events Impacting the National Guard,” The National Guard: Always Ready Always There, accessed December 20, 2024, <https://www.nationalguard.mil/Features/2021/385th-Birthday-The-National-Guard/Top-10-Most-Important-National-Guard-Events/>.

²² Jerry M. Cooper, *Citizens As Soldiers: A History Of The North Dakota National Guard*, (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 118, and James A. Drain, “Getting Ready for Our Next War,” *Pearson’s Magazine* Vol. 21, No. 4, 408.

of the Rough Riders. In American culture, the war was a quick victorious and glorious war against a decaying Spanish Empire. This view is often reinforced through American popular culture and in the classroom. What little popular culture that surrounds the Spanish-American War focuses on the larger-than-life personality of Teddy Roosevelt and his regiment of Rough Riders. Very few popular culture works have been set in the Spanish-American or Philippine War. The first notable account of the war, a silent film in 1927 entitled *The Rough Riders*, was a highly fictionalized interpretation of Roosevelt's Rough Riders' actions in Cuba.²³ These wars produced only two other major American motion pictures in the decades following the end of the wars. Both films present highly fictionalized views of the wars and they both present the American characters in heroic light.²⁴ The only other popular culture treatment was the 1997 mini-series *Rough Riders*, which also presented a sanitized image of the war focusing on the heroism of Rough Riders and Theodore Roosevelt.²⁵ Unlike other American conflicts, very few documentaries cover the Spanish-American or Philippine War; therefore, the American public continues to misremember the war which permits it to maintain its heroic veneer. This highly fictionalized interpretation of the wars is the predominant cultural view of this little remembered conflict and is reinforced in American schools.

The Spanish-American War was a small military conflict in American history. It also had limited, direct social or cultural impact on American society unlike the American Civil War, the later Second World War, and Vietnam War. Few Americans served in the conflict and even a smaller number saw military action. Since this war has had limited impact on American

²³ *The Rough Riders*, Silent Era, last modified October 30, 2024, <http://www.silentera.com/PSFL/data/R/RoughRiders1927.html>.

²⁴ David Thomson, "Niven Busch: A Doer of Things," in *Backstory Interviews with Screenwriters of Hollywood's Golden Age*, ed. Patrick McGilligan (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986), 106 and Jeffrey R. Tishman, "The Story Behind 'A Message to García,'" *The News and Courier*, July 25, 1995, 9.

²⁵ Tishman "The Story Behind 'A Message to García,'" "Don Heckman "'Riders' Characters Prove Roughly Drawn," *Los Angeles Times*, July 19, 1997, and Chris Kaltenbach "Rough Riders' loses track of story in thickets of detail TV: Miniseries about Teddy Roosevelt and the Spanish-American War needs to cut to the chase," *Baltimore Sun*, July 19, 1997.

society, it does not receive much attention in American schooling. When it receives attention, it is usually a short discussion that glosses over the war and does not go into any depth regarding the war by mentioning all the problems faced by the United States in mobilizing for war. In most American textbooks and even histories of the United States at the university level, the Spanish-American War is dealt with in a fairly cursory manner. In most cases, when the war is discussed, it is treated as a minor historical event and the accounts confirm how this conflict helped make the United States a great power.²⁶ Despite the failure of mobilization for the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars being the catalyst for reforming the United States Army, few text books discuss the mobilization process for the war or the lasting impacts of this failed process. The heroic and sanitized view of the war does not adequately address the difficulties faced by the men who were mobilized for the Spanish-American War, which did not mirror the heroic reputation of the war in American popular culture. The men who served in the Spanish-American War suffered immensely because of the unpreparedness of the United States.²⁷ They suffered from inadequate logistical support which resulted in poor food, lack of equipment, and inadequate uniforms.²⁸ In addition, the failure to modernize resulted in ill-prepared maritime transportation. The true picture of the Spanish-American War is not a war of great heroism; it was a war of staggering incompetence on the part of the United States and one filled with a great deal of luck.²⁹ If the United States had been forced to fight a more capable power, the war would have potentially had very different outcomes.³⁰ To the general public, the failed mobilization process that occurred during the Spanish American War that led

²⁶ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire; the United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1971), I and Louis A. Pérez Jr, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapple Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 126.

²⁷ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 1.

²⁸ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire* 43.

²⁹ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, I.

³⁰ Ibid.

to the transformation of the military into the global fighting force it is today is not recognized or part of America's popular cultural awareness surrounding the conflict.

Historiography

The historiography of the Philippine-American War can be divided into three major categories: Philippine national histories, military histories of the Philippine-American War, and studies of the US colonial state in the Philippines.³¹ The third context is the most recent as it places the American-Philippine colonial state within the context of the US in the world. Each category has unique interests regarding what the war is about, its meaning, and its legacies. The following sections examines these historiographical areas to highlight a silence in the literature that is long overdue for historical examination.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Filipino historians, notably Teodoro A. Agoncillo, were searching for a defining event marking the beginning of Filipino history.³² The islands' three centuries of Spanish rule provided little inspiration or evidence of unification, but the final three and a half decades of Spain's rule provided the catalyst needed to establish a national identity.³³ The Filipinos who rediscovered the war in this context used it as a foundation for building this national identity. Thus, for many Filipino historians, the Philippine-American War was and is a national revolution.³⁴ Filipino historians began considering this war as the event that founded the Philippine nation, much in the same way Americans views the War for

³¹ This information comes from reading other works on the Philippine War that discuss the historiography of that conflict as, I have read few histories of the Philippine-American War written by Filipinos. An exception is Teodoro A. Agoncillo's *Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic*, a work that portrays the Philippine-American War as a struggle for liberation. I do intend to read more works by Filipinos on the war, including Renato Constantino and Letizia R. Constantino's *The Philippines: A Past Revisited*.

³² Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 219-220.

³³ Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines*, (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press), 14-15.

³⁴ Ibid.

Independence, and they used it to establish a coherent national story about the Philippines.³⁵

This is evident in *Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic* by Teodoro A. Agoncillo who is an early nationalist historians of the Philippines. He approaches the Philippine-American War as a national event rather than an event in and of itself, and tends to give credence to the more nationalistic or poetic renditions of events during the war.³⁶

In American military histories, the Philippine War has went through three broad periods. The first period of study was in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. Much of what was written during this period applauded the American presence in the Philippines and praised its civilizing impact, although a few anti-imperialist works countered these tendencies.³⁷ By the 1930s and 1940s, however, the Philippine-American War had faded as a focus of study, and it was only rediscovered in the Vietnam era when historians and the antiwar movement realized the US had fought a war in Southeast Asia that appeared similar to the one in Vietnam.³⁸

During the 1960s, the anti-war movement greatly influenced historians' views on the conduct of the Philippine-American War. Historians stressed that the atrocities committed during the war were indicative of the entire American military campaign.³⁹ They argued that

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Teodoro Agoncillo, *Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic* (Quezon City: Philippines, 1997). Other sources for a Filipino view point on the war include, Uldarico S. Baclagon, *Philippine Campaigns* (Manila, Philippines: Graphic House, 1952), Reynaldo H. Leyte, *Imperial, 1898–1902: The Philippine-American War* (Diliman, Quezón City: Office of Research Coordination, University of the Philippines, 1996), Resil B. Mojares, *The War against the Americans, Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu: 1899–1906* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1999), Orlino A. Ochosa, *The Tinio Brigade: Anti-American Resistance in the Ilocos Provinces, 1899–1901* (Quezón City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 1989), William Henry Scott, *Ilocano Responses to American Aggression, 1900–1901* (Quezón City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 1986), Bonifacio S. Salamanca, *The Filipino Response to American Rule, 1901–1913*, (Hamden, Connecticut: Shoe String Press, 1968; repr., Quezón City, Philippine Islands: New Day Publishers, 1989), Samuel K. Tan, *The Filipino-American War, 1899–1913* (Quezón City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press, 2002), and Gregorio F. Zaide, *The Philippine Revolution* (Manila: Modern Book Co., 1954, rev. 1968). For those who have interest on the Spanish experiences in the Philippines fighting the Filipinos and later the Americans see the Spanish language *El desastre Filipino* (Barcelona, Spain: Serra Hermanos y Russell, 1899) by Carlos Ría-Baja which contains personal narratives of Spanish soldiers who fought both the Filipino rebels and later the Americans.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., 220.

³⁹ Ibid.

the conflict in the Philippines was an unjust and oppressive war that sought to force America's views as well as its political and economic systems on an unwilling population that sought to become an independent nation with its own policies. This view was heavily anti-army and anti-imperialist. Many of these views, particularly the anti-army viewpoint, were fostered by events in the Vietnam War such as the Mi Lai massacre.⁴⁰ These events significantly influenced the opinion of historians who perceived parallels between the conduct of the Army during the war in Vietnam and the Philippine-American War.

One notable example of the antiwar movement's view is Stuart Creighton Miller's "*Benevolent Assimilation*": *The American Conquest of the Philippines 1899 to 1903*. In his book, Miller argues that use of brutality and repression were the main tools employed by the US Army and the US government to ensure the pacification of the Philippines and to force its rule. Miller stresses the racist attitudes of American soldiers and American policymakers throughout the work and attributes to these men the worst possible motivations. Throughout the work, Miller, without considering the overall military situation of the islands, argues that American commanders, especially General Ewell S. Otis, were incompetent due to their failure to understand the whole situation in the Philippines as well as lying to their civilian superiors.⁴¹ Although some of these criticisms are grounded in truth, Miller fails to completely assess the war and American actions.⁴² Miller uncritically accepts every single statement made by American military personnel and civilian leaders, instead taking them at face value. That is

⁴⁰ John M. Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags: The United States Army in the Philippines, 1898–1902* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1973), vii-viii.

⁴¹ Stuart Creighton Miller, "*Benevolent Assimilation*": *The American Conquest of the Philippines 1899 to 1903*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 31, 40, 46-48, 49-52, and 55-57.

⁴² Miller almost exclusively employs anti-imperialist sources, disregarding other primary sources that might call into question his conclusions about the war. Further, other scholars have called into question Miller's handling of his sources as well, see B.M. Linn, 'Stuart C. Miller and the American Soldier', *Pilipinas* VII (Fall 1986). See also two reviews, J.N. Schumacher, SJ in *Philippine Studies* XXXI (1983), pp. 272–4, and that by T. Burdett in *Newsletter of the S.L.A. Marshall Military History Collection in the Library of the University of Texas at El Paso* (July 1984).

not to say atrocities did not happen during the Philippine War; they did. We have an example of the Marine battalion under Major Littleton Waller that executed thirty-nine Filipinos over an eleven-day span during Smith's Samar Campaign in 1902, and similar reports were also filed throughout that campaign.⁴³

During the Vietnam era, the majority of historians were critical of the US's conduct in the Philippines. However, some historians, such as John Gates, argued that atrocities were rare and did not characterize the American strategy during the Philippine War. Gates contended that it was the policy of "benevolent assimilation" that helped bring an end to the war.⁴⁴ This policy stressed the introduction of public works that convinced Filipinos that American rule would be more advantageous than independence.⁴⁵ He also maintains that it was the Army that ensured a policy of pacification through good works even when civilian leaders in Washington and the Philippines advocated the adoption of harsher measures.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Gates notes that as the war continued, harsher tactics were introduced with the tightening of martial law and the creation of policies forcing Filipinos to choose sides.⁴⁷ These policies were only introduced after a period of warning, however, and came with an explanation of how the new rules would work. He admits that American actions in Samar were barbaric. Gates is, overall, a little too kind to the American soldier in the Philippines. Unfortunately, *Schoolbooks and Krags* fails to examine how the racist attitudes held by the white American troops in the Philippines allowed them to commit crimes and atrocities. Particularly their actions on the Philippine Island of Samar, would not have been acceptable or contemplated against opponents who were of Caucasian ancestry.

⁴³ Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 255.

⁴⁴ Ibid., viii.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 280-283.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 173-175.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 258-260.

Another important school that developed in parallel with the anti-imperialist interpretation of the war was the Wisconsin School, which captured the cultural mood of the 1960s.⁴⁸ Wisconsin School scholars argued that economic reasons and a desire for foreign markets drove American foreign policy and imperial ambitions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, resulting in the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars. Walter LaFeber, one of the leading scholars of the Wisconsin School, argued that businesses were seeking new markets due to the effects of the Panic of 1893 and pushed the government to intervene in Cuba.⁴⁹ LaFeber argued that although large segments of American industry initially resisted intervention, they changed their minds and exerted pressure, leading Congress to declare war and to develop a formal colonial empire.⁵⁰

With the Vietnam War's close, interpretations of the Philippine-American War began to change with historians re-assessing it once more. Authors concluded that American forces employed additional tactics besides massacres and atrocities or "benevolent assimilation" to pacify the Philippines. Historians highlighted the civil policies instituted by the US, in addition to sound military tactics, as an important factor that contributed to the defeat of the Filipinos in the Philippine-American War.

Following the American invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan and the subsequent counterinsurgency operations during the Global War on Terror, there has been a resurgence of interest in the Philippine-American War. Due to this recent interest and re-evaluation of the Philippine-American War, historians now assert that the American victory resulted from a combination of American military tactics, civil policies, and the political and military miscalculations of the leaders of the First Philippine Republic. Authors such as Brian Linn and

⁴⁸ Hopkins, *American Empire*, 341.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

David Silbey highlight that American victory was not one-dimensional and that the reasons for victory were a complex combination of policies and actions. Linn and Silbey argue that American civil policy was one of the primary reasons for the success of the US in the Philippine-American War. These policies removed the incentive to support the First Philippine Republic as the reforms the US introduced resolved many of the grievances that elite Filipinos had with Spanish rule.⁵¹ Thus, the Filipinos were unwilling to support a war that might negate the positive advantages the US offered. This weakened the ability of the Filipino rebels to resist the American conquest as the reforms removed support for the revolution.⁵² Silbey also stresses the importance of American military tactics in defeating the insurgents. He argues for the use of garrisons, the constant patrolling by army units, resettlement programs, a surge in American military forces, increased penalties for resistance, and rewarding those that collaborated as a significant reason for the success of the Army in the Philippines.⁵³ Silbey remarks that these strategies eroded the strength of the Filipino rebels as the tactics removed the capability of the Filipino rebels to resupply resulting in food and ammunition shortages.⁵⁴

Additionally, historians such as Glenn May maintain that internal Filipino issues fatally undermined the ability of the First Philippine Republic to resist the US.⁵⁵ These issues included internal fighting within the First Philippine Republic, class conflicts, and racial issues.⁵⁶ The schisms within Filipino society enabled the US to conquer the Philippines as they exploited them with a divide-and-conquer strategy. May argues that elite Filipinos primarily drove the rebellion against Spain and the resistance to the US's military occupation and colonialism because the establishment of an independent Philippines would allow them to

⁵¹ Silbey *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 127-128, 135-138, 183-184, and 205-208.

⁵² Ibid., 135-138.

⁵³ Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags*, 214-216.

⁵⁴ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 179-180.

⁵⁵ Glenn A. May, "Why the United States Won the Philippine American War, 1899-1902," *Pacific History Review*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Nov., 1983): 360 and 365-267.

⁵⁶ Ibid., and Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 11-14.

consolidate their economic dominance of the Philippines. He argues that many poor Filipinos did not support or oppose either side; they simply tried to survive in difficult circumstances and attempted to please both sides.⁵⁷ Unlike earlier views concerning the Philippine-American War, modern views perceive American victory as the result of multiple interdependent causes. Historians no longer argue that terror or “benevolent assimilation” alone were the reasons for an American victory. Instead, they view American victory as a result of a combination of Filipino weakness, American military tactics, and American civic reforms and improved conditions in the Philippines. Although recent historians do not believe the use of atrocities was a major factor in American strategy, many continue to stress these factors and criticize the US Army for such actions. They also emphasize that these events were not an official US Army policy and were an exception rather than a rule.⁵⁸ Historians highlight the campaign on Samar as one of the areas where the worst American atrocities took place and stress that terror tactics were widely employed during this campaign.

The final historiographical grouping that the Philippine-American War falls into is that of the US in the world. American historiography of the war has always predominantly examined the American experience, but it failed for many years to consider the broader international context of colonialism and imperialism at the beginning of the twentieth century. This issue has been recently corrected as historians have begun to examine the broader imperial context in which the US was involved at the turn of the previous century. Historians like Paul A. Kramer have begun to examine the American occupation of the Philippines by placing it into the imperial context of the early twentieth century, arguing that the American colonial empire was not that exceptional when compared to the other colonial empires. These historians demonstrated that the US government and military relied upon the experience and

⁵⁷ May, “Why the United States Won the Philippine American War,” 360, 365-267.

⁵⁸ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire* 207-208.

expertise of other nations, rather than being truly exceptional. Further, the rhetoric the American government utilized to justify its actions was the same as that used by other colonial powers, particularly the United Kingdom.⁵⁹

There are several examples of how the US employed previous knowledge developed by European colonial powers to establish a colonial government in the Philippines. For example, one can examine the American occupation of the southern Philippine Islands, specifically the islands of Mindanao and Jolo, which have a heavy concentration of Muslims living there. Joshua Gedacht demonstrates the importance of other nations' colonial knowledge in this region in his article "Holy War, Progress, and 'Modern Mohammedans' in Colonial Southeast Asia."⁶⁰ When the US occupied these islands, no knowledge of this region or any idea of how to rule this area existed as the region had never been fully controlled by Spain.⁶¹ The US turned to former Spanish officials who remained in the islands such as Father Pio Pi whose knowledge the US relied upon to develop an effective colonial regime in the southern Philippines.⁶² Kramer highlights "that the racial elements that were involved in both the American and British colonial experiences developed into a shared Anglo-Saxon colonial idea."⁶³ Both the US and the British Empire used this idea to justify their colonial controls. Additionally, several articles examine how the US, like other European powers, developed colonial infrastructure and colonial architecture such as the establishment of its own "hill station."⁶⁴ This is a growing field because it demonstrates that the US looked outwards for experience on how to govern colonies of people who are culturally different. American

⁵⁹ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 11, 89-90, 121, and 177.

⁶⁰ Joshua Gedacht, "Holy War, Progress, and 'Modern Mohammedans' in Colonial Southeast Asia," *The Muslim World*, Vol. 105, No. 4 (Sep., 2015), 454-456.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 454.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 454-455.

⁶³ Paul A. Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule Between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (March 2002), 1320-1325.

⁶⁴ David Eric Brody, "Building Empire Architecture and American Imperialism in the Philippines," *The Journal of Asian-American Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (June, 2001), 123-145.

colonial experience though unique in some aspects was, by and large, an adaptation of what other European nations were doing at the turn of the twentieth century.⁶⁵ This recent development has helped to expand our understanding of the Philippines and their place within the American empire and the ideals and ideas behind American imperialism.

One of the central works in this field is Paul A. Kramer's *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the US, and the Philippines*. This work surveys the racial attitudes of Americans and Filipinos and the importance of race in building the American colonial state. This book focuses primarily on the American colonial state in the Philippines but also surveys the American colonial adventure in the context of the wider imperial world at the turn of the twentieth century. This book begins the discussion of race comparing and contrasting Filipino attitudes of race with those of Spain, examining how the Spanish used race to argue that the Filipinos were unfit for self-government and inclusion within the Spanish legislature.⁶⁶ *Blood of Government* demonstrates how the Christianized Hispanicized Filipinos used race to argue they should have representation in the Spanish legislature.⁶⁷ The book also studies how the US and the Filipinos used race in a complex dialogue to argue whether or not the US should be able to colonize the Philippines as part of the development of an American colonial state.⁶⁸ The work also highlights that the Americans essentially adopted many of the Spanish arguments for why the Filipinos should not be allowed to rule themselves and how race played a crucial role in the Philippine-American War. This war quickly became a war of race because only "uncivilized" races engaged in guerrilla war while "civilized" races conducted European style wars. As the Filipinos resorted to guerrilla warfare, the Americans used this as further

⁶⁵ Thomas R. Metcalf, "From One Empire to Another: The Influence of the British Raj on American Colonialism in the Philippines," *Ab Imperio*, Issue 3, 2012 (Nov., 2012), 25-41.

⁶⁶ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 40-43 and 52-55.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 40-43, 52-55, and 73-76.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 89 and 102.

justification for their control of the Philippines and their military actions in the islands such as creating concentration camps.⁶⁹

Blood of Government further explores race and race relations in the emerging American-Philippine colonial state, and it explores how race was not directly imported into the Philippines from the US but instead developed due to the collaborative nature of the American colonial experiment.⁷⁰ However, Kramer also demonstrates that this new racial understanding that existed within the Philippines between white Americans and Filipinos was not paralleled in the US, and Filipinos were still regarded as inferior peoples.⁷¹ This conflicted perspective is most evident in the 1904 St. Louis Louisiana Purchase Exposition when the US and the American colonial government in the Philippines developed a colonial section of this exposition, a common practice by European empires.⁷² This Philippine section of the fair had several goals including encouraging assimilation, showcasing the benevolence of the US's actions in the Philippines, and promoting American investment and the reduction of tariffs in the Philippines.⁷³ Also, the American colonial government and the "civilized" Christianized Hispanicized Filipinos sought the recognition of these Filipinos as equals to Caucasian Americans. However, the exposition was a complete failure. The exposition convinced the American public they had civilized the Philippines in the short period of American control, but it did not recognize the difference between the "civilized" and "uncivilized" Filipinos as was intended, greatly offending the Christianized Hispanicized Filipinos.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Ibid., 137, 145, 146, and 152. The water cure is a form of torture in which the victim is forced to drink large quantities of water, or other liquids resulting in gastric distension, water intoxication, and possibly death. The victim has the mouth forced or wedged open, the nose closed, and a funnel forced down the throat. The victim has to drink all the water poured into the funnel to avoid drowning. The stomach fills until near bursting, swelling up in the process and is sometimes beaten until the victim vomits and the torture begins again.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 159-160.

⁷¹ Ibid., 257-258 and 276-277.

⁷² Ibid., 238.

⁷³ Ibid., 232, 240, 242, 247, and 257-258.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 257, 268-269, and 273-275.

There is much to explore in the military aspects of the war and with American imperialism in the early twentieth century. This reflects the reality that the Philippine War, outside of Filipino history, has not been widely studied. In addition, there is one particular aspect of the Philippine-American War that has not been thoroughly examined. This aspect is the experience of soldiers during the mobilization for the war and the experiences of these early soldiers of a global American empire. Although the attitudes, opinions, and experiences of soldiers have been touched upon in most military history works, there have only been two notable works dedicated to studying the experiences and attitudes of the soldiers during the conflict. These works are Willard B Gatewood Jr.'s *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden* and his follow-up volume *Smoked Yankees and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers 1898 to 1902*.⁷⁵

An examination of this topic is beneficial for the field of the US role in the world and the military history of its war in the Philippines as it would provide a deeper understanding of the attitudes and opinions of those who fought and participated in the conflict⁷⁶. The deployment of troops in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War helped prepare the United States for later military conflicts by exposing the weaknesses in the United States military, particularly its army, and forcing reforms that ensured the United States could effectively deploy troops in the world wars during the twentieth century.

Sources and Methodology

⁷⁵ Willard B. Gatewood Jr., *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975), and Willard B. Gatewood Jr., *"Smoked Yankees" and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (Fayetteville, AK: The University of Arkansas Press, 1987).

⁷⁶ It is important to note the American army that conquered the Philippines was largely a volunteer army that was raised for that purpose, and not the Regular US Army.

This project bases its examinations on the primary sources left behind by the soldiers who served in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War and the prelude to the Philippine-American War. It uses letters, diaries, and other primary sources collected from the United States Army History and Heritage Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania as well as some other less explored archival collections to discuss the experiences of the ordinary soldier. These sources primarily focus on the experiences of the ordinary American soldier and the volunteer regiments, with very little use of the recollections of high-ranking officers.

This paper's principal source of material originates from the Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, compiled in the late 1960s and early 1970s by the Army's History and Heritage Center in Carlisle, Pennsylvania primarily from the remaining living veterans of those conflicts and their widows. The basis of this collection is the Spanish-American War Veterans and Widows Survey, which began in 1968 under the supervision of the U.S. Military History Research Collection at Carlisle Barracks, the predecessor of the U.S. Army Military History Institute. The Spanish-American War Veterans and Widows Survey utilized the pension records of the Veterans Administration to send letters requesting that veterans or widows answer questionnaires about service during the Spanish-American War, Philippine-American War, and the Boxer Rebellion—known as the China Relief Expedition by the U.S. Army—and the donation of any material relating to those conflicts. Approximately 800 veterans agreed to complete the questionnaire which covered topics including equipment, discipline, military life, and leadership. Additionally, widows also responded to the request for information by providing data that resulted in significant additional material for the Survey and, in a few cases family members of recently deceased widows or veterans.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ "Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection: An Inventory of the Collection," U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 2.

This collection has numerous different types of primary sources. Such sources include questionnaires the veterans or widows answered for the survey as well as letters, diaries, and other archival collections. The questionnaires contain information regarding the veteran's branch of service, length of service, campaign participation and other aspects of daily military life. Materials donated by the veterans, widows, and families included diaries, military records, personal records, newspaper clippings, photographs, and uniforms. This collection is arranged into ten groups organized by state, Regular Army units, and US volunteer units. Regular Army and volunteer unit items comprise the vast majority of the collection. State units are arranged alphabetically by state, and soldiers are alphabetically by last name.

The letters of two individuals, Edward Dunbar and William Christner, were used extensively. Edward Dunbar was a private in the 1st California Volunteer Infantry. He completed the questionnaire but also supplied a transcription of his letters home to his future wife along with commentary on the Veterans Survey. The original letters are held in California. Dunbar's letters cover the period from his enlistment to his discharge from service, and his commentary provides additional context and information about his experiences in the war. William Christener was a private who served in the 10th Pennsylvania Infantry. He wrote home regularly, and his letters report the movement of the 10th Pennsylvania west to San Francisco to the return of the 10th Pennsylvania to that city in 1899. The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey has extensive material for use because of the surveys collected by the History and Heritage Center from the veterans themselves. This diverse set of source draws information from the memories of the state volunteer regiments who served in the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars. It also, draws information from those who served in the various federal volunteer regiments raised to fight in both of those wars. It also gathers information from soldiers who served in the Regular Army during those conflicts.

Additionally, this collection holds a limited amount of material from those who served in the

United States Navy, United States Marine Corps, and some civilian employees. The collection primarily consists of the recollections from the enlisted personnel of these conflicts, with a smaller collection of officers remembrances. For those who wish to study any of these topics particularly the experiences of the soldiers involved in the conflicts, this collection is vital for that task.

Archival research was also conducted at various other archives in the United States. The vast majority of the state volunteer units that served in the Philippines were raised in the Western states, such as Colorado, Idaho, and Montana, with only a few regiments from states east of the Mississippi River. Therefore, most of the other archival research conducted was from states west of the Mississippi River. Materials were collected from the University of Nebraska, in Lincoln which holds various archival materials relating to Nebraskan experiences during this conflict. Although this collection does not have much relating to the soldier's experiences, it has a significant collection of civilian experiences from the Spanish-American War. These primary sources come from scrapbooks collecting newspaper reports and letters to newspapers as well as some letters sent by civilians to volunteers in the Army during mobilization. History Colorado, located in the state capital of Denver, was one of the research sites utilized. It holds a rich source of material on Colorado soldiers and their experiences during the conflict. This archival source has civilian-generated sources on the war from the collections of clippings about the conflict as well as a large group of letters from soldiers who served in the 1st Colorado Regiment. This collection is also quite interesting as it holds a great deal of material about the death of the first soldier from Colorado and the pageantry that surrounded his death and funeral.

Research was also conducted in Utah in Salt Lake City at the Church History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, which has one notable source in its

collection: that of David J. Davis. He recorded his experiences in letters home to his family from his enlistment until his early discharge due to an accidental injury and illness received during his service. The University of Utah, also in Salt Lake City, has a small collection of material relating to the Philippine and Spanish-American Wars. Research was also conducted at the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg, which does not have much relating to the Spanish-American War; however, it contains one notable collection in the papers of Edward Martin, the 32nd Governor of Pennsylvania who served in the 10th Pennsylvania. The 10th Pennsylvania was one of the few Eastern regiments to serve in the Philippines during the Philippine-American War. This collection is notable since it has not only his letters—which cover the entire period of his service from the training of the 10th Pennsylvania at Mount Gretna, Pennsylvania to the regiment's return to Pennsylvania—but also has letters from his relative, JJ Martin. JJ Martin served as a replacement for the 10th Pennsylvania, thus providing a differing view than most other soldiers. His accounts reflect a much less negative view of the Filipinos. Other primary sources include published memoirs from members of various regiments that served the Philippines including a memoir published by Thomas M. Anderson, who served in the 24th United States Infantry Regiment; John Bowe who served in the 13th Minnesota; and Needom N. Freeman, who served in the Philippines and the 23rd United States Infantry. The memoirs of Freeman are particularly useful as they present a view from one of the few regular soldiers who served in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War.

There are multiple benefits derived from using the primary sources employed in this project. They allow the voices of the average soldier to be heard and their suffering and experiences understood. Many works about the War of 1898 and the Philippine-American War focus primarily on the higher-ranking American military personnel as well as political leadership of the colonial project. These military histories also tend to discuss the objective failures of the American military during the War of 1898 and their negative impact on the

morale and health of the soldiers. Utilizing the voices of the average soldier provides substance to these critiques and shows how they lay the foundations for broader reform in the United States Army and National Guard. Recognising the sheer misery and negative experiences of the American volunteer citizen soldier helps us understand why these reforms took place quickly after the war. Before war's outbreak, the US Army had been undergoing changes at a slow and unhurried pace. The experiences of the ordinary soldiers forced the United States to confront the dilapidated state of its Army and reserves in the face of modern warfare.

A drawback of using these American-centric primary sources is the general lack of Filipino voices. This limits our understanding of this conflict to just the views of the Americans. This is an unfortunate omission; however, it is one made necessary by the scope of this paper. The focus of this paper is the experience of the American soldiers during the mobilization for both the Spanish-American and the Philippine-American War. For those interested in the Filipino side of the war, there are many available sources, including *A Spaniard in Aguinaldo's Army: The Military Journal of Telesfor Carrasco y Perez* by Telesfor Carrasco y Perez who served as a soldier in the Philippine Revolutionary Army from the outset of the war with the Americans to the insurgent phase of the conflict. There is also *Recalling the Revolution: Memoirs of a Filipino General* by Santiago V. Alvarez who served as a general in the Philippine Revolutionary Army. Other sources include those written by Filipino leadership during the Philippine American War such as Emilio Aguinaldo's memoirs *Memoirs of the Revolution*. Finally, Glenn Anthony May's archival research material which includes recordings and interviews of Filipino veterans of the Philippine Revolutionary Army

is available at University of Oregon Libraries in their Special Collections, in Eugene, Oregon, in the United States⁷⁸.

Secondary works used for this paper come from many places but are primarily from works published in the past ten to twenty years. The most useful of the works employed was David Silbey's *A War of Frontier and Empire: The Philippine American War, 1899-1902* and Brian McAllister Lynn's *The Philippine War 1899-1902* which provided a helpful overview of the general course of the war. Another valuable secondary source is *Campaigning in the Philippines* by Karl Irving. Although this is an older source, it is a work that is contemporary to the Philippine War. *Campaigning in the Philippines* is quite useful as it provides an in-depth view of the war and uses various primary sources in its text. This work laid out the course of the Philippine War from the recruitment of American troops during the Spanish-American War, their deployment to the Philippines, and their actions from their arrival in the Philippines until 1899, as the state volunteer units were withdrawn. This work provided an extensive and more detailed view of the course of the conflict; so that, the reader could easily follow the early progression of the conflicts in greater detail. Other sources include a modern comparative analysis of the American colonial experiment as compared to other countries' colonial experiments including the British and Japanese. John Scott Reed's *The US Volunteers in the Southern Philippines: Counterinsurgency, Pacification, and Collaboration, 1899-1901*, discusses the experiences of the United States federal volunteer regiments that were deployed to the southern Philippines from 1899 to 1901. This is one of the few sources that examines the experiences of the soldier during the conflict and it is quite useful in providing an

⁷⁸ Santiago V. Alvarez, *Recalling the Revolution: Memoirs of a Filipino General*, trans. Paula Carolina S. Malay (Madison, WI: Center for Southeast Asia Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1992), Emilio Aguinaldo, *My Memoirs: Memoirs of the Revolution*, trans. Luz Colendrino-Bucu (Manila: Christina Aguinaldo Suntay, 1967), Telesfor Carrasco Perez, *A Spaniard in Aguinaldo's Army: The Military Journal of Telesfor Carrasco y Perez*, trans. Nick Joaquin (Manila: Solar Publishing Corporation, 1986), and Glenn May Research Collection on the Philippine American War. Special Collections and University Archives. University of Oregon Libraries.

examination of the federal volunteers' service while in the southern Philippines. Willard B. Gatewood's *Smoked Yankees and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers* and *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden* are beneficial sources that discuss the experiences of African-American soldiers deployed to the Philippines after the outbreak of the Philippine war in 1899. The books *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden* and *Smoked Yankees* provide primary source material that include the conflicting views of African-American service personnel who are called upon to help implement a racist American imperial project against other dark-skinned individuals. Other works consulted include *Prairie Imperialists: The Indian Country Origins of American Empire* by Kathern Bjork and Christopher Capozzola's *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines*. These works present how the logic of American expansion and racial attitudes carried over to the American imperial project in the Philippines demonstrating the connections between the United States' settler colonial frontiers and the imperial project in the Philippines.

Structure

In the following chapters, this thesis tracks the deployment of American troops, beginning with their mobilization in the United States to their arrival in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War and ending with the outbreak of the Philippine-American War in early 1899. This chronology allows the reader to follow the experiences of the soldiers as they were mobilized, trained, and deployed to the Philippines as well as their time served in the early occupation of Manila. It reveals the building tensions within the volunteer regiments as well as the slow degradation of relations between the Americans and the Filipino nationalists in the prelude to the outbreak of the Philippine-American War.

The first chapter of this project examines the historical background of the Philippine War and the Spanish American War, providing the historical context on how the United States ended up sending military forces thousands of miles from its shores. The second chapter of this project examines the mobilization of the state militia regiments, also known as the National Guard, and the suffering during the mobilization of the American volunteers. This chapter also discusses the problems confronted by the National Guard and the internal structural issues that would resurface throughout their service in the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars. The third chapter discusses the training regimen of the National Guard units in the Presidio in San Francisco and the problems and challenges they faced in the training camps that were harbingers of the conditions that would exist on the transports. The third chapter also discusses the horrendous conditions the state volunteer regiments faced on the transports during their deployment to the Philippines. The last chapter of this project examines the American occupation of Manila and the growing discontent of the American volunteers, who believed they should be returned home as the Spanish-American War had come to an end. This chapter examines the slow decline of Filipino-American relations that helped lead to the outbreak of the Philippine-American War due to the American soldiers being retained in the Philippines. The soldiers were frustrated because of significant cultural differences, and the uncertainty in Washington over the fate of the Philippines.

Chapter 1: Spain, Cuba, the Philippines and the United States and the War of 1898

Historical Context

By 1898, Spain was an empire in decline desperately holding on to the last remnants of their once great, but now disintegrating, colonial empire. Following Columbus's first voyage to the Americas, Spain had conquered and colonized most of the Americas, parts of Africa, and many of the islands of Oceania. However, by 1898 Spain had lost most of its American colonial empire which it had established following the European discovery of the Americas in 1492. The Spanish South and Central American possessions had successfully ended Spanish rule, becoming independent states throughout the early to middle nineteenth century. These losses reduced Spain's possessions to Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and various other small Pacific Island chains in Oceania, as well as their African colonial holdings. The two most prized and important of these possessions were the Philippines and Cuba. However, both of these colonies were dissatisfied with Spanish rule and were pressing for independence.

Cuba

Europeans first sighted Cuba during Columbus's first voyage in 1492 while he was searching for a western route to India. The first European settlement of the island came 20 years later, in 1511, when the Spanish crown dispatched Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar to establish a settlement in Cuba and conquer the island. Velázquez departed from the island of Hispaniola and landed at Baracoa where he established the first European settlement in Cuba. Despite resistance from the local Taíno people, under *Cacique* Hatuey and other leaders, the Spanish were able to conquer the majority of the island by 1514, three years after the start of

the Spanish conquest. As Spanish control of Cuba solidified, it became Spain's principal Caribbean holding with a network of plantations that grew tobacco and sugar, which were the primary exports from Cuba.¹ Due to the strategic importance of Cuba to Spain's American colonial empire, the Spanish sought to restrict access to the island from other European nations.² With access heavily regulated, the Cuban economy stagnated and was often technologically behind those of Spain's colonial rivals.³ However, as the nineteenth century progressed the Cuban economy began to flourish due to the influx of French planters fleeing the Haitian Revolution, the expansion of the slave system in Cuba, and the opening of Cuba's ports to world trade⁴.

Beginning in the 1820s, Cubans began agitating for independence. The first revolt for independence took place in 1826; it was crushed and its leaders executed.⁵ The first serious challenge to Spanish authority arose with the outbreak of the Ten Years' War, 1868 to 1878. This rebellion was defeated by the Spanish leading to a truce between the Cuban revolutionaries and the Spanish authorities. This truce was briefly interrupted by the second major rebellion for independence, The Little War of 1879 to 1880, which the Spanish successfully suppressed. The Little War of 1879 to 1880, the second major rebellion for independence, briefly interrupted the truce; however, this rebellion was successfully suppressed by the Spanish. During the seventeen years following the end of the Ten Years' War, many changes took place in Cuban society, such as the abolition of slavery, a drop in the number of sugar mills, an increase in sugar production efficiency, and a major increase in tenant farmers.⁶ Finally, with Cuba open to the world, American investments poured into

¹ Peter Bakewell, *A History of Latin America to 1825*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 74.

² Hugh Thomas, *Cuba: A History* (New York: Penguin, 2010), 89.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Geoff Simons, *Cuba: From Conquistador to Castro*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), 138.

⁶ José Cantón Navarro, *History of Cuba: The Challenge of the Yoke and the Star* (La Habana, Cuba: Si-Mar S.A: 2001), 53–55.

Cuban sugar, tobacco, and mining industries.⁷ Cuba gradually became increasingly economically dependent on the United States in spite of remaining a Spanish colony. These changes created the conditions necessary for a renewed uprising against Spanish control: the Cuban War of Independence, 1895 to 1898.⁸ The war began on February 24, 1895, with uprisings across Cuba under the leadership of José Julián Martí Pérez.

The Cuban War of Independence, like the previous two revolts for independence, attracted the American public's attention and support for the island's rebels. Despite official opposition from the American Federal government, the Cuban revolutionaries received the support of American backers who publicized their cause and provided supplies and volunteers. Spain struggled to suppress this revolt and began instituting harsher tactics in order to crush the independence movement under the new Spanish commander Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau.

To combat the successes of the Cuban rebels, Weyler instituted several policies to separate the Cuban revolutionaries from the civilian population in order to suppress their support system. These policies included public executions, mass exile of residents, forced concentration of residents in cities or designated areas, and destruction of farms and their crops. These orders forced hundreds of thousands of Cubans into cities and towns with crowded and unsanitary conditions where starvation quickly occurred. In these conditions, tens of thousands of Cubans died, with some estimates going as high as 10% of the total population.⁹

The real horrors and fictional accounts printed by pro Cuban American newspapers, enraged the American public opinion against Spanish rule in Cuba. The American public was genuinely concerned about the horrible conditions in Cuba and demanded action from their

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba 1895-1898*, (Chapel Hill, NC The University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 223.

government.¹⁰ As a result, the American warship USS *Maine* was deployed to Havana harbour in January 1898. The *Maine*, an implicit threat to the Spanish regarding their actions in Cuba, exploded on the night of February 15, 1898 killing the vast majority of her crew. The explosion that destroyed the *Maine* was likely caused by a coal bunker fire. However, the American public as well as the United States government and the U.S. Navy blamed the explosion on a Spanish mine. The sinking of the *Maine* did not immediately cause an outbreak of war between United States and Spain. President William McKinley did not cite its sinking as a *casus belli* for war, but her loss made a peaceful solution to the challenge of Cuba an unlikely event.¹¹ The American public had developed a general consensus that Spain had lost control of the island and was incensed by the atrocities, real or imagined, in Cuba.¹² The American public believed Spain would not be able to reassert control over the island.¹³ Ultimately, those factors, when coupled with the hysteria caused by the sinking of the *Maine*, created the conditions necessary for the United States to declare war on Spain on April 21, 1898, two months after the loss of the ship.¹⁴

The Philippines

The first European contact with the Philippine Islands came in 1521 during Ferdinand Magellan's circumnavigation of the world. Spanish Colonization began in 1564 when Philip II ordered an expedition be assembled to explore and conquer the Philippine Islands. This expedition departed from Mexico in November of that year. The Spanish expedition arrived in the Philippines on February 13, 1565 and slowly began conquering and colonizing the islands

¹⁰ *Crucible of Empire: The Spanish–American War*, directed by Daniel A. Miller (1999; New York: Great Projects Film Company, Inc, 2007), DVD.

¹¹ Ivan Musicant, *Empire by Default: The Spanish–American War and the Dawn of the American Century* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998), 151–152.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

as well as converting its inhabitants to Catholicism. By 1599, Spain had completed its conquest of the Philippines and controlled the majority of the islands. The exception was the southern Philippine Islands, the Sulu Islands, and Mindanao which continued to resist Spanish rule until the Americans annexed the islands at the end of the Spanish-American War.¹⁵ During the 17th and 18th centuries the Philippines remained closed to most trade and foreigners, and it became an important stop on the Pacific galleon route taking silver, gold, and other goods from the Pacific Coast of Mexico to Spain.¹⁶ In late nineteenth century the circumstances had changed; Mexico had become independent from Spain and there were no more galleons sailing from Acapulco. Industrialization had also spread throughout the world and demand for raw resources had skyrocketed, and the Philippines were opened to world commerce in 1834.¹⁷

Opening the Philippines to international trade made the Philippines more valuable for Spain, and it also created the conditions necessary for the development of Filipino nationalism. Technological, social, and economic developments of the nineteenth century permitted easier access between Spain and the Philippines leading to increased tensions. Spaniards born in Spain began to fill important governmental and economic positions in the Philippines taking these positions away from Filipinos.¹⁸ Additionally with an increasing wealth base and thus an expanding middle and upper classes, more Filipinos could afford to attend university in Spain which brought them into contact with many European intellectual developments.¹⁹ This created a Western-educated Filipino elite who were instructed in Spain

¹⁵ Robert A. Fulton, *Moroland: The History of Uncle Sam and the Moros, 1899-1920* (Bend, OR: Tumalo Creek Press, 2016), 8.

¹⁶ Herb Kawainui Kane, "The Manila Galleons," in *Hawai'i Chronicles: Island History from the Pages of Honolulu Magazine*, ed. Bob Dye, Vol. 1 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press), 25–32.

¹⁸ Kramer, *Blood of Government*, 39.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 43–44.

and developed a Filipino national sense of identity through their studies, and later began agitating for reform in the Philippines as well as independence from Spain.²⁰

In the Philippines, the dissatisfaction with Spanish rule led to the outbreak of the Philippine Revolution in 1896 led by Andrés Bonifacio y de Castro, a warehouse worker. The revolution was eventually taken over by Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy and his followers, who had Bonifacio executed. Fortunately for the Spanish authorities, the Filipino revolutionaries were the one enemy they were able to defeat. Thanks to reinforcements dispatched from Spain, the Spanish leadership in the Philippines were able to push back the revolutionaries and turn the tide of the ongoing rebellion.²¹ Under the leadership of Aguinaldo, the Filipino revolutionaries were eventually pushed back and surrounded in Biak-na-Bato. Understanding the hopelessness of the situation, Aguinaldo concluded that surrendering and going into exile was the best course of action for him. He struck a deal with the Spanish leadership, which would pay him 800,000 Spanish pesetas if he went into exile along with some of his followers.²² After agreeing to this deal, Aguinaldo and his supporters departed the Philippines to go into exile in Hong Kong. Aguinaldo, and his faction, correctly did not believe the Spanish would live up to their end of the deal and Aguinaldo certainly had no intent on maintaining his end of the bargain either.²³ Upon his arrival in Hong Kong on December 27, 1897, Aguinaldo promptly deposited the money given to him by Spain in a bank account to save for the renewed struggle for Philippine independence.²⁴ With this done, Aguinaldo settled into a comfortable exile and waited for a new opportunity to return to the Philippines to resurrect the revolution and throw

²⁰ Ibid., 73-76.

²¹ *Recalling the Revolution: Memoirs of a Filipino General*, trans. Paula Carolina S. Malay (Madison, WI: Center for Southeast Asia Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1992), 110.

²² Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 15.

²³ Ibid., 15-16.

²⁴ Ibid.

off the yoke of Spanish imperial control.²⁵ This opportunity would present itself four months later, in April 1898, when war broke out between the Spanish and the Americans over Cuba.

The United States

As the nineteenth century came to a close, the United States was rapidly developing into a world power; its frontier was closed and its influence; the nation's confidence increased. From its humble beginnings as a frontier republic established after a colonial revolt, the United States had weathered the challenges of sectionalism and slavery which resulted in a catastrophic Civil War in the mid-nineteenth century followed by a contentious decade of reconstruction. However, while the United States faced these challenges it was at the same time rapidly becoming a world power. The cataclysmic American Civil War from 1861 to 1865 ended the cancerous issue of slavery that had, in the previous four decades, created numerous political problems in the United States that resulted in increasing political instability. The destruction of slavery during the Civil War also conclusively ended sectionalism as a threat to the American union, allowing for a more unified nation.

However, while the United States faced these challenges, it was at the same time rapidly becoming a world power. The demands of the Civil War helped to advance American industrial and military power with innovation leading to the development of new weapons including turreted warships, early machine guns, and the introduction of repeating firearms. While these developments helped propel American industrial and military might, these advancements did not necessarily translate into a strong or well-prepared military.²⁶ Following the end of the Civil War, the United States rapidly demobilized its military forces and allowed them to languish in the decades that followed as the United States focused on reconstruction

²⁵ Ibid., 16.

²⁶ Ibid., 19.

and conquering the native peoples of the Western Plains. In the meantime, American industrial and technological prowess boosted its world influence and economic importance and provided an impetus to look beyond its borders to expand its influence.²⁷ Part of the drive for this was due to an economic downturn: the Long Depression, which began in the 1870s and led the US to seek new markets for its products.²⁸

However, the United States discovered that it was militarily unprepared to carry out this role. The possibility of war with Spain during the *Virginius* Affair of 1873 exposed the weaknesses of the United States Navy, demonstrating that the Civil War vintage Navy had fallen behind most other powers.²⁹ This lesson was reinforced by the Panama Crisis of 1885 when to the shock and horror of American politicians they discovered Chile—a nation that was smaller and certainly less wealthy and powerful than the United States—had a more powerful navy.³⁰ Due to these discoveries, the United States began to very slowly modernize its naval forces to the point that by 1898 the Navy, while still suffering from some shortcomings, nevertheless had the capability of carrying out a modern military conflict against the Spanish Navy.³¹ At the same time, the American army had not truly modernized. Although professional officers following the end of the Civil War had recognized and pushed for a reformation of the American army, this process was still being undertaken by the time the Spanish-American War broke out.³² The Spanish-American War demonstrated how antiquated the United States Army had become following the end of the Civil War, and it exposed the numerous failings of the Army. The mobilization for the Spanish-American War demonstrated

²⁷ Hopkins, *American Empire*, 356-358.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ James B Rentfrew, *Home Squadron: The U.S. Navy on the North Atlantic Station* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2014), 47-48.

³⁰ Carlos Tromben, "Naval Presence: The Cruiser Esmeralda in Panama," *International Journal of Naval History*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (April, 2002), p. 1-2, https://www.ijnhonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/pdf_tromben_english.pdf.

³¹ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 4-26.

³² Ibid., 19-20.

to the entire American population the failures of the American army and the necessity of reforming it.³³

This process of reforming the Army had not been completed by the time of the outbreak of war with Spain. Consequently, the United States Army faced numerous challenges while mobilizing for war, from a shortage of officers to properly coordinating and training incoming state volunteer units, and to supplying the men adequately with enough tents and modern weapons.³⁴ Further, the military had issues ensuring its supply system was adequately prepared for provisioning and supporting the newly raised Army.³⁵ All these issues created terrible conditions for the men who had volunteered to fight in the Spanish-American war and were deployed to the Philippines during that conflict. As a result of this conflict, the United States Army was able to modernize itself before it became involved in the First World War almost two decades later. Although a little remembered or studied war in popular culture, the Spanish-American War and the following Philippine War had far more consequential impacts than most Americans understand. Both conflicts heralded the United States' entry as a great power on the world stage at the beginning of the global American empire, with a more sustained American involvement in world affairs.³⁶ Thus, the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars are essential to study and understand as they herald the rise of the United States as the sole preeminent power of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

³³ Report of the Adjutant-General of the State of Connecticut, 1899, xxiv and Report of the of the Commission Appointed by the President to Investigate the Conduct of the War with Spain, 1899, 94–95.

³⁴ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Muehlbauer and Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, 282.

The Cuban Road to War

The Peninsular War, 1807 to 1814, and the Carlist Wars created significant difficulties for the Spanish Empire that contributed to the loss of the vast majority of Spain's American colonies. The challenges facing Spain led to the creation of a new definition of the concept of empire within Spain. This concept emerged with the development of Spanish nationalism in the latter part of the nineteenth century.³⁷ This new idea viewed the Spanish nation as a nation based on a shared cultural and linguistic history that tied Spain's colonies together with the metropole.³⁸ However, this vision of a shared nationalism between Spain and its colonies was not shared by everyone. This opinion was rejected by revolutionaries such as José Martí, who sought wider autonomy and, ultimately, independence from Spain. Martí, who was in exile in the United States, continued to advocate for Cuban independence and planned for a resumption of the struggle in spite of the stalemate of the Ten Years' War and reforms enacted due to the Pact of Zanjón which ended that conflict.³⁹ In 1895, after several years of organizing, Martí launched an invasion of Cuba intended to spark a rebellion that would quickly drive the Spanish out of Cuba. Martí's plan called for three landings that would coincide with a renewed call for revolution, the *grito de Baire*, which Martí hoped would create the conditions necessary for a swift victory over Spain.⁴⁰ While Martí's *grito de Baire* was successful and two of the landings took place, it was not the overwhelming result he had hoped for, and the Cuban nationalists prepared to fight a protracted insurgent campaign.⁴¹ Meanwhile, the "Cuba Libre" movement, under the leadership of the "Cuban Junta," mounted

³⁷ Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewitson, eds., *What is a Nation?: Europe 1789–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 225–226.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 218–220.

³⁹ David F. Trask, *The War With Spain in 1898* (Lincoln, NK: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 2–3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

an extensive propaganda campaign in United States that generated popular support among the American public in favour of Cuban independence. It also smuggled in volunteers and supplies into Cuba to support the rebellion.

Due to Spain's dependence on Cuba for not only trade but also for international prestige, they were determined to not give up the island to the revolutionaries. The Spanish Prime Minister at the outbreak of the Cuban War of Independence, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, stated that "the Spanish nation is disposed to sacrifice to the last peseta of its treasure and to the last drop of blood of the last Spaniard before consenting that anyone snatch from it even one piece of its territory."⁴² The Spanish government reacted to the renewed rebellion by sending a reluctant General Arsenio Martínez-Campos, who had successfully quelled the Ten Years' War, to Cuba to put down this renewed revolt for Cuban independence.⁴³ Campos's reluctance to accept this assignment and his failure to contain the revolt led the Spanish government to remove him and appointed General Valeriano Weyler in his place.⁴⁴ Weyler's methods of depriving the insurgency of weaponry, supplies, and the assistance of Cuban districts by instituting concentration areas while successful in slowing the spread of the rebellion fuelled anti-Spanish propaganda in the United States. These tactics were denounced by William McKinley in his first annual message to Congress. McKinley criticized Spanish actions and asserted the methods of Weyler were "not civilized warfare" but "extermination."⁴⁵

The outbreak of the Cuban War of Independence in 1895 and Weyler's harsh measures proved to be a benefit to the New York City newspaper industry which whipped up popular

⁴² Quoted in Trask, 6.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 7.

⁴⁵ The American Presidency Project, UC Santa Barbra, date accessed, January 18, 2025, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/first-annual-message-15>.

fury, particularly Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*, about these events. The actions of the New York papers did not please everyone as evidenced in the *New Holland Clarion*, published in New Holland, Lancaster County, which snidely remarked:

It is perhaps fortunate for the country that the power of declaring was vested in Congress, and not the yellow journals, which have since the blowing up and destruction of the battleship Maine and 250 Americans, in the harbor of Havana, been busily engaging in inflaming the public mind and adding to the existing excitement by publishing sensational manufactured stories for the purpose of showing that the terrible calamity was the result of foul play on the part of Spaniards, and demanding all sorts of ridiculous things from the government, not the least of which was an immediate declaration of war against Spain.⁴⁶

However, American public opinion generally saw Spain as a hopelessly backward power that would be powerless to deal with the condition in Cuba or treat them reasonably. As a Lancaster County paper, the *Lititz Record*, states on April 8, 1898, in a piece entitled "Spain's Hault: "Spain's barbarous treatment of her subjects has cost her nearly all distant possessions."⁴⁷

American Interests in Cuba

The United States had long held interests in the Caribbean prior to the American War of Independence, 1775 to 1788, due to maritime trade with British and other European colonies in the Caribbean region. Following American independence, interest in the Caribbean region did not change; it only intensified. This growth was due to the return of American maritime trade in the Caribbean as well as the development of the Monroe Doctrine, articulated by James Monroe, the fifth president of the United States, in 1823. The Monroe

⁴⁶ *New Holland Clarion*, February 26, 1898.

⁴⁷ *Lititz Record*, April 8, 1898.

Doctrine stated the United States would respect the existing European colonies, but it would not tolerate efforts by European governments to retake or expand their colonial holdings in the Americas or to interfere with the newly independent states in Central and South America.

American expansionists had long looked to Cuba as a possible addition to the United States due to its close proximity to American territory, only 90 miles off the coast of Florida. Cuba, was one of the few European colonies that still allowed slavery by the 1830s.⁴⁸ Before the Civil War, Southern states would have liked to have Cuba admitted to the Union as an additional slave state, because they felt it would preserve the balance of power between the free and slave states. To this end Southerners sought to have the United States acquire Cuba through either purchase or war as demonstrated in the Olmsted manifesto.⁴⁹

Following the end of the Civil War, American interests in Cuba did not diminish. With the opening of Cuba by Spanish, authorities following the conclusion of the Ten Years' War, American businesses began to heavily invest in Cuba. By 1894, 90% of Cuba's exports went to the United States, and 40% of Cuba's imports came from the United States.⁵⁰ According to Louis A. Pérez Jr. in his book *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution* this trade volume represented twelve times more product exported to the United States than to Spain, demonstrating that while Spain might have political control, economic control had passed to the United States.⁵¹ Additionally, American desires to annex Cuba were compelling due to the close proximity of Cuba to the United States and because Cuba was positioned in a strategically important location in the Caribbean. American interests in constructing a Central American canal—first in Nicaragua and then in Panama—required a naval base in the

⁴⁸ Robert E. May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854-1861* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), 46–60.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 149.

⁵¹ Ibid., 138.

Caribbean to protect the Caribbean terminus of the canal, and Cuba would provide a suitable location for such a base.⁵²

In addition to expansionist interests as well as strategic concerns, the United States had strong economic interests in the island that was being damaged by the protracted conflict. Shipping companies that relied on trade with Cuba were suffering losses and began pressing Congress and the McKinley administration to seek an end to the revolts in Cuba.⁵³ Other American business involved with the sugar industry were also losing money, and they hoped Spain would be able to restore order.⁵⁴

With rising tensions between the United States and Spain due to the inability of the Spanish government to suppress the Cuban revolt, popular support for intervention began to increase. Many Americans viewed the Cuban revolt like the American Revolution: an oppressed people fighting for their liberty and independence. They saw the Spanish government as tyrannical oppressors.⁵⁵ President McKinley, who wanted to end the conflict peacefully began negotiations with the Spanish government.⁵⁶ He hoped these talks would dampen the enthusiasm for war being stirred up by yellow journalists. However, these aspirations were hindered by the Spanish government who refused American offers of mediation and negotiations between the Cuban revolutionaries and Spanish authorities.⁵⁷ Although Spain rejected American diplomatic overtures, they promised to give Cuba more autonomy and end the concentration policies if Cuban revolutionaries agreed to an end of hostilities. Unfortunately for McKinley, this offer was rejected by the Cuban revolutionaries

⁵² Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 25.

⁵³ John L. Offner "McKinley and the Spanish-American War," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* Vol. 34, No. 1 (2004): p. 51.

⁵⁴ David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Trade and Investment: American Economic Expansion in the Hemisphere, 1865–1900* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1998), 328.

⁵⁵ Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 24-26.

⁵⁶ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 30, 31, and 33.

⁵⁷ Harold Faulkner, *Politics, Reform, and Expansion, 1890–1900* (New York: Harper, 1963), 231.

who calculated, correctly, that continued conflict would eventually lead to US military intervention in the conflict, which would result in an independent Cuba.⁵⁸

The American Road to War

The American consul Fitzhugh Lee requested that an American warship be dispatched to Cuba in response to demonstrations planned by supporters of Wyler, who had been removed by the Spanish government under pressure by the United States.⁵⁹ This request brought the armoured cruiser, USS *Maine* (ACR-1) to Havana harbour to protect the safety of American citizens and interests in Cuba as well as to serve as an implicit threat to the Spanish. The *Maine*'s presence in Havana harbour emphasized American demands for reforming Cuba as well as to bring peace to the chaotic situation.⁶⁰ At the same time, naval forces were positioned to attack Spanish possessions in the event war could not be avoided.⁶¹ However, while anchored in the harbour, the *Maine* suffered a spontaneous magazine explosion that sank the ship and killed the majority of her crew.

McKinley did not publicly blame the Spanish for the loss of the *Maine*, and he urged patience while waiting for the findings of a naval board of inquiry. This position was endorsed by the *Lititz Record* stating "Until the court examines every detail of the wreck and reports everybody should keep cool and like President McKinley regard the disaster as a chance affair," correctly highlighting the ship could have been lost due to anything from a coal bunker fire to an external mine.⁶² However, while McKinley urged caution, he did request that

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 239.

⁶⁰ Ibid. 240.

⁶¹ Offner, "McKinley and the Spanish-American War," p. 56.

⁶² *Lititz Record*, February 25 1898.

Congress approve an additional \$50 million in defence funding, which Congress approved.⁶³ Although American leadership believed the reason for the explosion was unknown and urged restraint, public attention was now fixed on the situation in Cuba, which made it impossible for Spain to find a diplomatic solution to avoid war.⁶⁴ Spain tried to appeal to European powers for help, but most advised them to accept the United States' conditions in order to prevent a war.⁶⁵ Unfortunately for Spain, the U.S. Navy's investigation, which was made public on March 28, concluded the ship's powder magazines had been ignited due to an external explosion set off underneath the ship's hull which was blamed on a Spanish mine. This report further angered the American public against the Spanish and made war between United States and Spain virtually impossible to avoid. As the *Lititz Record* argued in an editorial entitled "Must Answer or Fight" that:

The indemnity for the *Maine* may be determined by diplomatic conferences or by a board of arbitrators chosen outside the contending countries. The president has sent his recent message to Congress and the court's report to Spain. He is awaiting a reply, which ought to concede the representations of the documents and proffer reparation. We fear the Sagasta ministry will choose to be obstinate. If it fails to take the hint, President McKinley will set aside the demand for indemnity and invoke the power of the army and navy.⁶⁶

Spain, which had launched its own investigation into the sinking of the USS *Maine*, had come to the opposite conclusion that a fire had started in a coal bunker which had caused one of the powder magazines to explode.⁶⁷

⁶³ *New Holland Clarion*, March 26, 1898.

⁶⁴ Jerry Keenan, *Encyclopedia of the Spanish–American & Philippine–American Wars* (Santa Barbara: CA, 2001), 372-373.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 372.

⁶⁶ *Lititz Record*, April 1 1898.

⁶⁷ The Spanish conclusion was most certainly the correct one. Various investigations since the loss of the *Maine* have come to contradictory conclusions but the one in 1974 by Admiral Hiram G Rickover of the US Navy concluded that the Spanish were most certainly correct and that an internal fire caused the powder magazine to explode.

McKinley's call for calm and patience while the investigation of the sinking of the *Maine* took place was endorsed by some newspapers such as the *Lititz Record*.⁶⁸ However, other papers, most notably Hearst's and Pulitzer's publications, decided that the Spanish were to blame for the sinking of the *Maine*. They widely publicized this theory as fact, a tone articulated with the headline "Remember the *Maine*, To Hell with Spain!" Such exaggerated headlines and stories were not uncommon to the New York papers which had long published sensational and greatly exaggerated accounts of Spanish actions in Cuba. As a result, nationwide public opinion demanded immediate action from the government, but the McKinley administration still sought to avoid war. However, when Senator Redfield Proctor, a Republican from Vermont, gave a speech on March 17, 1898 supporting a declaration of war, it strengthened the pro-war movement and increased the pressure on President McKinley to declare war.⁶⁹ McKinley bowed to the pressure and on April 11 asked Congress for authority to deploy American troops to Cuba to end the fighting. He understood such an action would result in war. By April 19, Congress passed a joint resolution supporting Cuban independence, demanded Spanish withdraw from Cuba, and authorized the president to use military force to help Cuba gain independence. On April 20, 1898, President McKinley signed the resolution and forwarded the ultimatum to Spain, who severed diplomatic relations with the United States on April 21. As a result, on April 21, the United States Navy began a blockade of Cuba, and Spain reacted by declaring war on the United States on April 23, 1898. Two days later on April 25, the United States Congress responded in kind to the Spanish declaration of war by declaring that a state of war between the US and Spain began on April 21, the day the United States initiated its blockade of Cuba.

⁶⁸ *Lititz Record*, February 25, 1898.

⁶⁹ Donald H. Dyal, *Historical Dictionary of the Spanish American War*, eds Brian B. Carpenter, and Mark A. Thomas (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 210.

The main reason the United States went to war with Spain over Cuba was due to the increase in humanitarian concerns with the plight of Cubans and the belief that Spain could not control the situation. As Theodore Roosevelt stated in his autobiography:

Our own direct interests were great, because of the Cuban tobacco and sugar, and especially because of Cuba's relation to the projected Isthmian Canal. But even greater were our interests from the standpoint of humanity. ...It was our duty, even more from the standpoint of National honor than from the standpoint of National interest, to stop the devastation and destruction. Because of these considerations I favored war.⁷⁰

As McKinley stated in 1897, if Spain could not resolve the crisis in Cuba the United States would have “a duty imposed by our obligations to ourselves, to civilization and humanity to intervene with force.”⁷¹ That this “duty” also happened to align with long-term American interests and goals in Cuba and might lead to the American annexation of Cuba was left unsaid. With the sinking of the *Maine* and Spain's inability to pacify Cuba even with the specific promises of reform, American patience reached its end point. When diplomatic solutions to the crisis in Cuba proved impossible to resolve due to the fundamentally incompatible goals of Spain and the Cuban rebels, the only solution that remained was war.

Race as a Factor in Imperial Mobilization

Race was a critical factor at the turn of the twentieth century and influenced mobilization. American elites used race and racism to oppress minority groups worldwide. In the United States, at the turn of the twentieth century, views on race were defined by the ideas of eugenics and scientific racism. It was commonly believed that different races held different capacities for governance, work, morals, and civilizational development.⁷² It also provided the

⁷⁰ Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913; repr., Toronto, ON: HarperTorch Classics, 2015), 214.

⁷¹ The American Presidency Project, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/first-annual-message-15>.

⁷² Susan K. Harris, *God's Arbiters: Americans and the Philippines, 1898-1902*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 64.

structure for American soldiers to interpret their Filipino adversaries. The examination of these beliefs provides a framework for understanding the American soldiers in the Regular Army and Volunteer Forces who fought in the Philippine conflict.

At the turn of the twentieth century, racial theories argued that there were various civilizational developmental levels throughout the world, which depended upon the race of the individuals of that region.⁷³ These levels were part of a hierarchy that determined which groups were more civilized and more developed and which groups were more barbaric and backward. Race theorists contended that white Anglo-Saxons were the peak of racial development globally and that Anglo-Saxons were the most capable of civilized development, self-governance, and moral ability.⁷⁴ Below whites were various other races of people with differing levels of proficiency for civilization as well as self-governance. At the bottom of development were those deemed of “negro” ancestry.⁷⁵ The Filipinos, specifically the Tagalogs, ranked somewhat higher on the hierarchy of racial development and were often referred to as the most civilized of the Philippines groups.⁷⁶ Below the Tagalog Filipinos were the Moros and the various other cultural groups that inhabited the Philippine Islands, including the Mountain “tribes,” who were considered negros and were at the bottom of civilized development.⁷⁷

These views formed the foundation of American imperial beliefs at the turn of the twentieth century and determined how they treated their fellow citizens, with white supremacy institutionalized by the United States through laws and customs. American troops exported these views as they fought in the Philippines. However, American views on race were

⁷³ Ibid, 64.

⁷⁴ Paul A. Kramer, “Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule Between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (March 2002), 1322.

⁷⁵ Harris, *God's Arbiters*, 63-65.

⁷⁶ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 340.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 339-342.

complicated and filled with contradictions, a factor that would clearly be seen in the American soldiers' views of their Filipinos. Americans firmly believed that race was a fixed category with specific character traits inherent to each racial group.⁷⁸ Whites, specifically Anglo-Saxons, were on top of this hierarchy; they had all the right moral and mental capacity traits, which allowed for democratic self-government.⁷⁹ The most important of these characteristics were self-control and self-discipline.⁸⁰ Although Americans believed they would be able to improve other races through proper education and assimilation, this directly conflicted with the essentialist racial narratives that white Americans accepted.⁸¹

Anglo-Saxonism, the most important dynamic with race in the United States, was used to justify expanding the United States from a coastal nation to one that spanned the continent. It was also employed as the rationale to build and hold an overseas empire in the Caribbean and in the Philippines. According to racial theory, Anglo-Saxons were a nested or branching race frequently portrayed as splitting off from older racial groups, usually the "Teutons," and then tracing back to a still larger and more ancient group of "Aryans."⁸² However, Anglo-Saxonism was not only a race; it was also a directional and historical development, identified as part of a relentless Western movement that began in India and was now playing out on the American Empire's new frontiers.⁸³ Anglo-Saxonism was both ancient, affirming their Aryan ancestors, but also rhetorically young; its vigour was tied to the tasks of struggle and conquest.⁸⁴

Anglo-Saxonism was also a theory of politics as it was believed Anglo-Saxons were a liberated people who possessed unique political values of liberty and freedom only they could

⁷⁸ Harris, *God's Arbiters*, 67.

⁷⁹ Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons," 1322-23.

⁸⁰ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 340.

⁸¹ Harris, *God's Arbiters*, 67.

⁸² Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons," 1322.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

carry throughout the world, and it was their duty to liberate others and offer them the unique luxuries of freedom and modernity.⁸⁵ Conversely, Anglo-Saxons were also described as a force of order and power, uniquely proficient at creating and sustaining empires where they administered firm but fair rule or completely eliminated the weaker races.⁸⁶ In either case, it would benefit these lesser racial groups, as these lands would be freed from the neglect of their native inhabitants and would flourish through trade and the liberation of the inhabitants from their ignorance and savagery. Much of Anglo-Saxonism resonated with American nationalism, which held that the United States had a special mission to transform the world through republican virtue.

As the United States entered the colonial stage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was already experimenting with the idea of the civilizing mission within its borders. This experimentation was implemented with the Native American nations in the United States by forcibly removing them from their land during the 19th century. The United States was attempting to forcibly assimilate Native American peoples into the dominant Anglo-American culture by sending their children to Indian boarding schools.⁸⁷ At these schools, such as the one in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Native children were immersed in Euro-American culture through forced changes that removed indigenous cultural signifiers.⁸⁸ These methods included forcing native children to have Euro-American hairstyles, being forbidden to speak their indigenous languages, and having their real names replaced by European ones to both civilize and Christianize these people.⁸⁹ Furthermore, Americans were also experimenting with the civilizing mission on white Southerners in the southeast United

⁸⁵ Ibid, 1322-23.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 1322.

⁸⁷ Anne Paulet, "To Change the World: The Use of American Indian Education in the Philippines," *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (May, 2007), 181-182.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 185-186.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 193.

States.⁹⁰ Many poor white Southerners were seen as backwards and viewed by many white Americans as ignorant, filthy, lazy, and immoral.⁹¹ The apparent decline of poor white Southerners caused great alarm as it seemed these Anglo-Saxons were regressing to a state of “barbarism” associated with non-whites.⁹² The reason, as epidemiologists discovered, for the apparent laziness of poor southern whites was due to being infected by hookworms which infected many in childhood due to poor hygienic practices.⁹³ To solve this problem, epidemiologists set off on a crusade to change the habits and eradicate hookworm infections of white Southerners, allowing them to be “reclaimed” for civilization.⁹⁴ Many of the ideas and practices used to combat hookworm and other “tropical” illnesses such as using schools to enforce changes in sanitary habits carried over to the Philippines had been pioneered by “civilizing” poor whites in the American South.⁹⁵ Thus, for the United States, the concept of the civilizing mission was readily adopted and adapted for its new colonial possessions, including the Philippine Islands. The American policies for its civilizing mission within the Philippines were laid out in President William McKinley’s Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation. The United States, McKinley declared, would “oversee the establishment of the civilian government” that would be modelled on the United States government, carry out medical and societal reforms, and enact ambitious sweeping public works projects including reformation of the school system.⁹⁶ The American public supported these ideas. Although there was a spirited debate about whether the United States should annex the Philippine Islands, the concepts of what it meant to be and have a civilized nation were widely agreed

⁹⁰ Alfred W. McCoy, and Francisco A. Scarano, eds., *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 299-301.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 304.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 307.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 304.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 305.

⁹⁵ Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), Kindle Edition, location 2203.

⁹⁶ Gates, *Schoolbooks and Kraggs*, 34-36.

upon.⁹⁷ While not all Americans supported annexation due to several factors—moral opposition to imperialism and militarism, fear of racial contamination of the United States, or concerns about the cost of maintaining such a distant possession—they agreed on what was necessary to have a civilized nation.

When American soldiers first landed on Philippine soil, the United States government did not have a clear policy on what it was going to do with the islands. After Spain's decisive defeat after a mere ten weeks of war, the question of what was to be done with the Philippines Islands had to be answered. McKinley realized that the mood of a large number of white Americans supported the annexation of the Philippine Islands and instructed the American negotiators to acquire the islands as part of the peace treaty with Spain.⁹⁸ John D. LaWall, a member of the 27th United States Volunteer Infantry, who served in the later stages of the Philippine War, stated, "It is not difficult to see that the people are unfit to assume the higher form of self-government."⁹⁹ This view is not surprising given that Americans at the time had a profound belief in the superiority of American political and societal institutions. Americans believed the United States was a city on the hill with a divine mandate to help other countries follow its example. Nineteenth-century Americans saw themselves as a fusion of Enlightenment ideals of Protestant Christianity who had a unique mandate from God to foster freedom and integrity in the rest of the world, even for those they considered inferior to themselves.¹⁰⁰ LaWall's lecture clearly displays this idea:

Development, of course, includes education. When we have established schools at every cross-road in those fair islands when we shall have developed their unlimited resources, their downtrodden people out of the darkness and bondage of five hundred years into the light of liberty of education and enlightenment, who shall deny -when we have done all of this-that instead of decreasing, we have increased the force of that famous clause in

⁹⁷ Harris, *God's Arbiters*, 18, 23.

⁹⁸ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 54-55.

⁹⁹ John D. LaWall Collection, "Sixteen Months in the Philippines," (1901), pg. 107, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box 67, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

¹⁰⁰ Harris, *God's Arbiters*, 5, 13, 18.

the Declaration of Independence which reads “We hold that all men are created equal.”¹⁰¹

This demonstrates the optimism that existed in many nineteenth-century Americans. Fin de siècle era Americans were raised in a culture that suggested that with effort and the proper training, it might be possible for individuals not born into the community of white Anglo-Saxon Protestants to eventually become enough like Americans to enjoy the benefits developed by Anglo-Saxons.¹⁰² Americans told themselves they were doing the Filipinos a great favour, as the American administration of the archipelago protected them from the consequences of their incapacity for self-government as well as helped develop the islands economically.¹⁰³ William Christner, of the 10th Pennsylvania, wrote to his father after the announcement of the benevolent assimilation proclamation by William McKinley that large numbers of his regiment thought it was a “capital thing” for the United States to do.¹⁰⁴

As the first American troops began arriving in the Philippines, Filipinos had already been in revolt against Spain. Their army had successfully defeated the Spanish throughout most of the archipelago and driven most remaining Spanish troops into Manila and its environs, placing that city under siege. At this point, the Americans and the First Philippine Republic were de facto allies in a war against Spain. This fact is usually reflected in the American soldiers’ views of the Filipinos, in addition to their belief that the Spanish had oppressed the Filipinos. William Christner of the 10th Pennsylvania Infantry demonstrates the typical reaction American troops had towards their Filipino allies at the beginning of America’s involvement in the Philippines. In a letter to his family, he writes that American troops and Filipinos were able to get along with each other, and the Filipinos were friendly

¹⁰¹ LaWall “Sixteen Months in the Philippines,” 107, SAWS.

¹⁰² Harris, *God’s Arbiters*, 67-69.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 61

¹⁰⁴ William S. Christner to Father, Jan 5, 1899 William S. Christner Papers, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection-Small Collections, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania: he says “most of the boys in the army” supported annexation.

and respectful.¹⁰⁵ He also stated that the Filipinos were very helpful to the American forces as they arrived in the Philippines and provided support for the American Army.¹⁰⁶ This reflected the spirit of cooperation that existed at the beginning of America's involvement in the Philippines. However, this did not mean that American troops viewed their de facto Filipino allies as equals to themselves; they still held the contemporary American views of superiority. Asa C. Maxson of the 13th Minnesota related in his Veteran's Survey that the Filipinos were "as good as enlightenment made them possible."¹⁰⁷ These contradictory attitudes generally began to erode the American and Filipino relationship as no matter how positive the American soldiers saw the Filipinos, their racist attitudes prohibited them from fully accepting them as equals and frequently referred to Filipinos with racial epithets such as "n****r" and "gugu." As it became clear that the United States desired to acquire the Philippine Islands from Spain, additional strains were placed upon the relationship, as the Filipino forces stopped cooperating with American troops. In addition, there was a desire to return home by many of the volunteers, who were bored with occupation duty and tired of the discipline of military service imposed on them.¹⁰⁸ Ed Dunbar's letters to his future wife continuously mention his desire to return home after the declaration of peace with Spain.¹⁰⁹ He stated how much he hated occupation duty, the boredom it entailed, and the military discipline enforced on him.¹¹⁰

After American forces took control of Manila from the Spanish, relations deteriorated further between the Americans and the Filipinos and American attitudes began to become far more hostile and antagonistic. Ed Dunbar, of the 1st California Volunteer Infantry

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., Aug. 31, 1898, SAWS.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., Aug. 31, 1898, SAWS.

¹⁰⁷ Asa C. Maxson, Survey, Asa C. Maxson Papers, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box 13 the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, pg. 10.

¹⁰⁸ Edward Dunbar, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box 1, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, Oct. 20, Nov. 3, 1898 for examples.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

demonstrates the degrading relationship between the Americans and Filipinos. In his letter to his future wife Maud in September 1898, he described the Filipinos as “the ugliest lot of people you can imagine. The women are very plain, and when they are no longer young, they are positively hideous.”¹¹¹ He also stated in a letter written on November 3, 1898, “The boys are thoroughly disgusted with them, as they are always saying “Mucho a migo,” and then robbing us at every opportunity.”¹¹² In addition, even men who had generally positive views of the Filipinos began to see them as enemies. Christner related to his father on January 17, 1899, when the war was still several weeks away, “We have to kill one or two every night” to maintain order.¹¹³ By the time of Christner’s January 1899 letter, it was clear the United States was preparing to officially annex the Philippine Islands, which angered the Filipino nationalists. While tensions increased between the American Army in Manila and the besieging Filipino Army, American soldiers remained confident of their abilities to defeat the erstwhile Filipino allies. Dunbar of the 1st California related to his future wife, in his September 1898 letter that, along with the Filipinos being “the ugliest lot of people,” their mood was surly, but he was confident that if it came to war, American troops would be able to handle them easily.¹¹⁴ The Filipinos, he said, “have turned out to be a cowardly lot” and suggested that “one company of our fellows could wipe out a whole regiment of Filipinos.”¹¹⁵

American views of the Filipino adversaries, while generally negative, changed throughout the conflict. The Philippine War can be divided into three distinct phases: the conventional phase from February 1899 to the beginning of 1900, the insurgency phase from 1900 to about 1901, and the final mopping-up. Throughout these phases, American soldiers

¹¹¹ Ibid., Sep. 1, 1898.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Christner, William S. Christner Papers, January 17, 1899, SAWS.

¹¹⁴ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, Sep. 1, 1898, SAWS.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

generally had negative views of their adversaries, but these views evolved as they interacted with the Filipinos and the war intensified. During the conventional stage, American soldiers tended to have a somewhat positive view of their adversaries and respected their bravery, and some even viewed them as worthy enemies. After the war moved into the insurgency phase, American soldiers' opinions towards the Filipinos degraded. However, some troops were willing to admit that the Filipinos were clever and crafty enemies. Throughout the conventional phase of the conflict, American soldiers continued to maintain their negative assessments of the Filipinos; however, American soldiers continued to have a mixed view of the Filipinos. However, once the guerrilla phase of the war began, American views of the Filipinos continued to worsen as the soldiers did not generally see this as a proper type of war. Both Filipinos and Americans viewed guerrilla war as a sign of barbarity.¹¹⁶ This belief that guerrilla tactics were illegitimate, meshed with the idea that Filipinos were savages and “n****rs” who only understood force and, perhaps most decisively, that Filipinos had forfeited humane treatment by their brutal actions.¹¹⁷ Due to this, the Army began using the same tactics against the Filipinos as were used against the Native Americans of the Great Plains such as the destruction of homes and food, confiscation, and a system of movement control. Although American troops did not view the Filipinos positively during this timeframe of the conflict and did not believe that the Filipinos were brave, American troops did occasionally admit that the Filipinos continued to be good fighters.

Although the views of American soldiers were generally more positive when American troops first arrived in the Philippine Islands, they began to degrade due to a desire to return home and the increased assertiveness of the Filipinos as it became evident the United States

¹¹⁶ Paul A. Kramer, “Race Making and Colonial Violence in the U.S. Empire: The Philippine-American War as a Race War,” *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (April 2006), p. 172, and 194.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 194-195.

was going to acquire the islands as a colonial possession. Even though American attitudes were initially positive, Americans looked down upon Filipinos with paternalistic disdain as was evident in Filipino American relations.

Conclusion

Fundamentally the American army was not only unprepared for the outbreak of war; it was completely unprepared to fight the war that it was required to fight in 1898. The American army lacked the sufficient logistical and professional ability to not only raise a large military force but also maintain that force. These issues helped lead to the suffering the soldiers in 1898 deployed to the Philippines experienced throughout their military service. These sufferings, helped to depress the morale of the men and helped to generate tensions within the American army that would surface repeatedly in the Philippines during the War of 1898. These internal problems, when combined with prevailing American social attitudes to military service and non-whites, created the conditions necessary for the breakdown in Filipino-American relations that helped to contribute to the outbreak of war between them in 1899.

Chapter 2: The Army, National Guard and Mobilization

“I would like to be there during the Eisteddfod but if I was, I wouldn’t be in Manila and this is a trip of a lifetime as so long as one is in good health.”¹ This was communicated by David J Davis, a member of the Utah Light Artillery Battalion, in a letter to his family in Salt Lake City while he was stationed in the Philippines. Although combat is the activity most directly associated with military service, the vast majority of time spent by military personnel does not include combat. Two of the main experiences soldiers encounter are training for war and traveling to combat zones. For the men who fought in the Philippine-American War, specifically those who were part of the state volunteer units raised during the Spanish-American War, training and travel were a truly hellish experience. The United States Army was completely unprepared to fight a modern conflict against an opponent outside the United States. Consequently, it was challenging for the Army to properly train, equip, and supply the new inductees entering military service. Due to these challenges, an overwhelming majority of the initial contingents of American troops to reach the Philippines suffered extreme hardship and misery.

The reasons for their suffering were due to the physical state of the United States Army in the preceding years that led-up to the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars. The first section explores the United States Army in the years preceding the outbreak of war with Spain in 1898. The Army was severely neglected by the United States following the end of the American Civil War, allowing it to languish and slowly degrade. This created conditions of immense and unnecessary suffering for the US troops that were recruited for the Spanish-

¹ David J. Davis to Sister Mable, October 7, 1898, David J. Davis collection, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, UT.

American War and subsequently deployed to the Philippines. The American Army was unprepared for the war, with numerous structural issues caused by the United States' neglect of its army. This neglect manifest in an antiquated command structure, limited logistical systems, obsolete equipment, and few officers to fill critical wartime roles.

This chapter seeks to explore the state of the United States Army, during the era leading up to the American intervention in the Cuban Revolution. This will provide the context necessary as to why the United States Army faced numerous problems throughout the Spanish-American war such as mobilizing its reserves, deploying troops to the Philippines, and providing adequate supplies. The American army in the decades that followed the American Civil War had been deeply neglected by the United States government. This neglect would directly lead to the failures of the War Department during the mobilization process for the war and to the sufferings faced by the soldiers who fought in the Spanish-American war. Further, the inability of the United States to modernize its ground forces between 1870 and 1898 ensured that its reserve forces were antiquated and problematic during mobilization as well as their deployment in the Philippines.

In the second section, this chapter explores the equally antiquated state of the American militia—the now-famed National Guard system. The section examines the mobilization of these regiments and the issues that surfaced during recruitment, training and deployment. Although, the National Guard viewed itself as the United States' premier military reserve system, the numerous failings of the National Guard included limited military experience, poor training regimens, a lack of experienced or qualified NCOs and officers, and a wide, inconsistent range of unit military ability. Further, the decision to enlist large numbers of recruits brought in thousands of men who were fundamentally unprepared for, and unwilling to submit to, the demands of military life. The situation was worsened by the provincial nature and unit pride of the militia regiments. The problems of both the Regular

Army and the National Guard directly affected the combat effectiveness of the American militia volunteer units and many of those who served in these units. Poor supply and substandard transportation directly impacted the combat ability of the initial contingent of troops dispatched to the Philippines and resulted in increased and unnecessary illness.

The Pre-War Army

When war was declared on Spain in April 1898, the US Navy was reasonably prepared to fight a modern conflict beyond the territorial confines of the United States, but the United States Army was fundamentally unprepared to engage in such a conflict.² The United States Army in 1898 was extremely small and incapable of effectively fighting Spain in a large-scale military conflict. Therefore, the United States Army required a significant expansion in size to fight Spain. The Army lacked the necessary higher-level combat commands that could coordinate and control the overall movement of individual units and ensure the militia was effectively trained, organized, supplied, and equipped. Additionally, due to the Army's diminished size and lack of logistics support, its supply systems could not cope with the rapid expansion of military forces needed to fight the Spanish. Due to these issues, the War Department and the Army struggled to supply, train, and transport their troops.³

Throughout US history and up to the post-Second World War era, there was no peacetime precedent of maintaining a large standing military force due to the opposition within the United States. A budget-conscious Congress, which desired to keep taxes low and maintain an unintrusive central government, did not want to spend money on the military; therefore, they permitted the Army to languish.⁴ By 1875, ten years after the end of the

² Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 1.

³ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

⁴ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 343.

American Civil War, the Army could only marshal about 28,000 officers and men, a fraction of its former military power. In contrast, the Army of Belgium was twice the size of the American Army in a nation that is approximately the same physical size as the US state of Maryland.⁵ By the 1880s, the US Army was so small that it was a novelty to be introduced to an army officer outside the western frontier. Indeed, a one woman exclaimed when she met an Army officer, “What, a colonel of the Army? Why, I supposed the Army was all disbanded at the close of the War!”⁶ Because the US maintained only a small standing army after the end of the Civil War, it would have to expand rapidly in the face of a declaration of war with Spain.

Following the end of the American Civil War in 1865, the United States Army was one of the world’s largest and most powerful. In 1865, the United States Army stood at more than a million men under arms with extensive combat experience.⁷ After the defeat of the secessionists and a resurgence of resistance to Federal authority unlikely, the Army’s ranks were decreased dramatically. Military power within the United States rapidly disintegrated due to traditional republican opposition to maintaining a large standing military establishment. Due to its legacy from its British origins, the primary fear of the American population was that the government could use the military to oppress its citizenry.⁸ The perceived threat from a large standing army meant that the United States would only raise large military formations on an as needed basis and then reduce their size once the threat or the perceived need for such a force ended. An example of the army’s growth and reduction occurred during the administration of John Adams from 1796 to 1800 when the United States raised an army of 20,000 men to fight France in what was perceived to be an inevitable military conflict during

⁵ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 17.

⁶ Quote in Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 215.

⁷ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 17.

⁸ Coffman, *The Old Army*, 2-4.

the Quasi-War.⁹ However, when a peaceful resolution to this potential conflict with France was achieved and it became apparent that the threat from the French no longer existed, the size of the United States Army was rapidly reduced. The United States Army remained small until the next threat: the War of 1812.

The US neglected to pay its military personnel regularly, kept their pay low with infrequent raises, did not invest in the modernization of its forces and did not support its Army. These failures created abysmal conditions for both officers and enlisted personnel.¹⁰ Further, the Army was forced to utilize and deal with outdated and antiquated equipment, such as the obsolete Springfield 1884 trapdoor rifle. The 1884 Springfield was approved for use even though it was obsolete. In contrast several nations had already adopted superior bolt-action rifles or were making that transition.¹¹ Food and supplies were difficult to obtain. Theft was common in the enlisted ranks due to the poor conditions.¹² Additionally, most units were stationed at isolated and remote posts without recreation or distraction. One example of such a post was Camp Cook, also known as Fort Claggett; this post was established in 1866 and abandoned in 1870. It accommodated 400 officers and men during its four-year lifespan. Camp Cook was a remote outpost established to protect steamboat traffic on the Missouri River. Such remote posts proved extremely difficult mentally for the officers and men to handle due to the severe isolation.¹³

In these extremely isolated posts, without any distractions or amenities provided by the Army, drinking became the solution to the boredom, in which both officers and men

⁹ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰ Rodger Lee Huckabee, "Camp Cooke: The First Army Post in Montana – Success and Failure on the Missouri" (MA Theses, Boise State University, 2010), 95 and 98-99.

¹¹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 8 and Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 17-18.

¹² Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 18.

¹³ Huckabee "Camp Cooke," 95 and 98-99.

frequently indulged.¹⁴ On reporting to his first post, one officer, who had recently graduated from West Point, found the entire garrison was on a five-day drinking spree.¹⁵ Such neglect ensured that only the most desperate, who had absolutely no other options for employment, enlisted.¹⁶ Augustus Myers served in the United States Army for ten years, from 1854 to 1865, and is one such example. As an immigrant, he had limited opportunities to pursue a civilian career and enlisted in the Army at the age of twelve to help provide for his family. He re-enlisted in 1859 after failing to find a civilian job in New York City.¹⁷ The poor conditions, harsh discipline, and limited pay led to high desertion rates among enlisted personnel, with one-seventh of the Army deserting every year from 1867 to 1891.¹⁸

Career prospects were limited for officers in the small American Army. Because career advancement was strictly on a seniority-based promotion system, officers were frequently the same age or were only somewhat older than those they ranked. Due to slow attrition many officers remained in the same rank for decades. Therefore, most high-ranking officers in the Philippine War were veterans of the Civil War, which ended thirty years earlier. In 1893, the average age of colonels was only four years younger than that of the average general.¹⁹ Officers could be stuck in their rank for decades without expansion, due to, infrequent retirements, and few combat casualties. In the 7th United States Cavalry, promotions and advancements were stagnant until its defeat at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. With the loss of many officers and men during the battle, promotions within that unit skyrocketed, then

¹⁴ At Camp Cook for example the men had little to do. Except for the months of May, June and July, steamboat traffic was virtually non-existent.

¹⁵ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 18.

¹⁶ The common perception amongst the American population was that only lazy individuals who did not want to work joined the Army. Augustus Myers, who enlisted at the age of twelve as a fifer for the United States Army in 1854, recounted in his that as a boy, other boys would make fun of them by running up to him and saluting and asking, "Soger will ye work?" While another would shout: "No! First, I'd sell me shirt." Augustus Myers, *Ten Years in the Ranks U.S. Army* (1914; repr., Kissinger Publishing: Whitefish, MT, 2007), 12-13.

¹⁷ Myers, *Ten Years in the Ranks*, 12 and 87.

¹⁸ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 18.

¹⁹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 8 and Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 18.

stagnated. An example of the stagnation in the Army is Arthur MacArthur. MacArthur, a Medal of Honor recipient, was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel at age 19 and took command of his volunteer regiment at age 20 during the Civil War. He was a captain for twenty-three years following the end of the Civil War.²⁰ He only reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the 1890s due to attrition through deaths and retirements.²¹

As the nineteenth century closed and the frontier disappeared, the isolated frontier posts were shuttered and abandoned. The outlook began to improve for the Army and its personnel, as military units consolidated into larger postings near cities and towns. In addition, President Benjamin Harrison initiated a gradual program of modernization. This program sought to replace outdated equipment and weaponry such as the trapdoor Springfield Rifles with more modern bolt-action small arms, like the Springfield 1892 Krag–Jørgensen. Furthermore, there was a movement to improve training regimens, living conditions within the Army, and professional development for both officers and enlisted personnel. By 1894, there were only eighty posts left on the frontier.²² Additionally, enhanced training regimens and organizational structures had begun to take shape.

Despite the implementation of the modernization program, the Army remained extremely small, only numbering around 28,000 officers and men.²³ Further, the most probable enemies of the United States did not seem particularly concerning due to distance or weakness. Due to this perception, there was little impetus for the United States to expand the size of the Army or intensify the extremely slow pace of the Army's modernization programme. The slow pace of modernization and the failure to attend to the inherent

²⁰ During the Civil War many Regular Army officers held two ranks, one a Regular Army rank, and a volunteer army rank. After the end of the war, they reverted back to or received new ranks in the Regular Army, if they were volunteer officers, often lower than those they held in the volunteer army during the American Civil War.

²¹ Robert Leckie, *Delivered From Evil: The Saga of World War II* (New York: Perennial Library, 1988), 317.

²² Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 19.

²³ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 9 and Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 19.

weaknesses of the United States Army ensured difficulties in mobilizing the American forces and transporting troops to potential combat zones.

The Political Realities of Mobilization

Since the United States Army was small, the Army was forced to expand rapidly to assemble the forces necessary to fight Spain. Although the Army had drawn up plans to expand in an organized and controlled fashion, political considerations led the United States government to reject this plan. The plan was rejected because it had no role for the militia system, the self-styled National Guard which viewed itself as America's reserve force.²⁴ Political considerations placed a great deal of stress on the underdeveloped U.S. Army. Initially, the War Department sought to increase the size and number of Regulars to between 50,000 and 100,000 men to fight Spain rather than rely on the dysfunctional militia by bringing them into service.²⁵ The War Department wanted to build a professional military force because it would be a disciplined force, something that the militia could not provide and thus a critical weakness. Further, expanding the Regular forces of the United States Army would create a balanced combined arms force. Such a force could effectively employ infantry, cavalry, and artillery in concert in what was perceived as a major and challenging war against Spain. The lack of artillery and cavalry units was another weakness of the National Guard as they were primarily infantry units. Further, creating a professional force would allow the Army to slowly build up without overwhelming its small support system and enable the support system to develop with the expanding Army. Finally, the Army believed that a

²⁴ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 96.

²⁵ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 10.

professional force would be able to cope with the strong resistance anticipated from the battle-experienced Spanish Army, which had been fighting in Cuba for the previous three years.²⁶

Even though the War Department's plans for expanding the Army were militarily and logistically sound and would have prevented many of the problems that developed throughout the buildup during the Spanish-American War, these plans were rejected by Congress and the president due to political considerations. The Army's plan had no role for the state militia system, which wanted to fight in the war to demonstrate their usefulness and effectiveness.²⁷ Further, the military spirit that had swept the nation in the immediate aftermath of the sinking of the *Maine* and the declaration of war on Spain made it impossible for the government of the United States to institute a slow and orderly growth of the Army.²⁸

For Republicans, there were political considerations. In 1898, the Republican Party controlled both Congress and the presidency.²⁹ If the president and Congress had followed the War Department's plan to increase the Army, the failure to allow the National Guard to become involved in the war could have potentially led to a political backlash against the Republican Party. The control of the White House and Congress was narrowly contested during the late nineteenth century and any defection of voters could easily swing control of the government to the opposing party. Following a sensible and rational plan to expand the Army and denying the National Guard their opportunity to fight and win glory could have led to electoral defeats in the midterm elections of 1898 and the presidential election of 1900 and handed control of Congress and the presidency back to the Democrats. Although not in power, the Democrats could have faced their own political issues had they supported a more rational buildup of military strength. Supporting a more practical plan to expand the Army could also

²⁶ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 88-90.

²⁷ Ibid. 96.

²⁸ Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 107 & 110.

²⁹ Ibid., 102-103 and 106.

have caused them to lose the backing of their supporters, many of whom were members of the recently defunct Populist Party. Had Democrats supported a slower callup of troops, their formerly Populist supporters might have defected and revived the Populist Party. The Populists appealed to many of the Democrats' base voters in the Southern United States and the Midwest, which would have lost them critical political support.³⁰ These considerations caused the government to call on the state militia system as the force that would fight the war with Spain; this decision led to numerous problems for the Army and resulted in considerable hardship for the men involved.

The Problems of Mobilization

Due to political pressures exerted upon the president and Congress, the Army expanded rapidly from its small size to a force of around 200,000 men. This rapid expansion in a relatively short period led to many problems for the small Army. Due to the lack of higher combat commands, there was no ability to delegate the responsibility of moving troops to their embarkation points from the locations where they were being assembled. Further, the small American army only had enough administrative capacity to maintain itself and supply itself; it was unable to expand the supply systems necessary to support a larger military force.

Since the United States Army had not completed its modernization process, there were no standing formations of higher combat commands than the regimental level. Higher combat commands such as brigades and divisions were only created on an ad hoc basis when needed. The only higher commands above the regimental level in the Army were departments such as the Department of Washington or the Department of the Great Lakes, and the Army had to

³⁰ Populist party collapsed in 1896 after its electoral defeat in that year's presidential election. Although many Populists became Democrats, the party still existed, and it is possible had the Democrats supported a more sensible expansion of the United States Army, many of the former Populists would switch back to the party.

create new combat commands from scratch.³¹ While these departments contained some elements of combat commands, they were primarily administrative commands that dealt with supply issues, personnel issues, and other administrative duties relating to the Army. Since there were no higher commands available to coordinate the movement of troops, the officers of the United States Army and those assigned to the War Department were required to plan and coordinate the movement of the forty-two individual regiments of the Regular Army and their components.³² The task of coordinating the movement of both Regular and Volunteer units made it difficult for the War Department to equip and supply newly raised troops properly. The lack of higher combat commands and the requirement that officers fill multiple roles simultaneously, at both the regimental and brigade or higher levels, as well as coordinating the movement of soldiers, ensured that chaos would exist. Further, forcing officers to multitask ensured that supply issues could not be readily or easily addressed.³³

Due to the small size of the Army and the rapid expansion that it experienced while incorporating the National Guard, the small Army could not effectively equip the men who were inducted into service. Thus, the states that were not prepared to do this were forced to take the initial steps of equipping and organizing the troops.³⁴ One of the results of the slow issuance of supply was that men were not in proper uniforms. With such a short supply of uniforms, most men did not receive a uniform that fit, and to make matters worse, their undergarments quickly disintegrated after just a few washings due to their poor quality. Edward Martin of the 10th Pennsylvania did not receive an adequate uniform until he reached San Francisco in June 1898, a month after he initially enlisted in the 10th Pennsylvania.³⁵ Ed

³¹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 8.

³² Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 107-110.

³³ Muehlbauer and Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, 275.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Edward Martin to Mr. J.T. Martin, June, 1898, Edward Martin Papers, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, PA.

Dunbar of the 1st California also had to wait several days to be properly equipped even though he joined a unit already inducted into service.³⁶ David J Davis of the Utah Artillery had a similar experience, having to wait some time to receive the uniform of the United States Army.³⁷ Even when the men obtained their uniforms, they were often of poor quality or did not fit properly. Private Dunbar recalled in his memoirs that his uniform was ill-fitting and he had to trade around with other men to get uniform pants, jackets, and shirts that fit him at least somewhat.³⁸ Soldiers were dressed in a mixed collection of civilian clothing or a varied supply of blue or brown canvas and white linen that was thoroughly inadequate for Camp Merritt's damp and chilly environment.³⁹

Food was also of poor quality because of problems with the supply system, which was inadequate even for the small Army.⁴⁰ It essentially collapsed under the rapid expansion that occurred in the aftermath of the declaration of war upon Spain. In the prewar era, most regiments secured supplies, mainly food and occasionally other items, from the surrounding area where they were stationed; officers were provided money from the War Department to secure such needed supplies.⁴¹ Before the Philippine War, most posts were small, only holding a garrison at most of one or two regiments—about 1,200 to 2,400 men. These small numbers would not strain the local resources. However, during the war with Spain thousands of men were concentrated in different training camps throughout the United States, and the lack of a large supply system made it difficult to adequately supply these troops. Due to the lack of officers and a weak supply system, the Army was unprepared and unable to accomplish this task effectively. The poor diet provided by the Army compounded the poor conditions the

³⁶ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 02-3, SAWS.

³⁷ Davis, David J. Davis collection, July 6, 1898, CHL.

³⁸ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 3, SAWS.

³⁹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

⁴⁰ Muehlbauer and Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, 283.

⁴¹ Edward F. Keuchel, "Chemicals and Meat: The Embalmed Beef Scandal of the Spanish-American War," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (1974), p. 256.

volunteers faced. The Army diet consisted mainly of beef or other substitutes like pork or salmon, hardtack, coffee, and dried vegetables.⁴² This diet did not provide the nutrients necessary to maintain the soldiers' health. The lack of nutrients created conditions that allowed diseases to spread throughout the training camps as the men underwent intense drilling to prepare them for combat.

The “National Guard”

Due to political pressures on the president and Congress not to expand the Army, the United States relied on the highly dysfunctional militia system, also known as the National Guard. This course of action was due to the political need to appease a large number of American men who wanted to serve in the war. However, relying on the militia system had several issues. The first and most crucial issue faced by the United States due to its decision to use the National Guard were questions about the legality of employing the American militia beyond the borders of the United States. This issue had troubled the United States in previous wars. During the War of 1812, when the United States invaded Canada the New York State Militia refused to accompany the Regular Army into Canada, citing legal arguments that suggested they could only be employed in defence of the United States, not in any offensive capacity. The failure of the militia to support the Regular Army during the invasion of Canada was probably a significant factor that led to the defeat of the Americans during that invasion.⁴³

The War Department employed legal manoeuvring to get around any questions about using the militia units to prevent such an incident from happening during the Spanish-American War. To avoid the legal challenges of having the militia fighting outside the United

⁴² Linn, *The Philippine War*, 14 and The Spanish-American War Centennial Website, <https://www.spanamwar.com/2ndoregon#Trip%20to%20the%20Philippines>.

⁴³ Michele L. Dauber, “The War of 1812, September 11th, and the Politics of Compensation,” *DePaul Law Review*, Vol. 53 No. 2 (2003), p. 301.

States, the War Department required these men to take new oaths on their enlistment.⁴⁴ If enough men from a militia unit enlisted, that unit would enter Federal service intact.⁴⁵ Additionally, militia units, unlike the Regular Army, did not necessarily have a system of promotion or training that ensured that their officers were prepared to command troops in battle. Therefore, the militia's officers had a wide scope of capability and competence. These National Guard units were largely commanded by amateurs whom the regimental members usually elected. In other cases, state governors appointed officers.⁴⁶

These factors allowed civilian rivalries, including political, social, and economic, to find their way into the ranks of the newly raised state volunteer units and create friction within them. This factor meant that factionalism and petty disputes could develop within the state volunteer units. For example, the 1st California split between partisans that supported the commanding officer, Colonel James F Smith, and those of his executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Victor Duboce. In the 1st Idaho, one company commander, a member of a strikebreaking militia, court-martialled any member of United Mine Workers at the slightest pretext.⁴⁷ Even in the relatively harmonious 10th Pennsylvania a rivalry developed between Colonel Hawkins, the commanding officer, and his executive officer, both of whom held political ambitions after the War.⁴⁸ Additionally, the political nature of such appointments meant that talented, competent, and deserving men could be passed over in favour of more politically connected individuals. This happened to Neil Sullivan a sergeant in the 1st Colorado. Sullivan was considered an excellent soldier and was a second lieutenant of the

⁴⁴ As indeed happened previously in American history, notoriously during the War of 1812, the New York militia refused to invade Canada because it was outside the United States, significantly weakening the American invasion of that country during the War.

⁴⁵ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 11-12.

⁴⁶ This is not a new practice; during the Civil War, many officers were elected by their men or appointed by state governors.

⁴⁷ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 33.

⁴⁸ Edward Martin, Edward Martin Papers, October 26, 1898, PASA.

Colorado National Guard before the war. He was passed over and made a sergeant, while a more politically connected individual was made a lieutenant.⁴⁹

There was little training within the militia units, and that training was of varying quality. While some genuinely excellent militia units, such as the 10th Pennsylvania, were well drilled, others were simply strikebreaking militia units. This wide range of abilities and skills within the National Guard units was not helped by the fact that many of the troops in these units were raw recruits with little to no previous military experience. To fulfil their quotas, and preserve their prewar identities, many units embraced a relatively flexible meaning of who were members of the National Guard. For example, the 1st Wyoming continued to recruit men as it assembled in the state capital to ensure that it would be carried into federal service intact and not combined with another unit. Another example is the 13th Minnesota, where only twelve out of 112 officers and men in one company were prewar guardsmen. The other 100, or 89% of the total company strength, were new inductees to bring up the strength of the 13th Minnesota to the proper size.⁵⁰ Thus, the reality was that many of the “Boys of 98” were untrained raw recruits who were swept up in the explosion of military spirit that accompanied the outbreak of war with Spain. Therefore, these troops needed extensive training before being deployed to fight the Spanish.

A further issue with the militia was that its members expected to be treated as equals and resented the military discipline that their officers and the US Army tried to impose on them. This was partly due to Americans’ strong views of egalitarianism and republican tradition. At this time in the United States, enlisted military service was not seen as a positive career choice. Most Americans viewed those who decided to enlist in the Army as lazy, good-

⁴⁹ Neil C. Sullivan, Jr. Biography, 4, Neil Carmichael Sullivan Collection, MSS.676, History Colorado, Denver, Colorado.

⁵⁰ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 11.

for-nothings who were unwilling to work. Additionally, a military career as enlisted personnel was looked down upon due to Americans' traditional hostility to standing armies and the deplorable conditions of military service. From the end of the Civil War until the outbreak of the war with Spain, military discipline was extremely harsh, with severe punishments made worse by isolated posts. Such realities did not encourage enlistment with the United States Army or induce civilians to seek military careers. It was also perceived that free citizens in a republic, like the citizens of the United States, should not be subjected to the "slavish" discipline impressed on soldiers by the military, and citizens should be treated with honour and respect as equals. The state volunteer units were unprepared to submit to the discipline required of military life. The state volunteers resented and despised what they viewed as the slavish subordination of being in the Regular Army.⁵¹ This anti-militaristic attitude and negative view of Army life was well ingrained into the American psyche, making it difficult for state volunteers to successfully adapt to the requirements of Army discipline. The volunteers expected that their officers, who were often elected, would treat them as fellow citizens and with the proper dignity, and respect they deserved as equals.⁵² Such attitudes made it difficult for them to accept the necessity of military discipline and all the actions required by that discipline. This included following orders they disliked, following proper military sanitation practices, and following proper military education that reinforced discipline and ensured that military forces could function appropriately in combat environments. The men also resented the amount of drilling they were forced to do by their officers, and they also resented the fact that enlisted personnel regularly did most of the physical labour required in

⁵¹ John Scott Reed, *The US Volunteers in the Southern Philippines: Counterinsurgency, Pacification, and Collaboration, 1899-1901* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2020), Needom N. Freeman, *A Soldier in the Philippines*, (1901; repr., Kissinger Publishing: Whitefish, MT, 2010), 20 and Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 2 and 19, SAWS.

⁵² Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 2, SAWS, Linn, *The Philippine War* 32-33, and Reed, *US Volunteers in the Southern Philippines*, 168-169.

camp.⁵³ Another complaint was that many members of the National Guard wanted to serve under the officers they elected. This produced issues when units did not reach full strength and were combined with other units to form a whole unit. The 1st Colorado lost members who refused to serve under officers appointed by the governor. Members of Company H quit the National Guard when they found out they could not serve under Neil Sullivan, an officer of their own choosing.⁵⁴ This anger and resentment at being forced to follow military discipline set the stage for many of the issues that would haunt the American units in the initial stages of the Philippine War. These issues only got worse as the first waves of American troops embarked on their trip to the Philippines.

Further, the vast majority of National Guard regiments were infantry units. Very few artillery or cavalry National Guard regiments existed, both of which performed vital combat support roles. Thus, the War Department relied on irregularly raised forces to supplement the infantry. For example, the Aster Battery formed in New York was funded by the wealthy John Jacob Astor IV, who purchased a set of guns from Paris and uniforms from a firm in New York City.⁵⁵

Because there was no headquarters command that could be tasked with coordinating the movement of troops above the regimental level, it led to chaos in the US Army. The regiments and the War Department had to coordinate each regiment individually. This meant that the entire task of the War Department was centred on moving individual units. The Quartermaster Corps had been reduced to such a degree following the Civil War that it lacked the resources and administrative capacity to coordinate troop movements effectively. As there was not a sufficient number of soldiers to staff the growth required for the Spanish-American

⁵³ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 32-33.

⁵⁴ Charles W Wilson Scrap Book 2, 1, Charles W. Wilson Collection, MSS.676, History Colorado, Denver, Colorado.

⁵⁵ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 43.

War, the officers in the Army and the inexperienced officers of the militia were forced to fulfil multiple roles at the same time. Many companies and regimental grade officers filled administrative positions at the brigade and divisional level on top of their existing duties. The Army lacked a coordinated supply system capable of maintaining its units with the supplies they required.⁵⁶ Instead, it relied on regimental officers to supply their men by acquiring local produce to feed them and local merchants to supply other essential goods.

The American Army lacked an integrated organizational table, which resulted in the absence of a standing brigade or command staff. These were subsequently created only as necessary, hampering mobilization of Regular troops, as the War Department in Washington and each unit had to plan and execute the movement of every regiment individually.⁵⁷ Additionally, with few Regular Army officers experienced in staff work or the organization and movement of large bodies of troops, few officers were available to support the mobilization of the National Guard. There were not enough officers to staff the growth required for the Spanish-American War and alleviate the administrative problems that developed while expanding the Army.⁵⁸ In addition to the staffing issues, there was no structure to secure supplies, ensuring that uniforms, tents, and other necessary supplies were critically short.⁵⁹

Many senior officers were Civil War veterans. Many junior officers had no experience working with larger formations of troops due to the lack of higher combat commands and the severe underdevelopment of the United States' military education system. Additionally, due to the lack of permanent brigade or higher command staff, many officers who were part of the regimental command structure were detached for staff assignments to fill these new vacancies

⁵⁶ For many remote posts this made a great deal of sense as it would be easier to just buy local goods than try to transport them in.

⁵⁷ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 107-110.

⁵⁸ Muehlbauer and Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, 275.

⁵⁹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

at these higher echelons. It often happened that company commanders or their subordinates would be detailed to brigade division or higher-level staff, which left voids in the regimental command structure. If the company commander was removed and assigned to a higher echelon command, his subordinates, two lieutenants, would have to take over his duties and continue to complete their own duties. If the more senior regimental leadership such as majors or colonels were removed to higher levels of command, more junior officers were forced to fill those vacancies.⁶⁰ Further, many junior officers had their workloads increased as they would have to juggle running their company, serving as the company quartermaster, serving as regimental quartermaster, and possibly having additional duties assigned to them at the brigade level. This meant that issues within regiments could not be as quickly or easily addressed. Breakdowns in supply and command-and-control were difficult to rectify efficiently and promptly due to the necessity of having commissioned officers from the Regular Army fulfilling multiple roles. Added to this was the requirement of having untrained officers with minimal experience from the state volunteer units who had to learn the functions of regimental officers and higher-level commands.

Following the end of the American Civil War, the Army was one of the planet's largest and most powerful military forces. However, once that conflict ended the Army rapidly contracted, due to American distrust of strong standing armies. This reduction in strength and the neglect that followed ensured that any crisis that faced the United States would force an inadequately prepared army to grow rapidly and face serious issues. The United States Army faced numerous issues as it expanded; problems with supply, raising and training new troops, and ensuring newly raised troops would be combat effective, as the Army prepared for the

⁶⁰ This exact issue happened to the 1st US Volunteer Cavalry. Although it did not serve in the Philippines, it is useful example. The regimental commander was Lennard Wood but he was given command of a brigade leaving the military inexperienced Theodore Roosevelt in charge of the regiment.

Spanish-American and Philippine Wars. The issues the United States Army experienced from 1866–1898, with a small Quartermaster Corps, limited opportunities for advancement, harsh discipline, inadequate pay, and antiquated equipment, had a direct negative impact on those who served during the Spanish-American War as well as the initial stages of the Philippine War. These issues caused a great deal of suffering and misery for the first contingents of troops dispatched to the Philippines. These issues caused resentment within the ranks of the state volunteer units that affected not only their abilities during the war but also how they remembered the conflict.

Conclusion

As the militia units were dispatched to California to train at Camp Marrett, the deficiencies of the United States Army, and the shortcomings of the National Guard regiments would converge. As the next chapter will show, these issues would have an immense impact in the training camps, where the troops would suffer from poor food, a lack of clothing, and other hardships. Additionally, the attitudes of the volunteers, their limited military experience, and their unpreparedness for military life, combined with the failures of the American Army created immense hardship in the training camps, and later on, the transports. This adversely impacted all of the regiments deployed to the Philippines during the Spanish-American War by degrading unit discipline and negatively impacting unit morale and fighting strength.

Chapter 3: Camps and Transports

The declaration of war on Spain led to the sudden induction of tens of thousands of new troops into the United States Army. To accommodate the enormous influx of new troops, the War Department established numerous training camps throughout the United States to equip and train the men. The camps included Camp George G. Meade outside Middletown Pennsylvania; Camp George H. Thomas on the Chickamauga battlefield in Georgia; and Camp Merritt at the Presidio in San Francisco.¹ Because of the decision to assemble a volunteer force rather than expand the regular Army, the War Department and the United States Army needed to train these men and acclimate them to military life. Due to the underdeveloped state of the United States Army, detailed in the last chapter, as well as the anti-militaristic attitudes of many volunteers, the experiences for a significant portion of men in these training camps were unpleasant.² Most men who served in the Philippines in the initial stages of the war were trained at Camp Merritt. Camp Merritt was like most of the other training camps developed by the United States during the Spanish-American War: hastily put together and crowded; this caused immense suffering and hardship for the men who were forced to train there.³

This chapter argues that many of the preconditions for the challenges of occupation arose from the training and travel prior to deployment in the Philippines. Due to the poor state of the United States Army, the American volunteers suffered immensely in the training camps and on the transports. The deplorable conditions and experiences degraded the desire for the volunteers to remain in the Army after the war ended, as well as their desire to conform to

¹ Spanish American War Camps: 1898-1899 Period. US GEN NET. Copy Right, 2005. Accessed August 2021. https://usgennet.org/usa/ne/topic/military/SpanishAmericanWar/span_am_camps/pg9.htm#merritt.

² Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 43.

³ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

military discipline. These issues resulted in problems for the American forces during training, on the voyage to the Philippines, and in the Philippines. The volunteers came to resent military discipline, which helped to create animosity with the Filipinos and contributed to the outbreak of the Philippine-American War.

The first part of this chapter examines the experiences of the soldiers at Camp Merritt and reveals how the failures of the supply situation and the physical location of the camp created difficulties for the troops. At Camp Merritt, the men who volunteered for the Spanish-American War suffered from shortages of supplies that adversely affected their health and combat readiness. The section will discuss how the failures of the supply system led to overcrowded conditions, poor food, and sanitation, which caused unnecessary sickness and suffering for those in training and during the subsequent voyage to the Philippines.

The two subsequent sections of the chapter explore the nature of mobilization and the voyage to the Philippines. This trip was far worse than the conditions in the training camps but featured many of the same failures apparent in those camps. The Army's failure to adequately plan for the deployment of troops to the Philippines resulted in deficiencies in the transport ships. Additionally, when on board the transports, the weaknesses of the militia and their officers became readily apparent by their failure to adequately plan shipboard activities to ensure a well-organized voyage. Although not every issue could have been resolved, the ineptitude of the National Guard's officers, with their inability or disinterest in mitigating some of the worst issues on board the transports, resulted in anger and resentment among their men. Combined, the trials of camp and ship created lasting damage to the U.S. volunteer force that would be apparent in the Philippines.

Camp Merritt

Many of the “Boys of 98” were, in reality, raw, untrained recruits who were swept up by the explosion of martial spirit that accompanied the outbreak of war with Spain. These troops needed extensive training before they could be deployed to fight the Spanish. Training took place at Camp Merritt at the Presidio in San Francisco. The camp was “pitched upon the site of the old Bay District Race Track, a great sand flat, which is about four miles west of the heart of the city, one mile east of the open ocean and immediately to the north of Golden Gate Park.”⁴ Although the Nebraska Adjutant General’s report described the camp “from a sanitary point of view of being healthful and dry,” it turned out to be the exact opposite.⁵

Camp Merritt was a dismal and dreary place for the soldiers who were training there. The camp demonstrated to the men who volunteered for war with Spain (and who would end up fighting in the Philippines) that enthusiasm and martial spirit only carried one so far. Andrew Whitworth, a soldier in the 1st Nebraska, said of Camp Merritt, “Of all the bum campgrounds this takes the pie.”⁶ Established on an old horse racing track near the Golden Gate, the camp was only one mile from the coast. It was constantly swept by cold winds, rain, and fog so thick that soldiers could hardly hear or see their officers during training or in camp. Although the coast of California is often viewed as a warm and sunny location, and San Francisco as a city of beauty and warmth, in reality, San Francisco was a much cooler location than expected. Because it was located on the San Francisco Bay and the Presidio located on the Golden Gate, the city’s weather is influenced strongly by the cool currents of the Pacific

⁴ Quote from 1897-98 Report of the Adjutant General of Nebraska, pages 89-90 in “Camp Merritt Spanish American War Camps”, US GEN NET https://usgennet.org/usa/ne/topic/military/SpanishAmericanWar/span_am_camps/pg9.htm#merritt.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Margaret I. Reilly, “Andrew Wadsworth: A Nebraska Soldier in the Philippines, 1898–1899,” *Nebraska History* 68 (Winter 1987):186–87.

and the water of the San Francisco Bay; thus, San Francisco has a mild year-round climate with little seasonal temperature variation.⁷

Although troops were stationed at the Presidio from April until August 1898, it was quite chilly for the men. JJ Martin, a replacement recruit for the 10th Pennsylvania, recounted a letter home on July 25, 1898, that while that day was the warmest they had experienced so far in San Francisco, it was still cool enough to need a jacket if one sat in the shade.⁸ Further, due to the unique geographical features of the San Francisco Valley, thick, cold, damp fog is a common feature in San Francisco, even during the summer. These climactic and geographical features created an unpleasant environment in which to acclimate new recruits to military life. The fog was extremely dense, so it was hard to do anything, as visibility was extremely limited. These factors made training in such conditions difficult for the men, if not impossible, as they were unable to follow the commands of their officers, see what they were doing, or see where they were going. This cold, damp fog was also detrimental to the men's health due to the improper and poor clothing that many wore, and the limited space for sheltering the soldiers.⁹ As the United States Army was unprepared to support a larger military force, it caused the breakdown of the supply system. As a result, most men did not have warm, appropriate clothing for the damp and chilly conditions of San Francisco in the late spring and summer. The damp and chilly conditions also affected the health of the men due to overcrowding in the military camps.¹⁰ With too few tents, poor food quality, and

⁷ San Francisco has the coolest daily mean, maximum, and minimum temperatures for June, July, and August among major U.S. cities. Liz Osborn, "Coolest US Cities in Summer," Current Results: Weather and Science Facts, accessed June 20, 2024 <https://www.currentresults.com/Weather-Extremes/US/coldest-cities-summer.php> and San Francisco Climate, Climate Data, assessed June 20, 2024 <https://en.climate-data.org/north-america/united-states-of-america/california/san-francisco-385/>.

⁸ JJ Martin to Martha Martin, June 25, 1898, Edward Martin Papers, Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg, PA.

⁹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

¹⁰ Ibid.

overcrowding, together with the damp and chilly conditions of the area, sickness spread rapidly throughout the ranks.¹¹

The location of the camp was also an issue for the men. Besides being in a coastal zone prone to cold, damp, and thick fog, Camp Merritt also had much sand because it was only a mile from the shore. The sand caused many problems for the men in conjunction with the significant overcrowded conditions at the camp. The size and location of the camp compound were far too small for the number of men that were training and encamped there; 14,000 men were packed into a space the size of one hundred and twenty-five acres.¹² Overcrowding impacted everything in camp: sanitation systems, disease, and training space. There were not enough sanitation facilities to support the number of troops encamped at Camp Merritt; therefore, sanitation facilities were pushed to the limit. To make things worse, sand clogged toilets and pipes, further compounding the sanitary issues at camp. Because toilets backed up, there were fewer toilets available for the men to use, and those that functioned were overused and became filthy due to the number of men using them. With pipes clogged, it was difficult for the men to maintain cleanliness, as fewer sinks and showers were available. Men were unable to wash their hands after relieving themselves and were unable to clean themselves due to overuse of available facilities. Sand made life miserable for the men stationed at Camp Merritt. It got into the tents, into clothing, and also caked the sweating bodies of the men, making drill and everyday life unpleasant. Because of the sand, men needed to clean themselves more often, compounding the overuse issue of the sanitary facilities at Camp Merritt. Sand clogged pipes used to remove sewage and bring clean water into the camp set the stage for a sanitary disaster that would ultimately catch up with the men

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² "Camp Merritt Spanish American War Camps", US GEN NET
https://usgennet.org/usa/ne/topic/military/SpanishAmericanWar/span_am_camps/pg9.htm#merritt.

on the ships to the Philippines. Sand also increased the amount of labour the men had to perform daily. It forced them to continuously and constantly clean their weapons as sand got into them, fouling them and making them unfunctional. The clogged pipes also made it more difficult to clean and maintain cooking and eating equipment.¹³ Overcrowding and poor sanitary conditions permitted illnesses to spread rapidly throughout the troops.¹⁴

Sand fouled drinking water, making it undrinkable, forcing men to find water elsewhere or travel a significant distance from camp to get fresh water. Sand also spoiled food. The food the men were eating was already inadequate for the stressful and strenuous activities they were subjected to as they prepared for war. Food spoiled by sand was inedible, limiting the amount of food available for consumption. The limited amount of quality food available reduced the strength of the men which affected their health and ability to resist diseases.

The camp was far too small for training soldiers. As the Nebraska's Adjutant General report stated: "There being no room for drill inside, the companies are taken out into the streets, while the battalions repair to the side of the Presidio hill where daily exercises are given in battle formation and skirmish drills."¹⁵ Thus troops were forced to drill at the city parks near the camp, but park authorities quickly revoked this due to the disruption training caused in city residents' daily activities.

Overcrowding, poor sanitation, contaminated drinking water, and poor and inadequate food allowed illnesses to spread rapidly throughout the troops, causing misery as well as creating tensions within the regiments.¹⁶ The situation was made worse because there were not

¹³ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "Camp Merritt Spanish American War Camps", US GEN NET
https://usgennet.org/usa/ne/topic/military/SpanishAmericanWar/span_am_camps/pg9.htm#merritt.

¹⁶ Many men from rural areas would not have had immunities to such diseases as measles mumps and other "childhood" illnesses due to their isolation from large population centers and the lower population per square mile in the rural Western states that inhibited the spread of such illnesses.

enough tents for all the troops stationed at Camp Merritt. Men were jampacked together in too few tents; this created the ideal breeding ground for illness to spread.¹⁷ In addition to the issues with sand clogging pipes and fouling food and water supplies, Camp Merritt was plagued with inadequate sanitary facilities. Although “there [was] city water at the end of each company street, with ample accommodations made for water closets and sinks,” with 14,000 men stationed at the camp, the Army simply did not build enough sanitation facilities to support that level of troop strength.¹⁸ Camp Merritt quickly began to breed pestilence. The limited sanitation facilities, exhausting training, poor food, and crowded conditions increased the likelihood of the soldiers becoming sick in the cramped, crowded, and unsanitary conditions of Camp Merritt. Additionally, as many of the volunteer soldiers came from rural and sparsely populated western states many of the men may not have been subject to childhood illnesses such as measles. Thus, these men were vulnerable to many “childhood” illnesses, weakening them and making them more susceptible to other deadlier diseases. Further, many of the troops were physically and mentally unprepared for military life as well as the physical demands that it would place on them.

Due to the conditions that existed in camp, Camp Merritt swiftly began to look like a cesspit. The men were exhausted due to the demanding training regimen instituted by their officers, and their unwillingness to follow the demands of military directives in sanitation and personal care compounded the deplorable conditions the volunteers faced. W. Thomas Osborne of the 1st Tennessee wrote in a letter home that of the 109 men of Company G, fifty-nine were either in the hospital or on sick call.¹⁹ Even the regular troops thought to be

¹⁷ This would be the last war in which the United States and lose more troops to disease than to combat.

¹⁸ “Camp Merritt Spanish American War Camps”, US GEN NET https://usgennet.org/usa/ne/topic/military/SpanishAmericanWar/span_am_camps/pg9.htm#merritt and Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

¹⁹ “The Letters of W. Thomas Osborne, a Spanish-American Soldier of Buford County,” Tennessee Historical Quarterly 22 (June 1963), 156.

prepared and supplied better than their volunteer counterparts, suffered at Camp Merritt. Needleman F. Freeman, a private in the 23rd US infantry, recounted that while stationed at Camp Merritt during the buildup for the invasion of the Philippines, he was sick for a month with a fever.²⁰ The few Regular Army officers stationed in San Francisco desperately tried to rectify the situation. Nonetheless, due to pressures from Cuba and the need to get troops on transports quickly, they could not make much headway.²¹

The men's health was further degraded due to the poor diet the Army provided. As most of the men who enlisted to fight the Spanish-American War were volunteers, their officers recognized that these men needed extensive training to prepare them for war. However, the Army diet did not provide the nourishment necessary to maintain health while conducting these exhausting drills in the poor sanitary environment of Camp Merritt.²² The Army diet consisted mainly of beef or other substitutes like pork or salmon, hardtack, coffee, and dried vegetables.²³ This diet did not provide the vitamins and nutrients necessary to maintain the soldier's health. Much of the food provided by the Army was unpalatable to the men, either due to poor preparation or spoilage; thus, many men did not eat the food provided. Further, much of the beef spoiled due to poor preservation, inadequate canning or improper handling by the soldiers.²⁴ Because it was necessary to vastly expand the supply systems to support the Army in the buildup during the Spanish-American War, rather than following the Army's traditional practice of procuring fresh beef from local sources, the War Department was dedicated to supporting the Chicago meatpacking industry.²⁵ To adequately supply the troops, the War Department hurriedly arranged, at the lowest cost possible, contracts to supply

²⁰ Freeman, *A Soldier in the Philippines*, 13.

²¹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

²² Ibid., 12.

²³ Keuchel, "Chemicals and Meat," p. 256.

²⁴ Ibid., 259-261.

²⁵ Ibid., 256.

the Army with preserved beef to provision the expeditionary forces. Eventually, the meatpacking industry shipped hundreds of tons of refrigerated and canned beef to the Army. The “big three” Chicago meatpacking corporations—Morris & Co, Swift & Co, and Armour & Co—took advantage of the situation by further cutting corners and reducing the quality of the already heavily adulterated product they provided to the US Army. As a result, some of the meat supplied to the troops was found to be so poorly preserved, chemically adulterated, and/or spoiled that it could be toxic and dangerous to consume.²⁶ The health of the men was further weakened due to the demanding training regimen put in place by the officers of the state units. Most of these units were filled with raw recruits with little to no military training; therefore, it required a great deal of practice to effectively operate as a military unit. The regiment of intensive training exhausted the men. When combined with spoiled food that did not provide the nourishment necessary to maintain proper health, it created a situation where men became much more susceptible to illness.²⁷

The hardships endured by the men in camp were further compounded by the inadequate supply system and the unpreparedness of the War Department. Not only was the supply of food a problem for the Army, but other supplies such as clothing and modern small arms were lacking, and most of the state volunteers were armed with outdated Springfield Trapdoor Rifles. Tents were in short supply; therefore, soldiers were forced to crowd into those available, creating favourable conditions for the spread of disease. Ed Dunbar, a private in the 1st California, and two other men, had to share a tent designed to shelter only two. Further, proper uniforms were also hard to come by. Soldiers were dressed in a mixed collection of civilian clothing or a varied supply of blue or brown canvas and white linen that

²⁶ These problems, eventually becoming known as the embalmed beef scandal and led to the resignation of the Secretary of War Russell A. Alger. Ibid, 259-260.

²⁷ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12-13.

was inadequate for Camp Merritt's damp and chilly environment.²⁸ With a short supply of uniforms, most men did not receive a uniform that fit, and to make matters worse, their shoddily made undergarments, quickly disintegrated after just a few washings.²⁹

Mobilizing an Army

As the United States raised troops for its war with Spain, men flocked to the colours to demonstrate their patriotism, avenge the destruction of the *Maine*, and free the people of Cuba from Spanish despotism. As the United States mobilized, these volunteers had two options: join the Regular Army or enlist in the various state militia units, the so-called National Guard, which were being mobilized for service. However, the Army's desire to entirely regulate the lives of their enlisted personnel to enforce discipline and guarantee the ability of troops to function in combat, grated upon the men who served during the war. In general, the American population, both civilians and military officers, believed that American soldiers could not or should not conform to disciplinary standards that were customary for European armies.³⁰ The Americans believed that European military discipline was rooted in an aristocratic hierarchy that did not exist within the United States armed forces at this time.³¹ It was widely believed by American officers and the American public that the officers of the United States Army should use a broad spectrum of negative and positive measures to motivate their men.³²

Most men chose to enlist in the National Guard regiments, as many Americans had an aversion to the strict discipline of the Regular Army and the perceived harsh and tyrannical treatment of enlisted personnel in the Regular Army. Ed Dunbar, a member of the 1st

²⁸ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

²⁹ Ibid., 12-13.

³⁰ Reed, *US Volunteers in the Southern Philippines*, 167-169.

³¹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 31-32, and Reed, *US Volunteers in the Southern Philippines*, 167-168.

³² Reed, *US Volunteers in the Southern Philippines*, 167-169.

California, was initially going to enlist in the Regular Army during the war. After meeting with his father in San Francisco, they sought out the recruiting office for the Regular Army. The surgeon passed Ed Dunbar as fit for service in the Regular Army, but they met a family friend who advised his father “not to let the boy go into the Regulars” where he said they treated a man like a dog. He said “Try to get him into a volunteer regiment.”³³ Even in the more relaxed disciplinary environment of the volunteer regiments, the men chafed at the imposition of discipline that was required of them. These men, a large number of whom elected their officers, resented these same officers and NCOs imposing military discipline on them. Many men resisted the demands of military discipline and hygiene, believing this to be a tyrannical imposition on free citizen volunteers. The volunteers believed they should be treated with the same dignity and respect from their officers and NCOs as they received in civilian life from their peers. Dunbar had this issue while in the Philippines. He was put in the guardhouse for speaking disrespectfully to his superior.³⁴ He related to his sweetheart Maud: “I have not quite got used to being spoken to like a dog by the high and mighty beings called non-commissioned officers, so when I flew off the handle, I got the worst of it.”³⁵

The officers of the state volunteer regiments could never fully discipline their men and get them to accept the requirements of military life. The men constantly rebelled against their officers and often left a bad impression on the inhabitants in the areas they passed through. Beverly Daly, who began his career in the Regular Army as an enlisted personnel member, noticed that the lax discipline within the volunteer units soured many Americans to the military. In a letter to his mother after his transport landed in Hawaii, he indicated the population there was tired of soldiers, recounting to his mother that “though the weather was

³³ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 2, SAWS.

³⁴ Ibid., 19.

³⁵ Ibid.

very warm our parade was a ‘frost’ as there is no enthusiasm. Honolulu, has got enough of soldiers I guess-another case of volunteers.”³⁶ For the regulars, discipline was much stricter than what the volunteers experienced, with many officers believing that harsh discipline was necessary to keep men in order. Freeman, who served in the Philippines with the regular Army, experienced much stronger and more consistent discipline than the volunteer regiments. Recalling that during his training, “the manner of all the drill masters was very objectionable to me at first; I did not like the way they spoke to soldiers gave commands, which, if it disobeyed, punishment was inflicted.”³⁷ He recounted that discipline was severe, and men were placed in the guardhouse as a result of various infractions. Discipline included hard labour for up to six months in addition to any imposed fines. Freeman was careful not to suffer any of these punishments.³⁸ Although he generally avoided issues with military authorities during his service, he did not escape the harsh discipline inflicted upon enlisted personnel in the Army. While stationed in San Francisco, he sought to be transferred to a different company to escape the type of punishments imposed by one of the sergeants in his company.³⁹

The necessities of the war required the drastic expansion of the United States Army in order to combat the Spanish Army. To do this, the United States resorted to the traditional method of raising troops which was to federalize state militia units for military service. Because the vast majority of troops being inducted into the state volunteer regiments were raw, untrained volunteers, they required a great deal of hard and extensive training to prepare them properly for combat. A fact that their officers readily understood, but the men seemed to ignore, as these militia units were unruly and resented the discipline imposed upon them by their officers and NCOs and were not afraid to complain about their unfair—in their minds—

³⁶ Beverly C. Daly to Mamma, June 5, 1899, Beverly C. Daly Papers, American History and Heritage Center, University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY.

³⁷ Freeman, *A Soldier in the Philippines*, 6.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 12-13.

treatment in the Army.⁴⁰ The State governments primarily used the so-called National Guard to put down strikes or restore order. Because of this limited use, most prewar Guardsmen had very little actual training or experience with military life and the discipline required for combat. Thus, to prepare these units for combat against Spanish forces, the officers instituted a demanding and rigorous training program that thoroughly exhausted the men, sowing the seeds of resentment within these regiments. Men who enlisted in the National Guard during the Spanish-American War resented the discipline and authority their officers had over them. They often elected their officers and expected to be treated with the same dignity and respect as fellow citizens.⁴¹

As a result of the absence of discipline and limited experience, officers drilled their men relentlessly. The purpose was to familiarize raw recruits with the fundamentals of military life including basic military courtesy and discipline, following all the orders of their superiors, and recognizing the authority of NCOs. Further, due to the lack of discipline, officers instituted a challenging training regimen centring around military drills. Even those members who were part of the National Guard for a number of years required a great deal of practice before they could effectively function in battle. John Bowe, a recruit of the 13th Minnesota who had only been with the regiment for two weeks, recounted that he requested a pass from his commanding officer to go into San Francisco. Colonel Reeve replied, “Well, there are men who have been in the guard for two years who need drilling; you, doubtless, will also need it.”⁴² Intense drilling exhausted the men in these regiments and further reduced their already

⁴⁰ David J Davis, of the Utah Light Artillery, for example regularly wrote home complaining about his, and his comparands treatment, and once the war was over began writing home to try to find a way out of the Army, and complained in person to the Utah Light Artillery’s commanding officer Richard Whitehead Young, about the fact the Utah Light Artillery was not being sent home. David J. Davis, David J. Davis collection, December 14, 1898, CHL.

⁴¹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 32.

⁴² John Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota In the Philippines* (1905; repr., Forgotten Books: London, 2018).

weakened systems making them more susceptible to illness. Hard training angered the men, many of whom, as recounted by Edward Martin, had joined up not to be soldiers but for a trip to the Philippines. The discipline and extensive training imposed on the men led to resentment against their officers that festered and continued to increase as time wore on, especially during the trip to the Philippines.

The men who fought in the Philippines had diverse experiences while serving during the Spanish-American War and the beginning of the Philippine War. Some had positive experiences regarding their service during the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars, reminiscent of Edward Martin of the 10th Pennsylvania. In contrast, others, like Ed Dunbar of the 1st California, had unenthusiastic commentary on their time spent in the training camps and on the voyage. William Christner of the 10th Pennsylvania wrote to his family back home about his positive experiences in the Army. As mentioned, Edward Martin of the same regiment also recounted in several letters that he greatly enjoyed military life and would go to West Point if possible. Beverly Daly also generally enjoyed the life of a soldier, and he seemed to have integrated well into military life. He mentioned several times to his mother in New York that he enjoyed his time in the Army as an enlisted man. Although many men who served in the Philippine war objected to Army discipline and military life, they all remained proud of their service during the conflict.

The Transports

After much indecision by the McKinley Administration, with the Spanish fleet's defeat in Manila Bay, the United States decided to deploy troops to the Philippines to eliminate the Spanish threat in those islands. This required sending troops to a location over 3,000 miles

from the continental United States. It would be the first time the United States deployed a significant body of troops outside the North American Continent. Although the Navy could operate at such distances, the United States Army lacked this ability.⁴³ For the United States Army, it would be the first significant deployment of army personnel outside the United States since the war with Mexico in the 1840s.

As previously discussed, the United States Army had not sufficiently modernized between the end of the American Civil War and the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, which was necessary to effectively operate outside the Continental United States or beyond the Western Hemisphere. While the Navy had that capacity, due to its worldwide deployments to further American interests abroad, the Army lacked the logistical capacity to support troops beyond the United States.⁴⁴ Therefore, the Army was forced to develop that capacity quickly during the Spanish-American War, but this development severely impacted the men initially sent to the Philippines. Due to Washington's waffling over whether or not to send troops to the Philippines, the Army was not able to act quickly to provide the necessary transportation and support for such an action.⁴⁵ After the decision was finally reached to send troops, three expeditions were eventually dispatched to the Philippines before the end of the Spanish-American War. None of the early transport ships were built or designed to move troops; all ships were converted from other uses to be employed as troop transports.⁴⁶ Merchant ships were hastily converted to move troops to the Philippines, some of which were hastily converted livestock transport ships.⁴⁷ Thus, the conditions on these vessels were primitive and harsh.

⁴³ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 36-40 and Muehlbauer and Ulbrich, *Ways of War*, 272-273.

⁴⁴ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 8.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ The Spanish-American War Centennial Website; The Spanish-American War Centennial Website, accessed July, 14, 2020, <https://www.spanamwar.com/2ndoregon#Trip%20to%20the%20Philippines>

Due to political wavering in Washington, by the time it was decided to deploy troops to the Philippines, the Navy had already acquired the most modern vessels available on the West Coast for their use as supply ships or other auxiliary roles such as minesweeping or minelaying. The Navy moved more quickly than the Army to secure ships because the Navy needed to acquire vessels to support their role in defending the West Coast from any possible Spanish attack. The Army, on the other hand, moved more slowly due to the political uncertainty about deploying troops to the Philippines.⁴⁸ As a result, after the decision had been made to send troops, the Army was forced to charter older, smaller, and slower ships, which were hastily converted into transport ships⁴⁹. None of the vessels were suitable for troop transport due to their small size, low speed, and general design as most were designed as cargo ships or livestock transports.⁵⁰ Even when they were converted these ships had very serious shortcomings that made the trip to the Philippines for the vast number of soldiers a living nightmare.

The first expedition to the Philippines, consisting of 2,501 officers and men, was sent off to cheers. However, on board the three vessels of this expedition—the *City of Peking*, the *Australia*, and the *City of Sydney*—the “Boys of 98” quickly learned that “war was not all parades.”⁵¹ The three ships hastily converted from civilian use were crammed with men and equipment. The Army was forced to charter ships to transport their troops to the Philippines as the United States military maintained no purpose-built transport ships for such a task. The ship the *City of Sydney*, used to transport the 2nd Oregon to the Philippines, was converted from a cattle transport to move troops. Joseph Denburgh, a member of the 2nd Oregon, recalled that the *City of Sydney* had not been fumigated before it was converted into a transport ship.

⁴⁸ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 12.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 12-13.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 12-13, and The Spanish-American War Centennial Website; The Spanish-American War Centennial Website, accessed July, 14, 2020, <https://www.spanamwar.com/2ndoregon#Trip%20to%20the%20Philippines>

⁵¹ Ibid., 13.

Consequently, the ship was “terribly lousy and filthy.”⁵² He recalled that “right up to the day we arrived in Manila Bay we were kept busy sweeping up horse manure and other filth it accumulated for years.”⁵³

The converted ships were simply too small for the number of men and the amount of equipment to be carried on them. The *City of Peking* carried the 1st California Volunteer Infantry; the 980 enlisted personnel were crammed into a space 10 feet high, 425 feet long, and 60 feet wide. The men were housed in bunks stacked four high and six wide causing some men to crawl over five others to get to their sweat-drenched mattresses. Ed Dunbar, a member of the 1st California, recounted the sleeping arrangements on the *City of Peking*, “We are packed in worse than sardines. I am lucky, as I only have to crawl over one man to get to bed, but some men have to go back seven or eight, and the bunks are from three to five tiers high. There is barely any space to squeeze in, and the headboard strikes me in the back of the head.”⁵⁴ In addition to the men and their baggage, the regiment’s equipment and its supplies were crammed into the space as well.⁵⁵ Equipment and supplies included cooking gear to prepare food, tentage for the regimental field hospital, tentage for the officers and men, the arms, armament of the regiment, the ammunition for the regiment, and other sundry supplies, as well as the food intended to feed the troops on their voyage to the Philippines.

The cramped conditions aboard ship were made worse because most of the ships did not have internal ventilation systems for the holds where the men were housed. Since many of the ships were either cargo vessels that carried goods or livestock, or travelled short distances, they did not have or require the ventilation necessary for troop transportation. As the holds of the ships lacked ventilation, they swiftly became stuffy and unbearable, a situation that

⁵² The Spanish-American War Centennial Website; The Spanish-American War Centennial Website, accessed July, 14, 2020, <https://www.spanamwar.com/2ndoregon#Trip%20to%20the%20Philippines>.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 4, SAWS.

⁵⁵ The supplies and equipment carried by the regiments was also called baggage.

worsened in the tropics. In an attempt to alleviate the lack of ventilation, wind sails were installed to catch the air and force it down into the hold, as the ship travelled; however, they proved inadequate for the task.⁵⁶ The lack of fresh air resulted in miserable conditions for the men quartered below. As the vessel entered the tropics, these conditions produced immense suffering becoming extremely stuffy and unbearable. Men regularly tried to sleep on deck as the ships' holds were too hot and uncomfortable to sleep in. As Dunbar recounted almost sixty years later, "After retreat roll call in the evening, as many as could find space on the decks were allowed to bring out their straw mattresses and sleep on deck. There was a great rush to get out on deck, but most had to sleep below."⁵⁷ The conditions below were so bad that when the troops arrived in the Philippines, they were ordered to throw their mattresses overboard because they were so saturated with sweat and mildew that they could not be reused. Dunbar recalled the harbour being filled with floating mattresses for the next few hours.

The ships used to transport the troops to the Philippines were never designed to carry as many passengers as they did on the voyage to the Philippines. These ships did not have adequate facilities to handle the large number of men on board. Since the ships were designed to carry fewer passengers, they only had enough facilities to feed the crew and the smaller number of passengers typically on board for their usual voyages. To compound these woes, kitchen space and room for food preparation was limited, which caused significant sanitary and food issues for the men. While this problem could have been overcome by proper planning, either the inadequacy of the volunteer officers or their lack of interest prevented this. The limited hygiene facilities on board were a problem that no planning could overcome after the men had boarded their ships.

⁵⁶ A windsail is a wide tube or funnel of canvas used to carry air for ventilation into the lower compartments of a ship.

⁵⁷ Dunbar, *Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service*, 5, SWAS.

As the ships were not built for passenger service, they had limited toilets and other sanitary facilities to serve the men on board. The sanitary facilities quickly became overwhelmed by the number of men who needed to use them daily. Further, due to the horrendous conditions within the hold, the sanitation facilities were insufficient to ensure the soldiers could clean themselves and maintain their health. The lack of toilets was the most critical failure of these vessels. There were simply not enough toilets on board to handle the large number of men who needed to use them. Further, when the ships entered the rough Pacific Ocean, men often became seasick. For many of the men, this was the first time in their lives to be at sea; as a result, they became seasick in the rough waters off the coast of California.⁵⁸ There were too few toilets for the men who were sick and limited hospital facilities; therefore, they often were forced to stay in the hold and vomited there, leaving the holds awash with vomit. This further reduced the habitability of the holds making them smelly and unsanitary, further compounding the sanitation issues on board and increasing the likelihood of illness and death.⁵⁹

The men's miseries continued. Food issues plagued them on board the ships, as the men's food was often inedible and provided little nourishment. Refrigeration facilities rapidly broke down, causing the fresh meat stored on board to spoil within a week; the poor ventilation on board caused the fresh food in the holds to spoil. Joseph Debuggerth recalled in his writings, "Three days out from Honolulu, all of our supply of fresh meat went bad and had to be thrown overboard. Progress forward we lived on canned Willie (Cornbeef), salmon canned tomatoes and hardtack."⁶⁰ Food preparation was so inefficient and inept that bad food

⁵⁸ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 44.

⁵⁹ The Spanish-American War Centennial Website, <https://www.spanamwar.com/2ndoregon#Trip%20to%20the%20Philippines>.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

was often cooked with good. Private Dunbar recalled that while he was assigned one day to kitchen duty:

[S]ets of potatoes were hoisted out of the hold, where there is no refrigeration. Some had rotted, but no sorting was done, although plenty of men could have been detailed for this. The procedure was for two of us to hold a sack over the big steam kettle; the cook would draw a knife across the sac, and the whole contents, both good and rotten, were dumped in the kettle. When taking out to serve, all were discolored, and tainted by the rotten ones.⁶¹

The failures included allowing tomatoes and hardtack to soak overnight in pans on the deck of the ships. Because the pans were not brought in before the sailors cleaned the decks, it was not uncommon to find “a few cigarette and cigar butts mixed up with them for seasoning.”⁶²

Serving the food to the soldiers was also so inefficient that by the time many of the men received their food, it had congealed into a grey, cold, slimy mass the men called “slum.”

Failure to properly and adequately feed the men who were already suffering from sea sickness further degraded their health. Additionally, with limited medical facilities onboard and few medical personnel, illnesses spread among the soldiers. Added to the overcrowded conditions on board ship and the conditions they faced at Camp Merritt, it is unsurprising that several men died on the crossing to the Philippines, weakened as they were from sickness, a poor diet, and poor food quality. Cramped unsanitary conditions combined with exhausted troops and inferior food that was often rancid contributed to illness on board ship. Additional to the issue was sea sickness. Men faced a horrifying transit to the Philippine Islands, with many regiments reporting at least one death on the voyage. There was also minimal space to treat and care for the men of the 1st Oregon and the doctor was overwhelmed by the number of sick. Joseph Debuggerth of the 2nd Oregon recalled, “The health of the men began to show the lack of fresh meat and vegetables in their daily ration. The sick line became longer each day as the

⁶¹ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 23, SWAS.

⁶² The Spanish-American War Centennial Website,
<https://www.spanamwar.com/2ndoregon#Trip%20to%20the%20Philippines>.

voyage continued. As far as I can remember now old Doc Coolei was the only doctor on board ship.”⁶³ Several soldiers, including George Fisher and William Christner, recorded men’s deaths due to sickness and disease in their diaries and letters on the passage to the Philippines. Surprisingly, the 2nd Oregon only lost a single man on the voyage to the Philippines, despite their ship being essentially an uncleaned cattle transport.⁶⁴

The men of the following two expeditions did not have a better experience than those on the first transports to Manila. On June 15, 1898, the Second Expedition to be dispatched to the Philippines left San Francisco and suffered the same hellish conditions as the men of the First Expedition. In addition, the men of the Second Expedition had the excitement of a fire onboard in a coal bunker of one of the transport ships. The fire was not fully extinguished until the expedition reached Manila. Before the end of the Spanish-American War, the final expedition departed San Francisco on July 17, arriving at Manila on July 25 and bringing the total American strength in the Philippines to 10,946 officers and men.⁶⁵

Although most of the accounts of the trip to the Philippines by volunteer troops of the Spanish-American War recount horrendous conditions on the transports, William S Christner of the 10th Pennsylvania was a rare voice among the “Boys of 98,” as he did not complain about the transport ships. He recounted that the ship he was on, the *Zealandia*, was a fine vessel. His letters do not complain or mention conditions on board *Zealandia* during the trip to the Philippines. This optimistic view is unusual among the men sent to the Philippines in the

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ George R. Fisher Diary, June, 21, 29, July 5, 9, and 12, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box 30, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA, and The Spanish-American War Centennial Website, <https://www.spanamwar.com/2ndoregon#Trip%20to%20the%20Philippines>.

⁶⁵ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 15.

early part of the conflict. In his diary, John Arndorff, a member of Company C in the 10th Pennsylvania, complains about the cramped conditions and the foul air on the ship.⁶⁶

Luckily for the men dispatched to the Philippines following the outbreak of the Philippine War in 1899, conditions onboard ships had improved. However, there were still plenty of issues on board. Beverly Daly, a corporal in the 6th United States Infantry, recalled that his passage to the Philippines on the USAT *Sherman* was much more comfortable than those experienced by the “Boys of 98”. Daly recounted his experiences on board when writing home to his mother in New York: “A walk around the *Sherman* convinced me that, she could hardly be improved upon, as a transport. It is a very big ship - 445 feet long and carried over 2000 men comfortably. The berth decks are well ventilated, and every man has a comfortable bunk. The bunks are arranged in three tiers, upper berth. There were ample accommodations for washing.”⁶⁷ Sanford M. Thomas of the 24th United States Infantry also recounted in his memoir *War the Philippines: A True Story* that he had a pleasant voyage to the Philippines on the chartered ship *City of Para*. Although still crowded, the Army had better vessels to move troops and had gained experience in moving troops over long distances. However, this did not mean that the trips to the Philippines were without incident. Ralph Fullerton, a member of the 31st United States Volunteer Infantry, described his experiences on the voyage to the Philippines to his mother in November 1899: “After thirty-four days we finally arrived here. We had all kinds of bad luck after leaving Honolulu. Our light flaut first broke down, then our ice flaut then our water conditioner. Then our engine broke down and we started to put in at the island of Guam.”⁶⁸ Nevertheless that was not the end of Fullerton and his comrades’

⁶⁶ John Henery Arendorff War Diary, June 15, 1898, The War Diary of John Henery Arendorff: The Story of a Pennsylvania Volunteer during the Spanish American War in the Philippines and the Philippine American War, accessed August, 20, 2020, <https://www.ajandj.com/diary/index.php>.

⁶⁷ Daly, Beverly C. Daly Papers, June 5, 1899, AHHC.

⁶⁸ Ralph N. Fullerton to Mama, November 29, 1899, Ralph N. Fullerton Collection, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box 68, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA.

problems on board: “We ran into an awful storm which lasted over three days. We would not have minded that but right in the middle of the storm our engines broke again, and the ship sprang a leak. The water came in so fast that the fires in the engines were put out. The pumps worked by steam; therefore, they were useless. We were completely at the mercy of the waves.”⁶⁹ Daly, relating his voyage to the Philippines to his mother, stated in his letter that *Sherman* almost sank during the voyage. During the journey from Honolulu to Manila, an ammonia pipe burst in the refrigeration room, causing a fire that forced the ship to stop in the middle of the ocean to put out the fire. Even though the Army had improved its ability, to some extent, to move troops the long distance to the Philippines, plenty of issues remained on board these vessels. Thomas, who served in the 24th Infantry, recalled that on board the ship, the food was still relatively poor, recounting:

Our breakfast on the thirtieth was a poor one, being salmon bread and bad tasting coffee, which was equally bad as a double dose of liquid quinine; and salmon was so very salty it was very necessary to have all the drinking water could possibly get. But it was useless to mention our thirst, because the machine would not or could not furnish water as fast as we wished.⁷⁰

Poor food was not the only issue facing the troops of the 24th. There was not enough water on board to adequately supply the men with drinking water, “the allowance being one half a cup,” according to Thomas, due to the poor quality of the ship’s desalination plant.⁷¹

The horrid conditions on board the ships did not make the men happy. In contrast to their men, the officers had spacious and comfortable accommodations. They enjoyed comfortable and airy staterooms with pleasant and spacious dining facilities. The officers and crew of the ship ate well and comfortably in their messes. Unable, or in the eyes of their men unwilling, to alleviate their men’s conditions, the officers kept to themselves, breeding resentment among the men. Neeldom F. Freeman, a member of the 23rd United States Infantry,

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Sanford M. Thomas, *War in the Philippines: A True Story* (1903), 7.

⁷¹ Ibid. 5.

felt this way about the officers: “Our officers on the transport had everything to suit themselves, and the private had to do the best he could and try to be satisfied, or at least appear that way. It would take two-thirds of the deck for half a dozen officers to have room. They thought themselves so superior to the privates they did not want to be near them.”⁷² Discipline on board the ship deteriorated under these conditions and, in some cases broke down entirely. The 1st Colorado rioted twice, demanding better food; the 1st California did the same demanding better food from their officers. Such actions caused military authorities to prepare the elements of the 18th and 23rd US Infantry “with loaded guns” to storm the transport that the 1st Colorado was on in order to put down a possible mutiny.⁷³

Many of the men had never seen the ocean before, let alone been to sea, and some were afraid of the ocean. Because most state regiments deployed to the Philippines came from the inland Western states, most of the men had never had a chance to travel to the United States’ beach resorts and experience the ocean, the closest of which were hundreds or thousands of miles from their home. The largest bodies of water they would have been familiar with would have been lakes, rivers, or ponds in their local areas. Such bodies of water were much smaller and far less threatening than the vast breadth of the San Francisco Bay they confronted when they arrived in San Francisco, and the vast, empty, endless expanse of the Pacific Ocean they would be forced to face while traveling to the Philippines. As William Christner reported of his regiment, the 10th Pennsylvania, a good number of men were intimidated by the enormous span of the Pacific Ocean, and the rough waters of that sea.⁷⁴ Additionally, almost all the men in these regiments likely never sailed anything larger than a rowboat. The anxiety of sailing across the enormous Pacific, combined with the rough weather

⁷² Freeman, *A Soldier in the Philippines*, 15.

⁷³ Fisher Diary, June 29, SAWS.

⁷⁴ Christner, William S. Christner Papers, May 20, 1898, SAWS.

the expeditions encountered on their voyage to the Philippines, conjoined with the truly hellish conditions they experienced on board the ships, certainly helped wear on the soldiers' nerves, which did not help their temper and certainly made the conditions they experienced onboard even more intolerable.⁷⁵ Further, the small ships, subject to the rough conditions of the Pacific, contributed to the men getting seasick, which increased their misery. In addition, the men who had never been on ships before worried about whether or not their ship would remain afloat.

There was very little the men could do to alleviate these conditions and burn off some of their anger. Each man was usually only allowed on deck for two hours, allowing them to work off some of their anger and frustrations with boxing matches and calisthenics. However, even this was limited due to the amount of space officers used for themselves. Private Freeman, a soldier in the Regular Army, recounted: "Our officers on the transport had everything to suit themselves, and the private had to do the best he could and try to be satisfied, or at least appear that way. It would take two-thirds of the deck for half a dozen officers to have room. They thought themselves so superior to the privates they did not want to be near them."⁷⁶ The activities allowed by the officers only kept rage at a simmering level. Ed Dunbar recalled in his memories that one night, a fellow soldier played a prank on him by throwing a handful of flour in his face. The only thing that stopped him from murdering the man by throwing him overboard was the guard's intervention, arresting him and placing him in the guardhouse for the rest of the night.⁷⁷ This anger and resentment ensured that the voyage to the Philippines was unsettled. Discipline deteriorated, and occasionally broke down completely, with the 1st Colorado and 1st California rebelling and demanding better food, forcing military authorities to prepare to possibly put down a mutiny.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Freeman, *A Soldier in the Philippines*, 15.

⁷⁷ Dubar, 13.

⁷⁸ Fisher Diary, June 29, SAWS.

Conclusion

Due to the horrifying conditions on board and the apparent indifference of their officers, when the state volunteers reached the Philippines, they were delighted to leave the ships. Although excited to finally face Spain and to prove their mettle, much damage had been done to the regiments. Relations between the officers and men would never recover due to their experiences on the ships and training camps during the buildup for the Spanish-American War. Further, the horrid conditions of camp and on board the transports ensured that sickness and ill health would remain a significant issue for the United States forces initially deployed to the Philippines. The poor relations, as well as sickness within these regiments, greatly contributed to how these men remembered their experiences in the Philippines and also hampered American military operations in the opening stages of the Philippine War. These issues continued to plague the volunteer regiments until the disbandment of these regiments following their withdrawal from the Philippines and return to the United States.

Chapter 4: An American Army in Manila

After the end of the long voyage to the Philippines, American forces disembarked from their ships. After the horrendous conditions in the training camps and those on the voyage, with the overcrowding, poor food, inclement weather, and unsanitary conditions, it was likely a great relief for the men to have reached the Philippines and be able to get off their transports and begin fighting the Spanish. However, these issues carried over into the Philippines as the troops were deployed first to fight the Spanish and then to occupy Manila. This chapter explores the tensions of occupation and argues the stresses of the occupation helped contribute to the outbreak of the Philippine-American War. The goals of the Americans and Filipinos were fundamentally incompatible and made war all but inevitable. The incompatible goals coupled with the stresses and tensions of the American occupation of Manila was the spark that initiated the war and caused the war to break out when it did.

In the Philippines, American attitudes towards Filipinos degraded after the end of the war with Spain. On arrival, they were not universally negative, nor were the Americans overly hostile to the Filipino people. While white supremacist beliefs were certainly in evidence even during this early stage, American-Filipino interactions did not have the animosity that would be evident by the outbreak of the Philippine American war in February 1899. These negative attitudes and hostility developed for two primary reasons.

First, was the desire of the volunteer American soldiers to return home following the end of the war with Spain. Though willing to temporarily occupy Manila until a formal peace treaty with Spain was signed and ratified, they did not want to remain in the Philippines beyond that point. After peace had been officially concluded, the volunteer American soldiers

wanted to immediately return to the United States and resume their civilian lives. These men were mostly volunteers who had been swept up in the enthusiasm for war in April 1898. They were not professional soldiers and had no desire to be professional soldiers. They felt that they had done their duty for their country. When, it became, evident this was not going to happen, the soldiers' resentment towards this state of affairs began to poison their relationship with the Filipinos.

Second, the American government's actions towards the Philippines drove this relational breakdown and made war with the Philippines inevitable. The American's decision on what to do with the Philippines was slow and tortured. McKinley's vacillation on the issue forced American commanders to seek to prevent conflict with the Filipinos and also prepare for the eventuality of war and annexation. American commanders operating without clear instructions had to work to safeguard their troops, try to prevent the outbreak of war, and appease Filipino desires without landing themselves into trouble with the War Department or United States government. This vacillation, and at times open doublespeak, by the American forces and their commanders, steadily increased Filipino anxieties about American intentions with the Philippines. Likewise, the leadership of the First Philippine Republic had to operate in the same environment without a clear understanding of American intentions and desires for the islands. This forced the Filipinos to act more aggressively and assertively towards not only American leadership in the Philippines but also towards the American military forces occupying Manila. These actions were to claim Filipino statehood and demonstrate to the world a Filipino nation existed and should be recognized. However, this assertiveness angered American soldiers who were already upset about being held in the Philippines beyond what they believed was their term of enlistment. These dynamics created pressures that thoroughly

damaged the relationship between Filipinos and the American soldiers and ultimately made outbreak of war possible in February 1899.

The Arrival of American Troops

The arrival at the islands must have been a great relief for the American troops deployed to the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. Up to that point, they had gone through immense suffering to arrive in the Philippines. The training camps in the United States were overcrowded, disease-ridden, and filled with the hard work of being turned into soldiers. The voyage to the Philippines was worse, with slow, small ships that lacked proper ventilation, had inadequate food preparation, and were unsanitary due to illness and lack of adequate cleaning before conversion into troop transports. These problems also led to increased tensions between the volunteer enlisted men and their officers, which carried over into the Philippines. These problems lead to difficulties for the American forces during their occupation of Manila. Poor-discipline was also an issue that helped drive increasing hostilities between American and Filipino troops.

However, before the Americans could begin siege operations, they had to ferry their supplies from their ships and prepare their forces for siege operations.¹ The first American troops arrived under Brigadier General Thomas M. Anderson in the Philippines on June 30, 1898. Although the American volunteer soldiers wanted to immediately get their hands on the Spanish to show the Navy how they could fight, Anderson sensibly began preparing the way for the additional waves of troops to arrive.² The American forces had to unload 440,000

¹ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 14.

² William Thaddeus Sexton, *Soldiers in the Sun: An Adventure in Imperialism* (Harrisburg, PA: Military Service Publishing Company, 1939) 31.

rations, roughly a thousand tons of food, hundreds of ammunition boxes, countless commissary stores, hospital and medical supplies, tentage, camp equipment, and cooking implements. Unfortunately for the Americans, the docks at Cavite could not accommodate the unloading of the American transport ships, forcing everything to first be offloaded onto small barges, then manually hauled to warehouses.³ Thus, the thousands of tons of supplies needed to fight the Spanish, from ammunition to food, had to be unloaded from the vessels onto *cascos*. *Cascos*, which are flat-bottomed, square-ended, narrow barges with a carrying capacity of anywhere between 50 to 125 tons, were then towed by steam launches to the docks where the supplies were unloaded and dragged through the mud to the warehouses at Cavite.⁴ This slow, tedious, backbreaking, and exhausting labour was done in the scorching monsoon heat and its torrential rains, made worse by the mud, which made moving the thousands of tons of supplies difficult. When the men's work details of unloading the thousands of tons of supplies from the ships were done, they collapsed in their tents.⁵ Exhausted, they slept with their heads and feet out in the rain, as their shelter tents were too short to completely cover them.⁶

The hard work of unloading the ships in such conditions, when combined with the poor food and horrendous conditions suffered by the troops in the training camps and on the ships, rapidly took their toll on the men.⁷ For example, the 2nd Oregon, a unit that had terrible accommodations on board a former cattle transport that had only been minimally cleaned before embarkation, started to show the strain the men were under. Three days after arriving and unloading their ship, over 100 men from that unit were on the sick report with fever and

³ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 14.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵ Leon Wolff, *Little Brown Brother: How the United States Purchased and Pacified the Philippine Islands at the Century's Turn* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 104.

⁶ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 14.

⁷ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 14 and Sexton, *Soldiers in the Sun*, 34.

diarrhoea, and within one week, over one-third of the regiment, around 300-400 men, was also on sick report, representing a significant reduction of the 2nd Oregon's combat utility.⁸ The morale of the men, already damaged in the camps and lowered even further on the horrendous voyage to the Philippines, plummeted even further when faced with these challenges. Further, the heat during the rainy season made it difficult for the American forces to maintain their readiness for combat in other ways. American forces were forced to rise early to conduct drills in order to maintain their martial skills. When writing to his sweetheart back in the United States, Ed Dunbar told her that his regiment, the 1st California Infantry, would rise at 4 o'clock in the morning to conduct drills before the heat of the day made that impossible.⁹

The fact that the American troops arrived and landed in the rainy season created other difficulties for American command. As previously discussed, life in camp in the United States, and on board the transports were virtually intolerable for the men. Upon reaching the Philippines, their situation did not greatly improve, and if possible, was arguably worse. Landing in the summer monsoon rainy season, the conditions in camp were unbearable. These hard and drenching monsoon rains, which last from May to October, bring an average annual rainfall of around 197 inches per year to the mountainous plains of Luzon Island on which Manila is located. The monsoon rains flooded tents, forcing the men to build bamboo platforms to sleep on in order to be out of the wet mud.¹⁰ Additionally, the rain and the constant walking and marching of men turned the company streets into muddy quagmires that made movement difficult and life unpleasant. Private Dunbar recalled that the rain was so constant that it was impossible to keep anything dry, including rifles. Those assigned to digging trenches found it exceedingly difficult to construct them due to the incessant rain and

⁸ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 14.

⁹ Dunbar, *Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service*, 16-17, SWAS.

¹⁰ Sexton, *Soldiers in the Sun*, 34.

the fire of the Spanish troops. With so much rain, the trenches were often flooded with water, and whatever work was accomplished constructing breastworks and parapets was simply washed away or slide back down into the trenches, forcing them to be dug out all over again.¹¹ Further, due to the saturated conditions, some trenches simply collapsed, forcing the soldiers to completely reconstruct them. Such conditions exhausted the men and, in the words of Ed Dunbar, left them “prostrate” when not doing work, and left them discouraged, as they were forced to constantly redo the work they had already done.¹² John Bowe said, “if a man had been on duty the previous night, his clothes be lying outside in the rain and heavy curled up in a blanket.”¹³ Even those lucky enough to be housed in Cavite’s barracks, such as Ed Dunbar’s Company C 1st California had difficulties. Dunbar and his companions were crammed into a space about 80 x 30 feet with companies, a total of around 250 men. Even when Company C was removed from the overcrowding at Cavite Arsenal’s barracks, the conditions for the soldiers did not significantly improve due to the monsoon rain and heat, which exhausted the men and made all their activities more burdensome and gruelling.

As the American troops struggled with the heat and rain from the monsoon as well as the harassing attacks from the Spanish, American authorities negotiated to obtain a position along the siege lines to combat the Spanish and possibly capture Manila.¹⁴ Technically, the Filipino revolutionaries and the Americans were allies in the fight against Spain. The United States had supported the Filipino revolutionaries by supplying captured Spanish small arms and ammunition, as well as some American rifles and ammunition.¹⁵ Further, the United States facilitated the return of Emilio Aguinaldo, the leader of the Filipino independence movement, to the Philippines from Hong Kong by transporting him on commissioned vessels of the

¹¹ Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 104.

¹² Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 20, SAWS.

¹³ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 31.

¹⁴ Sexton, *Soldiers in the Sun*, 35.

¹⁵ Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 70.

United States Armed Forces. Moreover, the Filipinos and the Americans on the scene treated each other respectfully and with vague assurances of each other's goodwill and support for their future policies, at least publicly and to each other's faces. However, the Americans and the Filipino nationalists expressed a certain amount of suspicion of each other at all levels. Although Aguinaldo publicly professed his certainty of the altruistic character of American aims, he was privately, along with many other Filipino leaders, much more ambivalent of American intentions. As David Silbey notes, the Filipino leadership found it hard to believe the United States would not covet the Pearl of the Orient Sea as a prize to be put into their crown.¹⁶

The Siege of Manila

By the time the American troops reached the Philippines, the Filipino revolutionaries had already driven the Spanish into Manila and had laid siege to that city. Therefore, when American forces arrived, they did not have to fight the Spanish immediately upon landing, which was fortunate for the disorganized Americans. However, the Filipino control of the country surrounding Manila proved to be an issue for the American troops as the Filipinos presented an obstacle to attacking the city. Although the Filipinos were glad to have American backing in the form of arms, ammunition, and naval support, they were less willing to accept American ground forces in the Philippines.¹⁷ Filipinos were initially reluctant to allow the Americans onto the siege lines. This reluctance forced the Americans to negotiate with the Filipinos to acquire a section of the siege lines to fight the Spanish.¹⁸ Although the United States had facilitated Aguinaldo's return to the Philippines and, according to him, promised

¹⁶ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 46.

¹⁷ Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 101-103.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 101-102.

independence for the Philippines, the Filipinos were still suspicious of the Americans and their intentions.¹⁹ Although the Americans were able to gain a section of lines to besiege Manila, this area was not very conducive for the health of the troops or for siege operations.

For their part, the Americans did not think much of their erstwhile Filipino allies. Although polite and cordial to their faces and visibly asserting the position that the Filipinos were superior to the Cubans and thus had the capacity for self-rule, confidentially, and in communiqués to the American government, the American leadership in the Philippines disparaged the Filipinos. Americans did not believe the Filipinos to be capable of independent self-government and they believed the Filipinos would massacre the Spanish if they captured Manila. The second-in-command of the American expeditionary forces and later the commander of the 8th Army Corps during the first year of the Philippine-American War, General Elwell Otis, offered a view that many of the officers of the American expeditionary forces shared. Otis held the view that the Philippine Revolutionary Army was made up of “all the robbers of the island of Luzon,” whose goal was to kill every white man in Manila.”²⁰ In Otis’ view, Filipinos were “ignorant and very superstitious.”²¹ These beliefs were not confined to the upper command of the American forces, and many of the enlisted troops and company and regimental level officers shared these opinions. Further, they also feared that if the Philippines were to become independent or remain part of Spain, some other imperialist power, such as Germany or Japan, might seize or acquire the islands threatening, American trade and interests in China.

It was in this environment that the Americans had to be able to take Manila. The American 8th Corps’ problem was that it needed to take Manila in such a way as to exclude the

¹⁹ Ibid., 100-103, 120-123, Sexton, *Soldiers in the Sun*, 32-33.

²⁰ Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 46.

²¹ Ibid.

Filipinos.²² That required the removal of Filipino troops from the path of the Americans.

Through diplomacy, Brigadier General Francis Vinton Greene convinced the local Filipino commander, General Mariano Noriel to remove his forces from a section of the siege lines, specifically the left wing of his forces, and allow the Americans to occupy those trenches.²³

This section line was a dismal location for providing ground to fight, running from the beach to an inland swamp. For the Filipinos, it was an excellent move to vacate these trenches to the Americans, as the trenches along their extreme left were weak, in a miserable area in which to be stationed, and the Spanish positions were particularly strong, presenting a challenge to any assault. It was dismal for the American soldiers in these trenches as they filled with water almost immediately.²⁴ Mosquitoes from the swamp quickly and promptly began feasting on American blood. Ed Dunbar recalled what the American trenches were like:

At midnight, our company was put in another place, behind an earthwork about two feet high. The trench made by taking out earth when the embankment was full of water, and we had to lie in it to keep undercover. I got a place where two sticks two inches square relate across about five inches apart, and I lay on them until six o'clock, when we were changed. The Spanish were hidden in the bamboo in front of us, so I could not move, and mosquitoes nearly ate me up. Indeed, they bothered us more than the bullets... My whiskers protected my face pretty well, but my hands were covered with blotches like the wards on a toad's back.²⁵

As noted, the constant rain made constructing and reinforcing the trenches difficult, as the men were forced to re-dig them every time it rained. Further, the American troops faced stifling heat when it wasn't raining and each time it did rain, the trenches flooded with water and mud. Adding to the misery for the American forces, their shoddily made clothing and shoes rotted, further depressing morale.²⁶ A member of the 13th Minnesota recalled: "It rained all the time we were at camp Dewey. It was the wettest, mightiest, and most miserable camp

²² Miller, *Benevolent Assimilation*, 43, and Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 47.

²³ Sexton, *Soldiers in the Sun*, 35.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 36-37.

²⁵ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 23-24, SAWS.

²⁶ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 23 and Sexton, *Soldiers in the Sun*, 34 and 36-37.

that we had during the war. Under the circumstances, it was the best possible, and it was well for the man we did not stay there long.”²⁷

Additionally, Spanish positions opposite the Americans were in a particularly strong position, anchored by Fort San Antonio Abad on the shore, near the beach and a blockhouse, Blockhouse 14, a few hundred yards inland.²⁸ Reconnaissance demonstrated there was no easy way to avoid the Spanish defences as American lines were sandwiched on a narrow front between Manila Bay and Filipino revolutionary forces.²⁹ Thus, the Americans had little choice but to launch frontal assaults against the strong points of the Spanish lines in order to take Manila, possibly a very bloody assault if another way could not be found to capture Manila. Additionally, the Spanish made it as uncomfortable for the Americans in the trenches as possible by continuously firing on them and occasionally launching attacks; Spanish raids killed fifteen and wounded fifty-three; snipers made any exposure dangerous; and the Spanish harassed at night with volleys of rifle fire.³⁰ Private John Bowe recalled what it was like in the trenches under the fire of the Spanish; “our location was opposite to and within three hundred yards of Spanish Blockhouse No. 14, where we put in twenty-four hours, crawling in and out of trenches. If we got into a trench the water would drown us out, and if we got out of it, the Spaniards would take a ‘pot shot’ at us.”³¹ The only good thing about this position was the fact that the American troops could be supported by their most important asset, the ships of the United States Navy who could provide gunfire support as well as supply the troops relatively quickly.

With a location secured across from Spanish positions, American forces began to seek ways to capture Manila without the support of their assumed Filipino allies. In the meantime,

²⁷ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 30-31.

²⁸ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 23.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 30, Linn, *The Philippine War*, 23, and Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 36.

³¹ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 30.

American forces began their first actions against the Spanish in Manila. For the American troops, this was the moment they had been waiting for since the outbreak of war with Spain in April 1898: a chance to prove their manhood and to avenge the sinking of the *Maine*. In addition to being forced to contend with incessant rain and boggy ground, the ever-present heat, and mosquitoes from the nearby swamp, the American troops had to contend with their first combat experience. This fighting was often at nighttime and confusing for the inexperienced and green American troops. The first engagement between the Americans and the Spanish took place on August 31, 1898. The engagement was a confusing affair in the dark, for the inexperienced volunteer units. The history of the 10th Pennsylvania recounts:

The enemy then advanced, delivering a heavy round of infantry firing by squads until within about 400 yards of our line, when, halting, they formed a line and delivered many volleys. This lasted for about three hours. When this volley firing had continued nearly a half hour the enemy evidently relieved a part of his line from the extreme right at the beach and again opened fire from two pieces of artillery with shell and shrapnel. The casualties of the regiment behind the entrenched line during the entire engagement were one man killed and four wounded.³²

Ed Dunbar of the 1st California, whose regiment was stationed near the front, recalled what it was like to be awakened for the first sounds of combat in his life:

I was awakened by the firing about half past eleven, and when outside my tent to listen. There was one continuous roll of musketry with big guns banging away every few seconds. Our boys only had a small supply of ammunition, so they sent for help, at a quarter of twelve the call to arms was sounded, and in less than five minutes we were dressed and lined up ready to march. The first and second battalions of our regiment removed to the front, and the third battalion, in which I belong was marched halfway and held as a reserve. It was pouring down rain all the time, and after about two hours of soaking we were marched back, and turned in after having a cup of hot coffee.³³

After this experience, Private Dunbar got his first real taste of combat the next day:

We went out at 8 A.M., and relieved the minimum trenches, but there was nothing going on until after dark. There is a full regiment of Colorado boys and our battalion—for companies. The Spanish came up at nine P.M. and made a sharp attack, but we drove

³²Karl Irving Faust, *Campaigning in the Philippines*. (Papamoa Press, 2017), 223.

³³ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 21, SAWS.

them back after they were about one hundred and fifty yards for breastworks, and by ten it was all over.³⁴

However, their first taste of combat did not go as planned for the Americans. Although the Spanish were driven back, suffering 150 casualties, according to Ed Dunbar, the American forces also suffered some confusion leading to a friendly fire incident. When elements of the Regular Army were sent forward to support the 10th Pennsylvania, the Regulars became confused. They opened fire on the 10th Pennsylvania, causing half the unit's casualties in the skirmish.³⁵

The Fall of Manila

The situation was becoming desperate for the Spanish hemmed into the walled city of Manila, which is called the Intramuros.³⁶ With American forces now engaging the Spanish and the Filipino revolutionaries closing in, the Spanish authorities in Manila were in a difficult situation, just like their American enemies. The Intramuros was filled with some 70,000 people, food was in short supply, and there was a general and continuing fear of either an attack from the Filipino revolutionaries or an uprising within the city, both of which the paranoid Spanish defenders assumed would be the prelude to a general massacre of the Spanish and their forces within the city.³⁷ For the Americans, their main problem was how to capture the city of Manila intact while excluding the Filipino nationalist forces from not only the attack but also the occupation of the city. For the Spanish, as the situation rapidly deteriorated it became their paramount objective to somehow surrender to the Americans and the Americans alone and prevent the Filipino nationalists from being able to enter and occupy

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., 23.

³⁶ 'Intramuros' means is derived from Spanish and means 'within the walls' or 'inside the walls.'

³⁷ Linn, *The Philippine War*, 23.

the city of Manila.³⁸ Thus, the goals of both the Spanish and the Americans came into alignment. Due to this, American and Spanish leadership began clandestine negotiations to allow the Spanish to hand over the city of Manila to the Americans secretly while preventing the Filipino nationalists from finding out what was going on. The American commanders on the scene, Admiral George Dewey and General Wesley Merritt, used the Belgian counsel, Édouard C. André, as an intermediary with the Spanish commander. The Americans struck a deal with the Spanish Governor, General Fermín Jáudenes, that would satisfy both sides.³⁹ The result of these negotiations was not a complete surrender but an agreement that allowed the Spanish to resist long enough to maintain their honour. Spanish forces would withdraw in the face of an American attack, U.S. forces would advance, and the advancing American troops would check the Filipino revolutionaries and prevent them from entering the city.⁴⁰ It was also agreed that if the Spanish coastal defence batteries did not fire upon the American naval vessels in the harbour, Dewey's Asiatic Squadron would not fire upon the city. Once a sufficient show of resistance had been made, Admiral Dewey would hoist the signal "D.W.H.B.," meaning "Do you surrender?" upon which the Spanish would raise a white flag, and Manila would formally surrender to American forces.⁴¹ Under this plan, the Americans would defeat Spanish forces, while Filipino forces would not be allowed to enter the city. This minimized the risk of unnecessary casualties and would limit damage to the city, while the Spanish would also avoid the shame of possibly surrendering Intramuros to the Filipino forces. This would have the benefit of allowing American forces to capture the city relatively intact, preventing any casualties among the numerous civilians trapped within Manila. For the Spanish commanders, it let them resist just long enough so the Spanish forces could maintain

³⁸ Miller, *Benevolent Assimilation*, 43.

³⁹ Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 117-118.

⁴⁰ Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898*, 416-417.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 420.

the honour of Spain and, most importantly to commanders on the scene, allow them to preserve their honour and hopefully avoid a court-martial back in Spain.⁴² For the Americans, this allowed them to capture the city, exclude the Filipinos, and put the 8th Corps into a strong position while the American commanders waited for Washington's decision on the fate of the Philippine Islands. With these agreements in place, the American forces in the Philippines prepared to assault Manila.

The Battle of Manila, sometimes also called the Mock Battle of Manila, took place on August 13, 1898, the day after protocols for peace had been signed by the Spanish and American governments, though the commanders on the scene from both sides did not know this. In preparation for the assault, American forces began to move up to their trenches through driving rain shortly after six in the morning of August 13. Although the conditions were miserable, morale among the American troops was high. John Bowe of the 13th Minnesota recalled the spirit of his unit before the assault on Manila: "Of course, it was raining, but the rain in no way affected the enthusiasm of the soldiers, they had put ten thousand miles between themselves and home for the purpose of paying their little tribute to the memory of the *Maine*, and now was the time and here the place."⁴³ The battle began at 9:35 in the morning on August 13 when Dewey began to bombard Spanish positions outside Manila, Private Bowe recalled: "the cannonading commenced and we were listening to the various sounds made by the different kinds of cannon when we got the order to go ahead."⁴⁴ The main points of the attack for the Americans were Fort San Antonio Abad and Blockhouse 14, both of which fell with relative ease. General Greene's brigade pushed rapidly through the Malate district and over the bridges to occupy Binondo and San Miguel. General Arthur MacArthur Jr.

⁴² Linn, *The Philippine War*, 23.

⁴³ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 33.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

advanced simultaneously on the Pasay Road, encountered and overcame resistance at the blockhouses, trenches, and woods to his front. This placed Manila in American possession except for the walled city of the Intramuros. Shortly after entering Malate, U.S. troops observed a white flag displayed on the walls of Intramuros. Lieutenant Colonel C. A. Whittier and Lieutenant Brumby of the U.S. Navy were sent ashore to communicate with Captain-General Basilio Agustín and Governor General Jáudenes, concluding a preliminary agreement of the terms of capitulation.

Private Bowe recalled the attack: “The Utah Battery boys were pulling their cannon through the trees with a long rope, after knocking a hole into Block House 14, which drove the Spaniards out. On reaching the corner near the little stone wall, he ran into such a hail of bullets that we got orders to lie down flat upon the road.”⁴⁵ Theodore Wurm described the assault on the Spanish works in his diary:

The greatest obstacle to overcome was in getting over the ground ahead, the way leading over wire fences and rice and cane fields which in places was nearly impassable, the ground being covered with water the depth of a foot or more and as much more mud underneath. A continual fire of small arms was kept up the enemy bullets were in the water underfoot and too near to make one feel comfortable. No determined resistance is made by the enemy after the fleets large them from their entrenchments. It was a rout.⁴⁶

Ed Dunbar, whose regiment participated in the attack, recalled what the assault was like:

Last Saturday our boys were moved to the front, and a few minutes before ten the fleet opened up on the fortifications. Our light artillery in the trenches turned loose at the same time, and our infantry attacked and took the first trench... We had to wade a river which came to our waists, with the Spanish firing at us, but most of the shots were high, and then we kept up on the beach, with the band playing “They’ll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight.”... The outer wall had been taken when we got to it, and we marched in through the suburbs with bullets singing all around, and came up the main wall just after the white flag went up. Our battalion was the first to enter the main town, and we feel pretty proud of it.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Ibid., 34.

⁴⁶ Theodore G. Wurm, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection-Small Collections, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, August 16, 1898.

⁴⁷ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 25, 25a, 26, SAWS.

For the men who were involved in this battle, it was both exhilarating and terrifying at the same time. As John Bowe recounted, his superior officer, Captain McQuade, refused to advance after coming under intense fire, replying that he was “sick and could not go ahead.”⁴⁸ Nor was the victory bloodless, as members of the 13th Minnesota discovered when they reached a church that was being used as a hospital, finding around twenty wounded men in the church, which was filled with broken furniture, bloodied bandages and pools of blood.⁴⁹

As Spanish resistance rapidly collapsed, American forces moved in to occupy the city and exclude the Filipino nationalists from its occupation. On the evening of August 12, the night before the assault of Manila, General Anderson notified Aguinaldo to forbid his troops from entering Manila, stating, “Do not let your troops enter Manila without the permission of the American commander. On this side of the Pasig River, you will be under fire.” At 8 o’clock on the morning of August 13, General Anderson sent a telegram to Emilio Aguinaldo informing him of the impending American attack and sternly warning him not to let his troops enter Manila without the consent of the Americans. The Filipino nationalists ignored Anderson’s request, and Aguinaldo’s forces launched an independent attack as planned. The Filipino troops advanced, crowding alongside the American forces, quickly leading to trouble between the Americans and the Filipinos, but they were prevented from entering the city by American troops. The battle had primarily gone according to plan for both sides. The Americans captured Manila intact, with very little damage to the city. The Spanish had been able to surrender Manila to American forces and not the Filipino revolutionaries. Both the Spanish and Americans had been able to keep the Filipino nationalists outside the city. At the end of the engagement, nineteen American soldiers were killed, 103 were wounded in action, and forty-nine Spanish soldiers were killed during the battle.

⁴⁸ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 34.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 36.

As American forces moved into Manila and began to occupy the city, the first hostile interactions occurred between American forces and the Filipino rebels. One soldier recalled that as they occupied the city, they immediately placed troops on guard duty at the Calle Real in Malate “to keep the armed insurgents moving towards the outskirts.”⁵⁰ American and Filipino soldiers almost clashed with each other over the Filipino exclusion from Manila in several places. General Anderson recalled that for the next several hours after the American occupation of Manila, “conditions were critical.” Ed Dunbar recalling that his regiment, the 1st California, upon entering Manila was required to “immediately had to face about to keep the Filipino Insurrectos out of the city.”⁵¹ Still, the Filipino soldiers maintained good discipline and did not attack the Americans. The Americans and the Spanish were convinced the Filipinos intended to massacre the Spanish population of Manila. As Ed Dunbar recalled years later, “their [the Filipino nationalists’] officers had promised them that when they took Manila, they could loot it and murder all the Spaniards, whom they hated after years of oppression.”⁵²

As the Battle of Manila wound down, American forces and the Filipino nationalists began to have their first hostile encounters with each other. As neither the Spanish nor the Americans wanted Filipino nationalists to enter Manila, American soldiers moved to cordon off the city and prevent the Nationalist troops from entering Manila, leading to the first incidents of American and Filipino hostility. This also marks the beginning of the American occupation of Manila, a slow, drawn-out affair that wore on the nerves and patience of the American soldiers in the Philippines, leading to a steady degradation of their relations with their erstwhile Filipino associates. This time was incredibly dull and frustrating for the American soldiers stationed in the Philippines following the capture of Manila. After the fall

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 26, SAWS.

⁵² Ibid.

of Manila, the American forces in the Philippines learned the Spanish-American War had ended on August 12, the day before they assaulted and captured the city when Spain and the United States had signed a peace protocol ending combat between American and Spanish forces. With the end of the war with Spain, the volunteer troops stationed in Manila became increasingly restless and irritable due to being retained in the Philippines after peace had been declared. As the anger of American soldiers increased due to military discipline, the only outlet on which the American troops could take out their frustrations were the Filipino civilians living in Manila and the soldiers of the First Philippine Republic. For the soldiers stationed in the Philippines following the capture of Manila, their daily routine quickly became a grinding bore. This routine consisted of daily responsibilities such as maintaining their equipment, and other duties that were assigned to them, such as maintaining their camps' cleanliness, working in the kitchen, and activities such as drilling to maintain their martial abilities. However, while these duties were important to not only help maintain the health of the troops and ensure they were prepared for combat, the repetitive nature and the growing desire to return home began to affect not only the morale of the men but also their desire to maintain good order and discipline. Besides their repetitive and monotonous nature, the major problem with these activities was that they were being conducted in a land where these men did not want to be and under the control of officers and non-commissioned officers whom they did not respect and often disliked. These issues affected the American troops' morale as well as their discipline, which in turn damaged the relationship with Filipinos, as the American soldiers sought to relieve the boredom through drinking, carousing, and other non-sanctioned activities. The Americans' unfamiliarity with Filipino society and customs placed strains upon the Filipino-American relationship, as disputes occurred over payments for goods and services, American soldiers engaged in rough and disorderly conduct, and American soldiers' general racism towards the Filipinos.

Race and Class in Manila

When the Americans arrived in Manila, it was a city with a vibrant and colourful social life. Manila, much like American cities in the late nineteenth century, was filled with bars, dance establishments, parks, and other forms of social and personal recreation. However, when compared to American cities, Manila certainly looked, felt, and smelled different than what the majority of American soldiers would have been used to. While those American soldiers from or stationed in the American Southwest would likely have recognized some of the social and physical features of Manila, for the vast majority of American troops Manila was a strange new cityscape for them to explore. Manila, with its Spanish-inspired buildings, monsoon heat, and houses built out of bamboo and napa, presented a unique and new experience for the American soldiers. Additionally, the sounds and smells of Manila with its Hispanic-inspired food, music, and culture would have been a whole new and alien experience for the Americans. It must have been, at least, somewhat unsettling for the white American soldiers, many of whom came from isolated communities in the American West. At the same time, it must also have been intriguing and exciting to be experiencing a new and strange culture. But there was more to Manila's society that was strange and unique to Americans than simply its architecture, culture, food, and religion.⁵³

The Manila where American forces arrived in 1898 was a dynamic city, had a rich cultural life, and was filled with amenities such as bailes (formal parties), dance halls, cockfights, and many other forms of recreation, including brothels and bars.⁵⁴ At these activities and locations, American soldiers would interact with the Filipino civilians of Manila,

⁵³ Tessa Winkelmann, *Dangerous Intercourse: Gender and Interracial Relations in the American Colonial Philippines, 1898-1946* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2022), 3 and 14.

⁵⁴ Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 20-22, Winkelmann, *Dangerous Intercourse*, 2, 14.

allowing Americans and Filipinos to begin to create contacts with each other throughout the long, slow, five-month occupation of Manila. These interactions helped to colour the Americans' views of their Filipino adversaries, which were influenced by the entrenched white supremacy of the white American soldiers. Nevertheless, the social scene in Manila introduced Americans to the exotic East. Manila was not some backward, undeveloped city; it was a global trading centre that boasted modern electric lights, municipal water services, as well as a horse-drawn streetcar system.⁵⁵ Manila was very much a modern city, although it had health and sanitation problems due to its location on Manila Bay; even contemporary American cities struggled to deal with disease and refuse.⁵⁶ There was a large degree of similarity between the Filipino and American society in the late nineteenth century, even if the intensely racist American soldiers would not or could not discern it. Much like the United States, Manila and the broader Philippine Islands had a class structure not only built upon wealth, but most importantly built upon race and skin colour.⁵⁷

In the United States, white men were at the top of the American social hierarchy and held almost all the political, economic, and social power of the United States. In the Philippines, this structure was mirrored. Although to American eyes Filipinos were all non-whites, Filipino eyes could tell the differences between the different classes due to the colour of their skin. The darker the skin, like in the United States, the less political, social, and economic power they held and the more discrimination they faced. In general, the lighter the skin, the more political and social power they had. Americans, who refused to recognize this feature, largely conflated all Filipinos as one group.⁵⁸ However, upper-class mestizo mixed-

⁵⁵ Edward Martin, Edward Martin Papers, August 18, 1898, PASA, and Christer, September 21, 1898.

⁵⁶ Sexton, *Soldiers in the Sun*, 56.

⁵⁷ Kramer *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines*, 39-40, and Winkelmann, *Dangerous Intercourse*, 3.

⁵⁸ Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 209.

race Filipinos had many similar attitudes to the American forces in the Philippines. The lighter-skinned, mixed-ethnicity Filipinos were highly educated, wealthy, and thoroughly Europeanized people who believed themselves to be equal to the Americans, and, in fact looked down upon other, darker-skinned Filipinos.⁵⁹ The upper-class Filipinos believed the lower classes were indeed degraded and incapable of ruling themselves, often applying to these Filipinos the same racist and negative views white Americans gave to their fellow black citizens. The upper-class Filipino elites completely agreed with the Americans that the lower-class Filipinos were barbaric, backward degenerates, and the Moros in the South and the Igorot Mountain peoples needed to be “civilized” through “benevolent assimilation” or otherwise.⁶⁰

However, there were many differences in Manila and its societal culture that would be strange and unfamiliar to American soldiers. One of the major differences between American cities at the turn of the century and Manila was the fact that Manila was, in many ways, a far more diverse location than the vast majority of American cities, whose populations mostly drew from European nationalities. Manila drew people from Spain and from various other countries from China to Germany. Unlike the United States, the colour line in Manila was much more permeable, and ethnicity mixing was much more common and accepted.⁶¹ However, that does not mean that Manila society, and Filipino society as a whole, was not stratified in a way Americans would be unfamiliar with. Much like in the United States, there was a colour line that separated the different groups of people and created a social hierarchy. In the Philippines, it was just much more mobile and open than the American system. At the top of this hierarchy were full-blooded Spanish peninsulars from Spain, for whom the best and

⁵⁹ Ibid., 66-67, and 124.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 124.

⁶¹ Winkelmann, *Dangerous Intercourse*, 89-90.

most prestigious jobs were reserved. These people made up the social, cultural, political, and economic elites of the Philippine Islands and Manila. Spaniards born in the Philippines were below them, then various groups of mixed ancestry individuals, mestizos, were below that. Finally, the people of entirely Filipino ancestry were near the bottom, with only the mountain groups and the Moros in the South below them.⁶²

Unlike in the United States this social hierarchy was more malleable and porous for the individuals living within it.⁶³ In Filipino society, mixed ancestry was not viewed as bad and was in fact genuinely seen as a positive. Marrying a Spaniard would “whiten” people, something that was impossible in the United States. Many Filipinos, to the shock of Americans, were genuinely proud of having Spanish Friar ancestry, in their families and even more shocking to the Americans was that this ancestry enhanced, rather than detracted from, their social standing.⁶⁴ Based on these “white” ancestors, as well as cultural and often educational affiliations with Europe, many Filipinos, particularly the wealthy elites, claimed cultural and racial equality with the Americans. These claims of cultural and racial equality by the Filipinos with the Americans certainly shocked them and also tended to annoy them. The Filipinos, on their part, did not understand why the Americans treated them with such disrespect and resented such attitudes. As one American recalled, Filipinos quickly began to learn what the word “n****r” meant.⁶⁵ Unlike in the United States, to the Filipinos, Americans’ interactions with them demonstrated a level of acceptance of their equality to the Americans and their cultural values despite the superficial difference of race. This was simply not the case; white Americans did not see the Filipinos as their equals in any way; many

⁶² Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 38-39.

⁶³ Winkelmann, *Dangerous Intercourse*, 89-90.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 90. It was claimed that Spanish priests and monks during the Spanish conquest of the Philippines and during the Spanish colonial era, took native wives and mistresses, and produced offspring.

⁶⁵ Miller, *Benevolent Assimilation*, 58.

American diaries and letters attest to this fact. Two examples would of the 10th Pennsylvania's William Christener and Edward Martin, both of whom had very negative views of the Filipinos.⁶⁶ This attitude was not confined to the lower echelons of the United States' troops in the Philippines; both American commanders on the scene, Admiral Dewey and General Otis, did not hold the Filipinos in high regard and saw them as degenerate and unable to rule themselves.⁶⁷

In most interactions between Americans and Filipinos—even those that were friendly—a condescending and paternalistic attitude showed through. However, the main sticking point between the Americans and the Filipinos was the insistence that they be treated as equals to the Americans. These demands annoyed the American soldiers in the Philippines. American soldiers, who were steeped in white supremacy and grew up in a culture where non-white people were decidedly second-class citizens, did not appreciate Filipino claims of equality. Such claims annoyed them, and these differences in understanding placed strains on Filipino-American relations. However, it should be noted that many Americans did, in fact, develop friendships and romantic attachments with Filipinos.⁶⁸ For the Filipinos, American interactions with them demonstrated a level of acceptance of their equality; however, as discussed, the Americans did not see their interactions this way.⁶⁹ This misunderstanding slowly damaged Filipino-American relations as the Filipinos, already wary of American intentions upon their arrival in the Philippines, steadily grew more suspicious of the Americans as they came to realize American statements of goodwill almost certainly covered racist American attitudes, as well as the steady movement of American policy towards the

⁶⁶ JJ Martin, Edward Martin Papers, December 29, 1898, PASA, Christner, William S. Christner Papers, September 3, 21, SAWS, and January 5, Edward Martin, Edward Martin Papers, August 27, 1898, PASA.

⁶⁷ Miller, *Benevolent Assimilation*, 42, and, 51-52, 244.

⁶⁸ Fisher Diary, January 3, 1899, and Christner, William S. Christner Papers, October 17 and 22, 1898, SAWS.

⁶⁹ Christener, William S. Christner Papers, October 17&22, 1898, SAWS and JJ Martin, Edward Martin Papers, December 29, 1898, PASA.

annexation of the Philippine Islands. The Americans saw their actions towards the Filipinos as a sort of courteous noblesse oblige where they treated an inferior people with dignity and respect, as well as bringing the blessings of civilization, American democratic government, improved economic techniques, and the benefits of modernity.⁷⁰ These American claims irritated Filipinos, particularly those of the upper class, who saw themselves as thoroughly modern, civilized, and European. These competing claims of equality and inferiority between the Americans and Filipinos slowly degraded their relations as well due to fundamental differences in how both groups saw and understood the world. These fundamental differences, which could not and would not be reconciled, ultimately led to the breakdown of Filipino-American relations and the outbreak of war between the Filipino nationalists and the United States.

The Occupation of Manila

As the boredom and frustration of the American volunteers increased at being retained in the Philippines, their relations with the Filipinos steadily deteriorated until the Americans were quite willing and happy for the outbreak of the Philippine-American War. Furthermore, American troops were frustrated with the living conditions in Manila, and volunteers held a growing belief that, with the end of the war with Spain, their term of service was up, and they should be returning to the United States. Additionally, the racial attitudes of the majority of American soldiers, who were deeply steeped in white supremacist ideals, ranged from merely

⁷⁰ Lawrance Benton Collection, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box 69, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA, Survey, 8, LaWall, "Sixteen Months in the Philippines" 100-101, and, Christner, William S. Christner Papers, September 3, SAWS.

deeply patronizing at best to downright hostile and xenophobic at worst.⁷¹ Moreover, as there was a vast gulf between American culture and the city of Manila, the Americans suffered from culture shock, putting a strain on their relations with the Filipinos. Further, as the Americans were confined to a limited space in Manila, Cavite, and their environs, boredom swiftly set in. As a result, troops began looking for activities that would entertain them. These activities included gambling on cockfighting, visiting brothels, and copious amounts of drinking. These activities all created situations that helped to increase tensions between the Filipinos and the American soldiers.⁷²

The most critical factor in growing tensions between the Americans and Filipinos was a lack of direction from Washington to the American commanders regarding the ultimate fate of the Philippines. Without these clear instructions, whether the Philippines were to be retained as an American possession, returned to Spain in a peace treaty, or granted independence, American commanders were forced to operate in the dark and had to prepare their command for any eventualities while trying to maintain, at the very least, cordial relations with the Filipinos. For the Filipinos, the lack of explicit knowledge of what the Americans were doing or were planning to do with the Philippine Islands made it difficult for them to interact with the Americans because they had to prepare for any eventuality, from an American withdrawal to being forced to fight the Americans if they decided to retain the Philippines.

As the American forces settled into occupation duty, complaints from the soldiers began to surface about such activities. Initially, the soldiers were busy policing Manila, cleaning up and repairing the city, as well as touring the city and, in some cases, the

⁷¹ Goerge Fisher of the Utah Light Artillery, went so far as to comment in his diary that he believed the Filippos thought the Americans were gods.

⁷² Winkelmann, *Dangerous Intercourse*, 33.

surrounding countryside. As occupation duty wore on, American soldiers began to become discontented. At the beginning of the US occupation, most American soldiers tolerated the city and its people even if they were condescending towards them. Another advantage the American soldiers had at the beginning of the occupation was the work required to clean up the city and impose American military rule in Manila. Private Dunbar recalled, “We had quite a hard time for some time after we got into the city, as there is lots of guarding and patrolling to do, but is not so bad now, as things are running more smoothly.”⁷³ In his first fourteen days in the city, Ed Dunbar had been detailed off for twenty-four-hours guard duty for six of those fourteen days, taking up much of his time. Soldiers were also tasked to restore the sanitation of Manila, which, quite understandably and unsurprisingly, during a siege in which some 70,000 people were crammed into a small area, had rapidly deteriorated. American soldiers were immediately detailed off to start removing refuse and other waste from the city and began to enforce the city’s health codes. Further, the chaos in the city due to the Philippine Revolution and the subsequent arrival and capture of the city meant that law and order in Manila had to be restored.

These activities kept the men busy for the first few weeks of the American occupation of the city. However, soon after the American army had entered Manila, news came of the signing of a preliminary peace protocol between the Spanish and American governments, and the minds of the American volunteers quickly turned to home. Per the terms of enlistment that the American volunteers signed, they had enlisted for either two years or the duration of the war. As Ed Dunbar recalled: “The term enlistment for the Volunteer Army was for two years, or the duration of the war. The battle and capture of Manila, on August 13, 1898, was the last engagement of the war with Spain. The setting up of a Protocol (a preliminary treaty of peace),

⁷³ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 27, SAWS.

shortly afterwards, was evidence that we were entitled to be discharged.”⁷⁴ The fact that the government decided to retain the volunteers and keep them on after peace had been officially signed rankled the men in the Philippines. Ed Dunbar stated: “When the peace treaty was signed on April 11, 1899, our time had expired, and the government asked us to stay on. Our officers replied that we would but that was never put to the men for vote.”⁷⁵ Dunbar expressed the general feeling of most of the state volunteer soldiers who were in the Philippines.⁷⁶ The war had ended, and they wanted to go home; the Regulars could act as an occupation force. As Edward Martin of the 10th Pennsylvania stated in his letters home, the men of the state volunteer regiments had enlisted to fight and get a trip to the Philippines, not to act as a garrison force.⁷⁷ Due to this and the limited recreational facilities in the Philippines to fight boredom, the American troops in the Philippines slowly began to antagonize their Filipino counterparts.

After the initial work of bringing sanitation back and imposing order in the city had been completed, American troops began to impatiently wait for the orders that would recall them home. But in this timeframe, they had to fight boredom, which was part of military life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Much like troops stationed on frontier posts for much of the nineteenth century, the American soldiers in Manila had little to do and were thus immensely bored. Although military activities, such as drilling, sentry duty, as well as fatigue and guard duty, would take up at least some of their time throughout the day, the vast majority of soldiers’ time was left up to themselves.⁷⁸ For example, a typical routine for

⁷⁴ Ibid., 26-27.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Davis, David J. Davis collection, October 7 and December 14, 1898, CHL, Fisher Diary, November 1, 1898, SAWS, JJ Martin, Edward Martin Papers, December 29, 1898, PASA, and Christer, William S. Christner Papers, October 17, 1898, SAWS for some examples.

⁷⁷ Edward Martin, Edward Martin Papers, October 8, 1898, PASA.

⁷⁸ Fatigue duty is manual labour required around camp as part of routine daily work. Fatigue duty could include anything from collecting firewood and gathering water, cleaning the unit’s encampment from any refuse, and any

many of the American troops stationed in Manila would have morning roll call with some drill in the morning, and a select number of men would be designated for fatigue duty. An example of what fatigue duty could entail is recounted by John Bowe, a member of the 13th Minnesota. He and seven other men were detailed off on August 29, 1898, to deliver fresh meat, that had been delivered to Manila, to the various companies of that regiment that were stationed away from their main encampment. Unfortunately for Private Bowe, this duty was hard work, as he and another man had to pull a cart around the city to deliver the meat as his regiment did not have horses or buffalo to do this work. Although such activities took up some of the soldier's spare time, the work was unpleasant as the troops had to labour under the warm tropical sun, "the sun seemed to burn into our brains," recalled Bowe when describing his fatigue work.⁷⁹

For the American soldiers in the Philippines, their lives were very regimented, with little variation from day to day. Thomas Zieber, a musician in the 1st Washington Volunteer Infantry's band, recounted his daily schedule in his diary from July 13 to July 15, 1898:

July 13

Arose 530 breakfast 6. played for guard amount at 9. then came band rehearsal Colonel sent his orderly with a pair of pants for me. 12 ate dinner. drill at 3 supper at 1:15 wrote to J.H. Moran. played dress parade went walking with a young lady went to C.S. meeting.

July 14

Usual routine, had picture taken with kodak, received letter from mother, bought selleoied [sic] collar to use on dress parade band gave a dance in post hall

July 15

Wrote to mother made application for a pass played guard mount 9.30 Band rehearsal broke church seat off of clarinet played for officers dance had refreshments in the basement⁸⁰

other labour required throughout the day. Sometimes fatigue duty could last longer with men being away from the units forcing the amounts of time.

⁷⁹ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 41.

⁸⁰ Thomas Zibler Diary, Thomas Zibler Collection The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box 31, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA, July 13-15.

Although these entries were written before Zibler was deployed to the Philippines—in fact, while he was still in the State of Washington—his duties, no matter where stationed, would change very little. Whether in Washington State, San Francisco, or Manila before the outbreak of the Philippine-American War, his daily schedule would mostly look exactly like this with limited differences. Some days, he might not be detailed, for example, to play for the guard mount, other days he would be detailed off to hospitals to assist there, but his duties would largely repeat themselves day in and day out. This can be demonstrated by looking at some of his later entries in his journal; his journal entries from December 12 to December 16, 1898, while in Manila, demonstrates the consistency of the military schedule that the men followed:

December 12

played guard mount had trouble with hospital flunky played retreat arm no better

December 13

Arm hurt all night no sleep played guard amount Band rehearsal in the afternoon played Retreat

December 14

Arm still giving me trouble played guard amount and retreat

December 15

Played guard amount ammunition was issued [to] us played Retreat & arms and I went to Luneta and orders to sleep with everything in readiness for a moment's call

December 16

played guard amount went to headquarters and played concert in the afternoon went down to the 2d Oregon saw Millard Pugh Cosfer Milkey Fulkenson played retreat went to the Luneta the evening saw Phil heard 2d Oregon band play concert⁸¹

Although these entries were written five months apart, they are essentially the same with only some slight differences; indeed, Zibler's entry on December 17 records essentially the same schedule. His later entries up to the outbreak of the Philippine war largely record the same activities, with the only substantial break in his daily routine when he was relieved of duty and

⁸¹ Ibid., July 12-15.

sent to the hospital due to suffering from an ailment to his arm that made it difficult for him to play his clarinet.⁸²

Most soldiers recorded similar repetition of activities in their recollections during the timeframe between the capture of Manila and the outbreak of the Philippine-American War. The repetition of such activities began to wear on the American soldiers. Day in and day, out they would be subject to the same activities again and again, under the influence and control of their officers, whom they often hated, with limited ability to escape these duties. Although Zibler does not mention in his diary any sort of annoyance or boredom with his daily routine, it is highly likely that it did exist. Other men, including David J. Davis, Beverley C. Daly, William Christner, and others, repeatedly stated in their letters and diaries their boredom in the Philippines, annoyance with their duties, and a desire to return home.⁸³ For example, David J. Davis, complained in his letters back home about the monotony and boredom of occupation duty.⁸⁴ Additionally, these repeated activities were enforced on the men by NCOs (non-commissioned officers) and the commissioned officers of the regiments, whom many felt treated them unfairly.

As previously discussed, the experiences of the soldiers in the training camps and particularly on the transport ships had greatly soured these men's relationships with their superiors, being forced to do these repetitive and tedious daily tasks over and over again by men whom most hated or even despised greatly annoyed them. Once news of peace arrived, being required to continue maintaining military discipline, and the repetitive and tedious military tasks such as drilling and guard duty further soured these men's mood. To escape the

⁸² Ibid., December, 12-16, 17,

⁸³ Daly, Beverly C. Daly Papers, August 4 1902, AHHC, Christer, October 17 and December 2&7, Davis, David J. Davis collection, October 7, 1898, CHL, Edward Martin, Edward Martin Papers, September 21 and October, 8, PASA.

⁸⁴ Davis, David J. Davis collection, October 7, 1898 and December 14, 1898, CHL.

tedium and boredom of military life, these men sought diversions and distractions in the city of Manila. Unfortunately, these activities had a negative effect on the Americans' relationship with the Filipinos, as well as the Filipinos' relationship with them, and also were generally detrimental to good order and discipline in the American army as well as their combat abilities.⁸⁵

To restore law and order, the military government under General Merritt quickly established a Provost Marshal and Provost courts and detailed three full regiments to provide policing and Provost services.⁸⁶ This activity occupied some of the soldiers in Manila, particularly the 13th Minnesota, which was on police duty. Thus, unlike other units, this unit was kept busy almost always. Not only did the 13th Minnesota have to try to maintain law and order between the Filipino and Spanish populations of Manila before the outbreak of the Philippine-American War, but the men detailed in police work were also required to try to maintain law and order among the American soldiers themselves. For Bowe, this duty became fairly regular, with one day on guard duty, one day on fatigue duty, and a day of rest.⁸⁷ Bowe recalled, "There were always a little excitement around quarters, so time passed quickly, and the boys were kept busy settling their natural disputes and difficulties which arrive between people of various nationalities."⁸⁸ Such disputes usually involve money. Still, the Minnesotans also had to deal with other disruptions to order in the city, such as prostitutes and drunken sailors, all with the complication of neither the American troops nor the Filipinos understanding each other. For those on police duty, their work was also made more difficult by American soldiers due to their inappropriate activities.

⁸⁵ Winkelmann, *Dangerous Intercourse*, 31, and 33.

⁸⁶ Provost services are policing duties carried out by military personnel.

⁸⁷ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 43.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

The volunteer troops, as previously discussed, were rather resistant to discipline and resented the authority that non-commissioned and commissioned officers had over them. Additionally, with the boredom increasing during Manila's slow and tedious occupation, American soldiers often got drunk and became disorderly in the city, requiring the intervention of American policing forces. As Ed Dunbar related to this future wife, it seemed to him that most men in his regiment were only interested in getting "beastly drunk."⁸⁹ Bowe recalls two such events: in the first, a member of Company H of the 13th Minnesota had mixed whiskey and beno, a strong alcoholic drink distilled from the fermented sap of palm trees, and was thrown in the guardhouse due to disorderly conduct and talking back to officers. In another incident, Colorado troops had found a keg of beer and tried to get a patrol from the 13th Minnesota to drink it with them, eventually leading to a fight when the members of the patrol emptied the keg by dumping it on the ground. Although for the Minnesotans time may have passed quickly due to their activities on police duty, they were excited and overjoyed when they found out they were to be released from police duty and sent to the front to fight the Filipino nationalists.

Private Dunbar of the 1st California recalled that there was a lot of hard work to do with "guarding and patrolling," but by September 2, 1898, things were "not so bad" and were running much more smoothly.⁹⁰ Initially, this time was taken up with things such as exploring Manila, an activity many soldiers indulged in, including William Christner, Ed Dunbar, and Edward Martin; eventually, the entirety of Manila and its surroundings were explored by the soldiers, and although some thought it was a lovely city, others did not like it. Further, as Ed Dunbar recalled, whether one liked the city or not, one had "been around to see almost

⁸⁹ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 36, SAWS.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 27.

everything worth seeing.”⁹¹ Thus, things became “very monotonous” for the American soldiers occupying Manila.⁹² Much like a generation before them, during the American Civil War, the American soldiers in the Philippines had to find ways to pass the time. Some of this time was spent writing letters home to friends and family in the United States. Several soldiers explicitly mentioned in the letters that they would write letters home as a ship was about to depart from Manila back to the United States.⁹³ Writing these letters would take up at least some of their spare time in their day. Another activity that could relieve their boredom was receiving letters from home from their friends and family, newspapers, and other reading material.

The American soldiers were genuinely overjoyed when they received letters from home. For example, William Christner, a private in the 10th Pennsylvania, wrote home to his mother on December 7, 1898, informing her of his feelings when he received a letter from her as well as admonishing her for not writing enough: “Your letter arrived a few days ago you write so seldom that when I get a letter I imagine it a kind of holiday.”⁹⁴ Another soldier, when writing home, requested more newspapers and reading materials to be sent in the mail to him, as he recounted that they did not receive much news and wanted all the information they could get from home and about the war. Private Davis of the Utah Artillery complained to his family that he thought they had forgotten his address, as he had received no letters or anything else from them for a long time.⁹⁵ One complaint of several soldiers whose letters and diaries were read for this project was a lack of letters sent to them from friends and family back home.

⁹¹ Ibid., 33.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Christner, William S. Christner Papers, December 7, 1898, SAWS, Davis, David J. Davis collection, December 2, 1898, CHL, and Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 27, SAWS.

⁹⁴ Christner, William S. Christner Papers, December 7, 1898, SAWS.

⁹⁵ Davis, David J. Davis collection, December 2 1898, CHL.

As the hard work of the early occupation duty gave way to a more peaceful and, thus, less busy occupation, American soldiers were forced to find new ways to entertain themselves. However, these activities were curtailed by the simple issue that American soldiers spoke English, and the citizens of Manila spoke Spanish and Tagalog, the predominant language of Luzon. Few American soldiers from the insular and xenophobic United States could speak Spanish, certainly none could speak Tagalog, and few Filipinos could speak English. This inability to communicate between Filipinos and American soldiers contributed to the tensions necessary for the outbreak of war between the Americans and the Filipinos. The language barrier between the Americans and Filipinos created a significant issue when determining the value of the cost of goods and services provided to the Americans by the Filipinos. American money was of greater value than Filipino money and could buy more. Roughly speaking, a single American gold dollar was worth two Mexican silver dollars, which was the currency of the Philippines. Due to the value difference between the money Americans were paid and the actual value of Filipino currency, American troops often felt that the Filipinos were cheating them out of their money. This was among the most common complaints that American soldiers levied at the Filipinos and Chinese mestizos in Manila. As JJ Martin of the 10th Pennsylvania related to his family on December 29, 1898, many American soldiers believed the Filipinos deliberately cheated them by charging more than the actual price of goods.⁹⁶ Unlike many other soldiers, however JJ Martin was not offended by their actions, saying that the “enlightened people” of the United States did the same.⁹⁷ As the Americans sought distractions from the boredom of occupation duty, their quest to seek entertainment could and did cause strife between Americans and Filipinos. American soldiers often felt the Filipinos were cheating them when paying for goods and services they used while in the city. With the

⁹⁶ JJ Martin, Edward Martin Papers, December 29, 1898, PASA.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

strict orders not to antagonize the citizens of Manila, American officers, whom the soldiers already resented often sided with the Filipinos in disputes of over payment. This caused even more resentment from the American soldiers toward their officers and Filipinos as they felt they were not being treated fairly by both. One of the prevalent problems the United States Army in the Philippines had to deal with was the easy supply of alcohol and liquor that American soldiers could get their hands on at very low prices. Alcohol was a ubiquitous commodity in the United States at the turn of the nineteenth century, and its use and overuse were reasonably common. As most of the soldiers were young men, particularly those from rural regions and small towns, who were for the first time removed from home and their communities, they could partake in activities that otherwise would have been difficult or impossible to do. One such activity was visiting brothels, which introduced venereal diseases to the units and helped degrade the discipline of American units, further heightening tensions with the Filipinos. But not all activities that the American soldiers partook in involved alcohol and prostitution; American soldiers also went to dance halls and concerts and fraternized with the Filipino people. Some even made friends with Filipinos living in Manila and nationalist officers. However, while Americans did find some distractions from the boredom of garrison duty, the strangeness of the land and the people and their desire to go home slowly poisoned the relationship between the Americans and the Filipinos. With the early occupation work behind them, American troops began to settle into the boring but routine and mundane duties of an army of occupation. Such duties included policing their quarters, maintaining daily drills, guard mounts, roll calls, and sundry other tasks as assigned or needed throughout the day.

However, this left significant free time for the American soldiers to enjoy. The soldiers filled this free time with many different activities. As mentioned previously, Manila had a vibrant cultural scene even if the Americans consciously decided to ignore it or view it

through a decidedly negative light. The city was filled with bars, dance halls, brothels, restaurants, and other amenities in which to cater to the American soldiers and distract them from their boredom and anger. For the Americans in Manila, the dance halls, balls, cockfights, and other activities helped to distract them from the slow and tedious occupation duty. At dance halls and bars, Americans not only met and came in contact with Filipinos, but at these locations, they also engaged in one of the most frequent activities of the American soldiers in the Philippines: drinking alcoholic beverages. Besides touring the walled city and the rest of Manila and spending time in the evening at the Luntra listening to concerts and enjoying breezes off Manila Bay, most American soldiers visited bars, brothels, and dance halls during their free time.⁹⁸ These activities were not unique to the Philippines; the American soldiers who had served in the Philippines also participated in these activities while in the training camps in the United States, and even there these activities undermined military discipline and relations with the civilian population. Much like in the United States, these soldiers were far removed from the eyes of their friends and families back home, and as most lived in small rural communities where the watchful eyes of the community constrained their activities, now these young men were on their own without those informal constraints. In San Francisco, the soldiers, already chafing under the imposition of military discipline, sought out entertainment to distract them from the rigours of the training camps, find better food than was available in the camps and their conduct began to show their ill-discipline by running the guard line and being absent without leave from their units.⁹⁹ This was a regular problem for volunteer units while in San Francisco and demonstrated the poor discipline that would erode the relationship between the Filipinos and the Americans. Disorderly soldiers in the city of San Francisco

⁹⁸ Fisher Diary, June 27, 28, September 21 1898, SAWS.

⁹⁹ Fisher Diary, June 27 and 28 1898, SAWS, JJ Martin, Edward Martin Papers July 9 1898, November 6 1898, and September 21 1898, PASA.

soured the population to the volunteers and the military in general. Private Daly, a member of the Regular Army, recalled when passing through Honolulu that the population there was unenthusiastic to see more soldiers, stating that it was “another case of the volunteers.”¹⁰⁰ The American volunteers, while in San Francisco demonstrated many of the problems that would be seen in the Philippines. Men got drunk, became disorderly, caused issues with the civilian population, and degraded unit discipline. These problems continued in the Philippines.

Although the American soldiers in the Philippines, who were predominantly white, were deeply steeped in white supremacist ideals like their contemporaries back home, this did not prevent friendly fraternization between American troops and civilians in Manila and the nationalist Filipino troops. At the initial landing of American soldiers in the Philippines, relations with the Filipinos were, reasonably decent. Many American soldiers wrote in both their letters home and in their diaries that they had at least some positive views of the Filipinos. Not everyone agreed. Private Dunbar of the 1st California never particularly cared for the Filipinos and felt them ugly and dirty people; others, such as William Christner, had condescending but more positive views of the Filipinos. The social interactions between American soldiers and Filipinos were mostly positive, with many, American soldiers making friends with Filipinos. William Christner, a private in the 10th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. Christner became friendly with a female Filipino while he was stationed in the Philippines during the occupation. As he recounted in his letter on October 17, 1898, that:

One of the Philippina ladies has become quite attached to me and washes and mends my clothes for me not charging me a cent she keeps store and when I call on the evening she gives me small cigars lemonade oranges bananas, and when I want to go pay for them she gets mad and says, me like you know pay me nothing¹⁰¹

But even here, there was tension in the relationship between these two individuals. Although Christner did regret when she moved away, he recounted in an October 17 letter that he could

¹⁰⁰ Daly, Beverly C. Daly Papers, March 10 1902, AHHC.

¹⁰¹ Christner, William S. Christner Papers, October 17, 1898, SAWS.

stand not paying her “if she only don’t want me to marry think what the colour of the children would be crossed between a muffle dum and a white.”¹⁰² John Bowe of the 13th Minnesota also had many positive interactions with Filipinos not only within Manila itself but also in the regions surrounding that city. Bowe and a few others in his regiment decided to do some prospecting outside the city behind the Filipino nationalist’s lines. They recalled being treated well by the Filipinos. On one occasion in a town, the local band serenaded them, though he recalled the music was the worst ever. However, he did call the town presidents “his friend” and had extended an invitation to him to visit the 13th Minnesota in Manila if he had the chance.¹⁰³

Additionally, Bowe and members of his unit befriended a Filipino named Bilbino, with whom they had a very good relationship. This was demonstrated in the support Bowe and several members of his unit gave to Bilbino when his son got married, as well as their invitation to the wedding and the reception afterward. They helped by not only smuggling his son’s fiancé out of her parent’s house but also helping to cover the cost of the marriage. Bowe also developed a friendly relationship with a Filipino nationalist officer before the occupation of Manila that continued through the occupation itself. A member of the Utah Artillery, George Fisher, recounted that his brother, who was later killed in action in the Philippines, intended to adopt a Filipino boy and take him back to the United States at the war’s end.¹⁰⁴ These friendly relationships flourished in the Philippines and were established in the early parts of the American occupation of Manila. As well as other relationships, many prominently sexual relationships also developed during this time. Although there were friendly relations between the American volunteers and the Filipinos, these relationships were often strained on

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Bowe, *With the 13th Minnesota*, 47.

¹⁰⁴ Fisher Diary, January 3, 1899, SAWS.

differing levels. As noted earlier, Christner, although enjoying a friendly relationship with a Filipino woman, still had overtures of racism, as he openly expressed to his family the fear of being asked to marry her and the disparagement of any possible offspring of such a marriage.

As time went on, American soldiers began to become more and more bored with their situation in the Philippines. Edward Martin, another 10th Pennsylvania, stated in one of his letters home that the American soldiers in the Philippines had signed up for a trip to Manila, not to be an army of occupation.¹⁰⁵ The majority of American soldiers in the Philippines continuously expressed their desire to see battle and then immediately return home when hostilities between the Kingdom of Spain and the United States of America ended, but most of the volunteers were willing to stay on as long as a peace treaty had not been officially signed ending the war. When word was received of the official peace between Spain and the United States, the American soldiers began to agitate to return home.

The Breaking Point Arrives

The vast majority of American soldiers in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War and the initial stages of the Philippine War were American militia units. These National Guard militia units, were, comprised of volunteer citizens not part of the regular United States military. These men were swept up in the martial spirits that followed the destruction of the *Maine* and the outbreak of war with Spain. They enlisted in the United States Army not only to demonstrate their manhood but to confirm their devotion to their country. Further, a large number of the men who were in these state volunteer units were not even members of the National Guard before the outbreak of war. As discussed earlier, many units, to maintain their

¹⁰⁵ Edward Martin, Edward Martin Papers, October 8 1898, PASA.

distinct identity when brought under federal service, continued to recruit men as they converged upon their mustering points. As previously stated in one company of the 13th Minnesota, the vast majority of the enlisted men were new members of the National Guard who signed up following the outbreak of war. Men such as Ed Dunbar of the 1st California and JJ Martin of the 10th Pennsylvania were not part of the National Guard before the outbreak of war. Ed Dunbar was working in the mines of Western California and was initially going to enlist in a regular army outfit until the intervention of a family friend. After the conflict with Spain ended, a large number wanted to return home as these men had no desire to remain in the Army, and they resented the continued enforced discipline they were subjected to. When the United States decided to retain the Philippines, this caused some practical problems for the United States. First, with most of the Regular Army being deployed to Cuba, it would take some time to move sufficient forces necessary to garrison the island and put down any possible hostilities with the Filipino nationalists which was appearing to be increasingly likely.

Further, many of the Regular Army units had been severely affected by disease and combat in Cuba, both of which depleted their ranks, requiring time to reorganize and refit these regiments. Due to this, the United States government decided to retain the state volunteer units already in the Philippines beyond their specified enlistment, which was for two years or until the conclusion of hostilities with Spain. However, this decision did not sit well with most volunteers, who began demanding their return to the United States. David J. Davis, of the Utah artillery, is a good example. Although he called the trip to the Philippines a trip of a lifetime and believed that it would be beneficial, after the war was over, he wanted to go home. Starting in late 1898, throughout the rest of his time in the Philippines, Private Davis wrote home several times asking for his family to see if they could exert pressure to either get him discharged, so he could return home or to get the Utah Light Artillery Battalion withdrawn

from the Philippines and returned to the United States.¹⁰⁶ He complained bitterly that the Astor Battery, a unit raised and supplied by the wealthy magnate John Jacob Astor IV, was withdrawn from the Philippines before the Utah Artillery even though the Astor Battery arrived later than the Utah Artillery and served less time in the Philippines.¹⁰⁷ Ed Dunbar also wanted to return home, telling his future wife that he dreamt of being home very often and found it hard to wake up in the Philippines. He also thought it would be a great injustice for volunteers to be held in the Philippines after the conclusion of peace. He recalled years later that when the government asked the volunteers to stay on, the officers replied that they would; however, such a request was never forwarded to the enlisted personnel for their input.¹⁰⁸ Ed Martin recounted that the vast majority of the members of the 10th Pennsylvania officers, as well as enlisted men, wanted to go home.¹⁰⁹

Besides boredom, another factor that helped to drive the volunteers' desire to return home was their interaction with other soldiers. Edward Martin, a corporal in the 10th Pennsylvania, recounted in several letters that he was tired of being in the Philippine Islands and being confined to Manila; part of his exasperation was his aversion to annexing the islands and dealing with the volunteers from other states. On September 8, Corporal Martin wrote home to his family; he related, "I am tired of this place owing to the fact of the kind of fellows we have to deal with. All the other troops here are from the sagebrush states, and you know what kind of people they are. They are all stuck on themselves and think they are too good to do dirty mean work."¹¹⁰ Private Davis disliked the men from the Astor Battery, thinking they were some of the worst soldiers.¹¹¹ Private Dunbar complained about his fellow soldiers. He

¹⁰⁶ Davis, David J. Davis collection, October 7 and December 14 1898, CHL.

¹⁰⁷ Davis, David J. Davis collection, December 14 1898, CHL.

¹⁰⁸ Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 26-27, SAWS.

¹⁰⁹ Edward Martin, Edward Martin Papers, October 8, 1898, PASA.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., September 8, 1898. Sagebrush states usually refer to the western plains' states, such as Nebraska, Wyoming, and the Dakotas for example.

¹¹¹ Davis, David J. Davis collection, January 30 1899, CHL.

related in his letters home to his future wife that he did not care for any of the men who served with him in the 1st California.¹¹² He recounted that he did not like his companions due to their drinking, saying that their only interest was to go to the bars and the dance houses and get drunk.¹¹³ He also complained about the surgeon of his regiment believing that he was incompetent and useless, which further increased his desire to return to the United States.¹¹⁴ Additionally, troops still had problems with their officers, whom they continued complaining about, arguing that they did not care about their men. For example, William Christner related home in December 1898 that while care packages and gifts sent from home had reached the Philippines by Christmas, the troops had not received them because the officers were not “interested enough in their men to try to get them off the ship.”¹¹⁵ It wasn’t just their officers that soldiers had problems with; Edward Martin complained about the officers of the Western regiments, stating that they did not like the 10th Pennsylvania.¹¹⁶ Edward Martin himself had at least some problems with some of the officers in his regiment. Although he thought the vast majority were good, he did feel that at least some were impeding their return home. He recounted to his family that while most of the officers of the 10th Pennsylvania wanted to return to the United States, the bad officers wished to stay because they were getting paid a great deal of money more than they had in civilian life.¹¹⁷ Many complaints about officers predated arriving in the Philippines as many men believed their officers were unjust.

Another reason that American soldiers wanted to return to the United States was the Filipinos themselves. The United States, at the turn of the twentieth century, was an extremely racist society. White Americans, the demographic who overwhelmingly fought in the

¹¹² Dunbar, Letters to Maud Miller and Memories of Military Service, 36, SAWS.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 34-35.

¹¹⁵ Christner, William S. Christner Papers, December 26, 1898, SAWS.

¹¹⁶ Edward Martin, Edward Martin Papers, September 8 1898, PASA.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., October 8 1898.

Philippine War, were steeped in white supremacist ideology. Although not every soldier in the American expeditionary forces sent to the Philippines had an inherent dislike and hatred of the Filipinos—many, such as William Christner and John Bowe, formed friendships with Filipinos—these men, along with their comrades, had inherently negative views of the Filipinos. These negative views added to the American soldiers' desire to return to the United States. The Filipino people were alien and had a strange society and culture compared to the United States. These fundamental racial and cultural differences placed a strain on Filipino-American relations that would be difficult to overcome. Many soldiers wrote back home at the beginning of the American experience in the Philippines expressing disdain for the Filipinos. Ed Dunbar thought them the ugliest lot of people out there. Edward Martin thought they were dirty and uncivilized and thought that if the United States took the islands, Filipinos would not be happy because the government would force them to toe the line. David J. Davis did not physically care for Filipinos. These attitudes and opinions towards the Filipinos led American soldiers to treat the Filipino people with contempt and hostility. As the American soldiers remained in the islands past their terms of enlistment, their anger and resentment built towards their officers and the Filipinos themselves. Part of this was due to the assertiveness of the Filipino nationalists who were trying to claim independence. This assertiveness meant the Filipino nationalists enforced checkpoints preventing American soldiers from crossing their lines and trying to prevent Americans from taking control of critical locations. This was one way for the Filipino nationalists to ensure that they were in the best possible position to fight the Americans or the Spanish depending upon the outcome of peace negotiations.

These actions greatly angered the American soldiers, who did not appreciate being treated this way by people they viewed as lesser than themselves. While not necessarily hostile, such interactions did not endear the Filipinos to the Americans. Soldiers repeatedly mentioned in letters, as relations deteriorated between the Americans and the Filipino

nationalists, that they were “forced” to kill Filipino sentries and pickets to keep them in line. These issues combined to sour Filipino-American relations. Additionally, as the Filipinos began to suspect the Americans were planning on annexing the Philippines, their relationship and actions towards the Americans became steadily more hostile. At one point, Americans such as John Bowe and others could travel throughout the islands, as Filipino suspicions increased, these privileges were revoked. Americans were further hemmed into Manila and Cavite, restricting their ability to escape Manila and the boredom of the city.

As the relations between the Americans and the Filipinos deteriorated, the conflict between the two became more common and deadly. As previously mentioned, American soldiers regularly stated they always killed Filipinos while on guard duty. William Christner of the 10th Pennsylvania recounted in his letters home that they killed one or two Filipinos every night just to keep order. As these interactions became more common, hostility between the Filipinos and the Americans increased, and they became even more likely with the announcement of the American annexation of the Philippine Islands, according to the Treaty of Paris of 1898. Although the Americans had promised a benevolent assimilation of the Filipinos, the annexation announcement ensured that war would break out. By this point, American soldiers were often ready to fight their former Filipino partners. The fighting between the Filipinos and the Americans would finally break out on February 4, 1899, with fighting breaking out around Manila, beginning the conventional phase of the Philippine-American War.

Conclusion

The American army was able to quickly capture Manila and exclude the Filipinos from the occupation of the city. This move, while militarily and politically prudent on the part of the

Americans, due to the as yet undetermined fate of the Philippines, it initiated the downward spiral of Filipino-American relations. With peace secured and news of peace arriving, additional pressures were placed on the Filipino-American relations as the American volunteers wanted to return to the United States due to the end of the war. The denial of this desire by the government and the already strained relationship between the soldiers and their superiors created additional tensions that when combined with Filipino suspicions slowly led to the breakdown of Filipino-American relations. When the American decision to annex the Philippines became public, the likelihood of war between United States and the Filipinos increased dramatically. Ultimately, war broke out due to the fundamentally incompatible goals of the Americans and the Filipinos, distrust between both sides, and frustrations on the part of the American soldiers in being retained in the Philippine Islands beyond what they determined was their term of service. These conditions combined to create the environment necessary for the outbreak of war to become all but inevitable.

Conclusion: Memories and Aftermath

With American-Filipino relations thoroughly degraded by February 1899, the stage was set for the outbreak of the Philippine-American War. American-Filipino relations had steadily collapsed over the previous seven months since the American capture and occupation of Manila following the 1898 Battle of Manila. Issues that contributed to the tensions on the American -Filipino relations included cultural and social differences between Americans and Filipinos, racism on the part of the Americans, and the indecision of the McKinley Administration on the eventual fate of the Philippine Islands. Additional pressure was introduced on the American-Filipino relations as both armies pressed to secure the best possible military positions for their troops and plan for either the return of Manila to the Spanish or for American annexation of the islands. With these anxieties, Filipino-American relations steadily degraded to the point that by February 1899, war broke out. Finally, on the evening of February 4, war erupted between the Americans and the Filipino revolutionaries when a small American patrol from the 1st Nebraska Infantry Regiment encountered a Filipino patrol near Santa Mesa, a suburb of Manila.

The incompatible goals of annexation by the Americans and independence by the Filipinos, made the outbreak of war likely, if not inevitable. When war finally broke out on February 4, 1899, neither side was expecting or planning for war. Both the American and Filipino leaders were taken by complete surprise and both were in total confusion. That evening, a detachment consisting of Private William Walter Grayson, Private Orville Miller, and one other man, all members of the 1st Nebraska, were ordered to conduct a patrol in Santa Mesa. The 1st Nebraska had orders to hold Santol to protect the waterworks and pipelines

located there that supplied freshwater to Manila. To ensure they were not surprised by any attack, 1st Nebraska sent out patrols every half hour to monitor the positions and patrols of the Philippine Revolutionary Army. After approximately five minutes of patrolling, around 8 pm, the Nebraskan patrol moved from Santol towards Blockhouse 7, and encountered four armed Filipinos. According to Grayson, he and his patrol encountered a Filipino patrol and ordered them to halt. Standing orders from the commander of the 1st Nebraska, Colonel John M. Stotsenburg, required his men to halt and arrest any armed Filipinos that tried to come into their lines. If they encountered resistance or were attacked, they were to fall back upon the Nebraskans outpost at the waterworks and pipelines and send for help. When the Filipino nationalists responded by cocking their rifles, Grayson and his comrades fired at them and retreated to their unit. Grayson recalled:

I yelled "Halt!"... the man moved. I challenged with another "Halt!" Then he immediately shouted "Halt!" to me. Well I thought the best thing to do was to shoot him. He dropped. We retreated to where our six other fellows were and I said, "Line up fellows; the enemy are in here all through these yards." We then retreated to the pipeline and got behind the water work main and stayed there all night. It was some minutes after our second shots before Filipinos began firing.¹

This event-initiated hostilities between the Americans and the Filipino nationalists and began the 1899 Battle of Manila. Violence between Filipino and American forces had been a common occurrence for some time, as William Christner stated when he wrote home, American forces were "forced" to kill a few Filipinos every night.² This time, however, the shots of the Americans and the Filipinos set off the war. The buildup of tensions on both sides coupled with this small engagement was the spark that led to war. Both sides seem to believe that war was inevitable and likely necessary to settle the problems that had arisen between the Filipinos and the Americans. However, neither side intended for the war to start, as key

¹ Teodoro Agoncillo, *History of the Filipino People*, 8th ed. (Quezon City, Philippines: R.P. Garcia Publishing Co., 1990), pg. 217.

² Christner, William S. Christner Papers, Jan. 17, 1899, SAWS.

leadership on both the American and Filipino sides were away from their commands, and they were not ready to lead any sort of fighting or to execute plans their superiors had laid out for the eventuality of war.³ War broke out in part because both sides were exhausted with the rising tension, and they believed that conflict was inevitable as noted by General Robert P Hughes, an officer on General Otis' staff. He recalled in his diary on February 4: "The men on both sides seem to have become weary of the tension, and all wish for collision. It is coming and no one can forecast a day ahead."⁴ The American volunteer militia regiments would remain in service until the fall of 1899 when they were withdrawn from the Philippines, and United States Federal volunteer regiments and Regular Army units replaced them. After several years of conventional and then guerrilla warfare, the United States was largely able to impose its political authority over the Philippine Islands. These federal volunteers and regular units would be the regiments that would end the dreams of Philippine independence by 1907, although American soldiers continued to officially fight the Moros of the southern Philippines, until the official withdrawal of Army units in 1913. The American colonial control of the Philippines would last until 1946, when the United States granted the independence of the Philippine Islands on July 4 of that year.

For the Americans, the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars were crucial experiences that helped the United States prepare for the First and Second World Wars. An effective supply system, mobilization system, and requisitioning system, in addition to rational organized reserve formations combined with a larger supply of Regular Army officers, would likely have mitigated many problems that developed during the mobilization process in 1898. The failures of the Army and the War Department ensured that the United States would suffer a much higher casualty rate than it would have otherwise. Due to these failures, the Spanish-

³ Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902*, 53-54.

⁴ Hughes Diary, *Robert Patterson Hughes Papers*, 4 Feb. 4 1899, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

American War would be the last military conflict the United States was involved in, where casualties from noncombat-related deaths, mostly disease, would outnumber the deaths by combat-related factors. The failures of the United States Army in the mobilization for the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars forced the United States to recognize the necessity of providing more recourses to make the United States Army a functional and effective military force.

As the Philippine War drew to its conclusion between 1905 and 1907, most American troops were withdrawn from the Philippines to return to the United States. Some forces were redirected to the southern Philippine Islands to engage the Muslim minority that inhabited those regions. Very few memoirs or accounts from the Philippine War were published in the years following the conclusion of the war with the exception of a few men and leading officers who released their memoirs in the years following the conflict. However, this conflict slowly faded from the American national consciousness as the century wore on. By the 1960s and 1970s, when the United States Army began its survey of the surviving veterans of the war, the memory of the Philippine-American War had all but faded from public consciousness. This section reviews how the American soldiers remembered their service in this forgotten war.

Some scepticism must be taken when examining the memories of the American soldiers as sixty years had passed since the end of the war. By the 1960s and 1970s, the American troops who had served in the Philippine War were in their late 80s and early 90s, and all had varying memories relating to the war. Often, these memories seem to be shaded with nostalgia and wishful thinking for times past. When examining surveys, many veterans had more positive memories of the war and their actions than were reported during the war. As an example, historical research demonstrates that the American soldiers stationed in the Philippines often had bad rations and poor clothing, most, though not all, surveys tended to

state that either the food or the equipment these men were provided was good or adequate. Contemporary reports, including those from the veterans themselves, do not support this argument. As noted, in his letters home to his family, William Christner of 10th Pennsylvania complains about the rations the Army provided; however, when completing his veteran's survey, he states that the rations were good.⁵ Additionally, although morale issues were somewhat common in the American Army in the Philippines, most of the veterans responded, even when their letters and diaries revealed otherwise, that morale around the American Army was good. Views of their Filipino adversaries also tended to be more positive than what many troops directly stated during the war or its immediate aftermath; again, Christner did not have particularly good things to say about the Filipinos during his service, but years later, when asked if he and his comrades considered the Filipinos worthy enemies he states yes, an improvement over what he writes home during the war.⁶ Additionally, when responding to the veterans' surveys, the veterans did not speak of the more questionable actions by American troops during the conflict. For example, the surveys asked the veterans if looting took place during the conflict and if they witnessed any looting. Almost all veterans responded that they did not witness or know of any looting by the soldiers; one veteran responded that there was nothing valuable to loot. Several of the surveys mentioned that American troops took chickens, pigs, livestock, and other food for consumption. This fact is widely reported and even mentioned by Frederick Funston in his book; however, the soldiers may not have seen this as looting; rather, they may have seen it as foraging, a practice widely accepted in previous military conflicts.⁷ Freeman relates, "while awaiting orders on the river, we consumed a great deal of time hunting chickens and ducks. These were very plentiful and

⁵ Christner, William S. Christner Papers, Oct. 17, 1898, and Survey pg. 2, SAWS.

⁶ Christner Survey, pg. 10, SAWS.

⁷ Frederick Funston, *Memories of two Wars: Cuban and Philippines Experiences* (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1911; repr., Lincoln, NB: Bison Books, 2009), pgs. 189 and 277.

easily caught. We fed well on these every day for a week. We also killed all the hogs that were necessary to supply our wants.”⁸ Additionally, American veterans often failed to remember any slang words from the Army; while some of this may indeed be due to the passage of time, it is possible that changing attitudes by the 1960s and the 1970s may have influenced these veterans to “forget” derogatory slang terms such as “gugu” and “n****r.” Furthermore, according to directions, very few American soldiers ever had sexual relations with Filipino women, even though medical records confirmed venereal diseases were prevalent in the American Army stationed in the Philippines throughout the conflict. Nostalgia certainly plays a role, as does the desire to look good for posterity.

The way in which the veterans remember their enemies had also improved by the 1960s and 1970s. Many veterans stated, that they and their comrades considered their Filipino adversaries as worthy enemies, when their writings during the Philippine-American War does not demonstrate such views. Private William Christner of the 10th Pennsylvania, provides a good example. When responding to the veteran’s survey question, “did you and your comrades consider your enemy...to be good fighters and were they worthy enemies?” Christner responded yes; however, his letters during the Philippine-American War demonstrate that he and his comrades did not see them as worthy enemies, as indicated above.⁹ The recollections of these men were possibly affected by the Second World War and the growing alliance between Filipino and Americans in the post-Second World War era.¹⁰ During the war, the Philippines and Filipinos were reinvented as American allies and praised by American newspapers and propaganda. This likely affected the memories of American

⁸ Freeman, *A Soldier in the Philippines*, 29.

⁹ Christner, Survey, pg. 10, SAWS.

¹⁰ Christopher Capozzola, *Bound by War: How the United States and the Philippines Built America's First Pacific Century* (New York: Basic Books, 2020), pgs. 185-187.

troops, softening their views on their adversaries. Further, nostalgic remembrance of their past and youth may also affect how they looked back on the war. As these men entered the final years of their lives, they may have looked more fondly back on the times that seemed simpler and more straightforward.

Based on evidence, some of the veterans' views had changed by the 1960s and 1970s. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine how much their views had changed as the men left few detailed records of their views on the conflict. Two veterans who reflected on the conflict and shared their views were John LaWall and Lawrence Benton. LaWall, at the end of the conflict, believed that the United States was justified in its actions in the Philippines. He states in his lecture, "It is not difficult to see that the people are unfit to assume the higher form of self-government," and the United States needed to educate the "downtrodden people" of the Philippines "people out of the darkness and bondage of five hundred years into the light of liberty of education and enlightenment."¹¹ A firm believer in the civilizing mission and necessity of the American actions in the Philippines. Looking back to the conflict thirty years before, he relates:

I am not so sure today as I was thirty years ago of our justice of our cause in the Philippines. Like many another I wonder whether any nation or people is ever justified in imposing its yoke under the guise of a "superior civilization" upon another nation or people. I am inclined to believe that every people has an inalienable right to self-government, however poor or inefficient.¹²

LaWall was unusual as he was college-educated.¹³ He received a degree in education, unlike many American troops who served in the Philippines; this may have contributed to his rethinking of the justice of the American conquest of the Philippines. While LaWall had second thoughts about American acts, not all of the soldiers who served in the Philippine War

¹¹ LaWall, "Sixteen Months in the Philippines," 101, SAWS.

¹² Ibid., 102.

¹³ LaWall, Survey, pg. 11, SAWS.

believed American actions were questionable. Lawrence Benton, a veteran of the 33rd United States Volunteer Infantry, continued to believe that American occupation of the Philippines was justified and indeed should have continued.¹⁴ Benton was an old-timer, an American soldier who remained in the Philippines after his term of service and became part of the American civil bureaucracy that ran the islands. He was convinced that the Philippines' problems since their independence demonstrated that they still needed US control.¹⁵ In his veteran's survey, he stated that "present writing of the Philippines under independence granted in 1946 bears out the prediction of "Old Timers" that independence would not be good for them."¹⁶ Ed Dunbar, of the 1st California, and Todd Little also never change their views on Filipinos. Neither expressed any particular views on the war itself.

On paper, both the United States and Spain were essentially evenly matched. Due to this perceived equality in military forces a much longer war was anticipated, when in reality, Spain was much weaker than it appeared on paper. Spain faced numerous internal issues affecting its army and navy, dramatically undercutting its paper strength. Internal strife from the three Carlist Wars, civil wars over the succession to the Spanish crown, between 1832 to 1872 had sapped the strength of the Spanish army and the Spanish treasury along with the rebellions in both the Philippines and Cuba. Additionally, Spain faced political tensions surrounding whether Spain would maintain a monarchy or become a republic. Economic problems with the weak Spanish economy and rising social issues undermined Spain's ability to wage war and significantly weakened its military. The United States was lucky. Their first foray into international imperial politics was against the weakest and declining European colonial power, Spain. With the poor state of the United States Army and its reserve forces,

¹⁴ Benton, Lawrence Benton Collection, Survey, 8, SAWS.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

facing a stronger enemy than the Spanish would have been a major challenge for the United States. Had the U.S. challenged a stronger European imperial power; the U.S. would likely have struggled to win quickly and with as few casualties as it did against Spain. The swift American victory over Spain obscures the reality of the American's struggles to not only mobilize forces for the war against the Spanish but also to deploy and support them overseas. Finally, the swift victory also obscures the command-and-control issues that plagued the US Army and National Guard throughout the war, with political bickering taking place in some volunteer units and some commanders being openly insubordinate with their superiors. If the United States had the misfortune of challenging a stronger imperial power, such as the British, French, or Germans, that had a better funded and maintained army and navy, the United States would not have won so quickly or as handily as they did against the Spanish. A war against a powerful and well-funded imperial power may not have turned out to be a victory for the United States or victory may have only been achieved at a much steeper cost in both American lives and money.

The early phases of modernizing the United States Army were critical in developing a capable modern American Army. Before the outbreak of the Spanish-American and the Philippine Wars, the United States Army faced significant challenges when operating in a contemporary conflict. The Army that fought in the Philippines against Spain and the Filipino nationalists was primarily designed and intended to fight irregular warfare against native peoples, provide policing and protection duties on the American settler frontiers as well as provide a small professional core of which to mobilize militia units around in the event of war against distant European powers. While this design for the American army was perfectly adequate for a small, weak, and relatively poor frontier Republic, such an Army was not suitable for the strong, wealthy, and burgeoning world power that the United States had

developed into since the end of the American War of Independence in 1781. Additionally, due to technological developments through the nineteenth century, such a military force was inadequate even for defending American borders from outside attacks from stronger European powers. The relative isolation of the United States from stronger powers allowed the American Army to degrade. The failures of the Army during the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars demonstrated to the American public and, most importantly, the American government, that the Army required significant investment and reform to turn the frontier constabulary that was the American Army of 1781 to 1898 into a modern professional military force that could not only defend the United States from aggression but also advance and defend American interests abroad.

In spite of the nostalgic views of their military service during the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars, the letters, diaries, and other material the soldiers generated during their time in the army demonstrate they suffered immensely during their service. The haphazard mobilization process brought many raw recruits, with no military experience, into the self-described National Guard regiments, who also had almost non-existent military experience creating major issues for the army. In addition, many of the National Guard's commissioned officers, who were either elected by the regimental members or were political appointees, were amateurs with limited military experience and limited understanding of their jobs. The fact that many officers were either political appointees or elected by unit membership to their positions occasionally created political friction within the National Guard units. Political rivalries could be carried over from civilian life, creating a fractious command environment and animosity between officers and their men and between regimental and company officers. Further, the National Guard regiments did not have enough equipment to support them at their full authorized strength during mobilization; many units had never been

at full authorized strength before the outbreak of war. When war broke out, many units only reached authorized strength through a rushed recruitment process in order to maintain their unique unit identities when they were called into federal service. These issues were compounded by the limited training that even pre-war guardsmen had due to chaotic and inconsistent standards set by the states and the reliance of National Guard units on state budgets to supply and maintain them.

The United States Army and the United States War Department were completely unprepared for this war compounding the problems within the state volunteer regiments which created suffering for the troops. The war demonstrated that the Army had not sufficiently modernized by the outbreak of the Spanish-American War to effectively fight beyond the territorial extent of the United States. Further, the logistical challenges the Army faced, even within the United States, called into question the Army's ability to successfully operate large forces within the territorial extent of the United States. The lack of a staff system, higher combat commands, and an inadequately staffed support system prevented the Army from functioning properly during the mobilization process and deployment to the Philippines. Lacking an adequate staff system or sufficient support systems and higher combatant commands, the United States Army was forced to create these entities on the fly after their rational plan to expand the Army slowly had been rejected due to political considerations. The necessity to create higher combat commands for both the Regular Army units and the newly mobilized state volunteer regiments required experienced volunteer officers and professional Regular Army officers to staff these positions, removing the possibility of support for helping to train and organize the volunteer regiments. Additionally, with limited support services, such as logistical and medical services, this created countless problems for the United States Army and the National Guard throughout mobilization. The lack of an adequate supply system

required the War Department to quickly secure the lowest-cost possible contracts for the provision of food, particularly meat. This allowed unscrupulous contractors to defraud the government and provide low-quality and dangerous beef and salmon to the military, resulting in illnesses among the troops.

Additionally, with such a limited supply system, the military did not have sufficient weapons, uniforms, tents, and supplies necessary to properly arm and equip newly mobilized militia regiments. Due to the inadequate supply system, many men were poorly equipped and armed with outdated weapons. Too few tents and improper clothing for the volunteers combined with overcrowding in the training camps, caused sickness and disease to spread throughout the American regiments. This put a significant strain on the existing medical system, which had been designed for a much smaller military and was not able to easily expand or meet the challenges that confronted it. Finally, the poor state of the American Army, with limited staff and support services, ensured that the War Department was unable to quickly acquire modern transports that were not only necessary for deploying troops to Cuba but also necessary to deploy troops to the Philippines or any other Spanish colonial possession. These issues would carry over to the transports, where the men suffered horribly due to the Army's and the War Department's ineptitude in preparing for the possibility of deploying troops to the Philippines. These failures caused horrendous conditions as well as unnecessary casualties on the voyage to the Philippines.

The issues faced during the Spanish-American and Philippine War were unavoidable due to the poor and neglected state of the United States Army, the War Department, and the American state militia or National Guard system. Proper investment and interest in improving and modernizing all three of the previously mentioned establishments would have gone a long way to have either mitigated or entirely prevented the suffering and unnecessary casualties

suffered by the United States Army and the National Guard units during the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars. Additionally, these issues created problems within the state militia regiments that helped to sour relations with the Filipinos, helping to contribute to the outbreak of war. Without these issues, the American military in the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars would have been much more efficient and effective and would have suffered fewer non-combat-related casualties. These issues caused immense suffering and would only be rectified after the United States moved to reform its Army and its National Guard system following the horrendous conditions the soldiers faced during the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars.

The American Army from its inception and throughout the nineteenth century was a frontier constabulary. The passage of the Dick Act and other reforms, during the Theodore Roosevelt administration, provided a sound basis for reforming the United States Army into a modern professional military force capable of fighting the armies of the other great powers.¹⁷ In spite of these reforms, developing and modernizing the American Army was a slow process plagued by political opposition and limited funding supplied by Congress.¹⁸ By the time the Americans entered into the First World War, the Army completed some of its reforms; however, it was still, by far, the weakest and smallest army of the great powers.¹⁹ The American army suffered from numerous shortcomings throughout its involvement in the First World War, such as training issues, transportation issues and supply issues.²⁰ The reforms enacted prior to the Americans entry into the First World War prevented the worst problems

¹⁷ David R Woodward, *The American Army and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 1.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 1-2.

²⁰ It should be noted while these problems were due to the slow modernization of the American army, following 1898, some of the supply issues were due to Allied pressure to prioritize the shipment of American combat personnel to Europe over the shipment of supplies and support service personnel for the AEF.

that occurred during the War of 1898 from reoccurring, and the reforms provided a solid basis for continued improvement during the war as well as the Interwar Period.²¹

Reforms to the army were slow and unhurried as they were hampered by the same issues that largely undermined reforms to the army before the Spanish-American War.²² Congress and the War Department viewed most of the potential enemies of the United States as distant powers who would have to fight their way past the British Navy and the American fleet to reach the shores of the United States, or nearby countries were viewed as an insignificant military threat.²³ American views changed with the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914 which forced the United States to address its underprepared Army. As tensions rose between the United States and Imperial Germany, a greater push was made by the government and elements of American society to prepare the United States for war and to continue to modernize and enlarge the American army.²⁴ These realities forced Congress to pass new laws which increased military spending, expanded the army, enacted further reforms to the National Guard, and increased the size of the Army General Staff, an organization within the Army whose task is to conduct planning, analysis, and information gathering as well as serve as the Army's central administrative establishment. The laws were passed in spite of the opposition by some members of Congress such as James Hay, who feared "militarism" was overtaking the Army.²⁵ Political opposition ensured large segments of the General Staff could not reside in Washington.²⁶ Additionally, more Federal control was asserted over the National Guard. The National Defence Act of 1916 required that guardsmen take two oaths; one to their state

²¹ Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History, Volume I: Forging of a Nation, 1775-1917*, 2nd Ed. (Washington, D.C.: Centre of Military History United States Army), 390-391.

²² *Ibid.*, 6.

²³ *Ibid.*, 6.

²⁴ Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, 386-391.

²⁵ Unfortunately, Hay and other Southern representatives also opposed reforms for less noble reasons mainly because they feared any expansion of the Army would lead to greater African-American recruitment. Woodward, *The American Army and the First World War*, 27 and 32.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

as the militia regiments historically required as well as the federal military oath.²⁷ This act also increased the training requirements for the National Guard including the amount of time they participated in military training exercises with the Regular Army.²⁸ The war in Europe highlighted the necessity that a modern national Army required a readily available and competent reserve force that could be called upon to rapidly strengthen the Army in the event of war.²⁹ Even with the deepening crisis of American-German relations, the pace of modernizing the Army was still painfully slow and incomplete by the time United States entered the First World War in 1916.³⁰

The role, responsibilities, and influence of the General Staff was the most contentious issue in reforming the Army. The conflict between the Army Chief of Staff Leonard Wood and the Adjutant General of the Army Fred C Ainsworth.³¹ This conflict came to a head when it was proposed that muster roles of the Army be consolidated.³² Ainsworth was incensed when Wood supported the initiative. Wood also began to involve himself in questions Ainsworth considered wholly the prerogative of the adjutant general.³³ Ainsworth wanted to merge the general staff with the staff of the adjutant General, and have himself appointed as the new Army Chief of Staff.³⁴ A bill to accomplish this change was created by Ainsworth's political ally James Hay, chairman of the House Military Committee. Fortunately for the United States Army, this bill was defeated as Ainsworth was forced into retirement due to insubordination and the Secretary of War Henry Stimson's support for Leonard Wood.³⁵ Ainsworth, although retired, still had strong political support. Again in 1913, he tried to bring the control of the

²⁷ Ibid., 29

²⁸ Ibid., 28-29.

²⁹ Ibid., 28

³⁰ Stewart, ed., *American Military History, Volume 1* 387-388, and 391.

³¹ Woodward, *The American Army and the First World War*, 12-13.

³² Ibid, 13.

³³ Ibid., 12-13.

³⁴ Ibid., 13.

³⁵ Ibid.

General Staff under that of the Adjutant General's Department. This bill also failed, being vetoed by President Taft, ensuring the General Staff would remain independent and have control of the Army.³⁶

Throughout the First World War, the United States continued to have issues mobilizing, supplying, and transporting its forces to the battlefields of Europe. The American army deployed to Europe, the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), and it suffered from supply issues that it was never truly able to remedy, logistical bottlenecks and shortages of trained personnel.³⁷ Many, but not all, of these issues are directly related to the slow pace of modernization carried out by the United States before entering the First World War.³⁸ Although logistical bottlenecks, supply shortages, and other inefficiencies plagued the American army throughout their involvement in the First World War, the sheer misery and inhumane conditions experienced by the soldiers who served in the Spanish-American War was greatly mitigated. Conditions on board transport ships during the First World War were cramped, and often bad; however, the sheer horror and misery faced by the soldiers on the transports of 1898 did not happen.³⁹ In spite of the many flaws that existed with the army during the First World War, improved logistical methods, an increase in trained personnel, and a more efficient mobilization system prevented the misery suffered by the men of 1898.⁴⁰ Even through the United States Army suffered many shortcomings, it performed well throughout its involvement on the European battlefields.

The reforms carried out between 1903 and 1917 improved the Army's performance. These improvements were realised during the First World War and evident by the AEF as they

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Gary Mead, *The Doughboys: America and the First World War* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), 119-120.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 132.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 119-112, and 132.

arrived fairly quickly in Europe, and they provided a decisive advantage for the Allies.⁴¹ The mobilization of troops for the AEF, though flawed, worked more effectively and was better organized than during the War of 1898. Although, illnesses were present in training camps, the scale and severity were significantly less than experienced during the Spanish American War, excluding the world-wide flu pandemic. Even though the AEF suffered from lack of training, partly due to the demands for evermore combatant forces placed on the Americans by their Allies, the training of new troops proceeded with fewer significant issues and was better organized, than in 1898.⁴² Overall, the American army performed well in Europe, and they materially contributed to the Allies' victory in the First World War.⁴³ Though support and supply services demonstrated a need for additional development, they did not outright collapse as they did on multiple occasions during the War of 1898. Although many issues still plagued the United States Army, including a shortage of staff officers, an inadequate supply system, inefficiencies in the transportation of men and material to Europe, and shortages of weapons, the reforms carried out due to the problems encountered during the War of 1898 improved the army and prevented many of the issues seen in 1898.⁴⁴ The failures of the United States Army and the War Department during the War of 1898 helped drive the reforms that enabled the United States to meaningfully and decisively help the Allies win the First World War.⁴⁵

The men who fought in the Philippines suffered greatly due to the structural issues within both the National Guard and the War Department. These issues also became readily apparent to the United States government. With the US holding an overseas empire, having increased influence in the Americas, and becoming a great power, it became evident for

⁴¹ Rodger H. Zieger, *America's Great War: World War I and the American Experience* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001), 113-114.

⁴² Mead, *The Doughboys*, 119-112, and 132.

⁴³ Zieger, *America's Great War*, 114.

⁴⁴ Stewart, ed., *American Military History, Volume 1*, 390-391.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

the need to invest in its army and reserve formations to increase their abilities, competency, and readiness. This process would begin in 1899 with the appointment of Elihu Root as Secretary of War, who was determined to reform the army and was able to have congressional allies pass the 1903 Militia Act, along with other legislation that fundamentally transformed the United States Army and the War Department. These actions set the US Army on the path to becoming the world's most powerful ground combat force by the end of the twentieth century. This process was far from perfect and faced obstacles that would slow this development due to limited funding, service rivalries, and American isolationism. However, even with those stumbling blocks, the reforms caused by the failures during the mobilization for war in 1898 would result in a much-improved army. As the Philippine War reached its conclusion, the Army and War Department solved several issues American troops faced during the mobilization for the Spanish-American and Philippine Wars. The improved capabilities of the army and war department would be demonstrated in 1900 with the deployment of American forces from the Philippines to China to combat the Boxer Rebellion. While still a challenge for the US Army, the deployment of troops from the Philippines to China was better organized and conducted than the movement of troops from California to the Philippines two years before. Although these processes to modernize and improve the army would take several decades to complete, the United States Army would take a leading role in defeating the threats of Japanese and German militarism and fascism, with its allies, and subsequently become the dominant land warfare force following the end of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union.

The Spanish-American War, was a short minor conflict that had limited numbers of Americans involved with few casualties as compared to major conflicts such as the Civil War or the Vietnam War; therefore, the American memory of the Spanish-American War is quite

limited.⁴⁶ Many of these memories are tied to the major events of the war such as the Battle of San Juan Hill, and its major personalities Theodore Roosevelt, and the Roughriders. Even in American History, schooling on the War of 1898 receives fairly little attention. For example, *The American Pageant: A History of the Republic*, a prominent advanced placement US History textbook for high school, the Cuban revolt, the Spanish-American War, and even the Philippine-American War take up only about two or three pages together and are combined into a chapter dealing with other several topics relating to American imperialism such as the Venezuela Crisis, the Open-Door Policy, and Japanese immigration.⁴⁷ In contrast, other subjects such as the Civil War, the Civil Rights Movement, and Western expansion take up at least a chapter each.⁴⁸ *The American Pageant* also treats the Spanish-American War as the United States' entrance upon the world stage something that many other textbooks repeat.⁴⁹ Fundamentally, there is very little popular historical memory of the Spanish-American war.⁵⁰ While the memory of the War of 1898 is limited in popular remembrance, in the professional field of history there is a great deal of discussion dedicated to understanding the War of 1898 and its aftermath. There are many excellent works that can be consulted starting with *The War of 1898* by Louis A. Pérez Jr. *The War of 1898* examines the historiography of Spanish-American War concentrating on the United States and Cuba. Other sources that examine the historiographical development of professional understandings of the war includes Thomas G. Paterson's "United States Intervention in Cuba, 1898: Interpretations of the Spanish-

⁴⁶ As an example of how limited the cultural impact of the war is, the author's father, a lifelong resident of Lancaster city, Pennsylvania, did not know there is a Spanish-American War Monument in Buchanan Park, until two years ago, nor that there is a Spanish-American War veterans' section at Greenwood Cemetery, both located in Lancaster city.

⁴⁷ Grossmont High School Advanced Placement and College Preparatory US History. Accessed June 10, 2025. David M. Kennedy and Elizabeth Cohen. *The American Pageant: A History of the Republic, 15th Ed.* Cengage Learning, 2012. <https://www.mrginn.com/uploads/8/5/4/6/85468970/chapter27.pdf>.

⁴⁸ Ibid., and see Chapters, 7, 8, 18, 19, 20, 21: <https://www.mrginn.com/textbook-chapters.html>.

⁴⁹ <https://www.mrginn.com/uploads/8/5/4/6/85468970/chapter27.pdf>.

⁵⁰ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire; the United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1971), I and Louis A. Pérez Jr, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 126.

American-Cuban-Filipino War,” published in *History Teacher* 29 (May 1996). Other works include, Ephraim K. Smith, “William McKinley’s Enduring Legacy: The Historiographical Debate on the Taking of the Philippine Islands,” in James C. Bradford, ed., *Crucible of Empire: The Spanish-American War and Its Aftermath* (Annapolis, 1993), Hugh DeSantis, “The Imperialist Impulse and American Innocence, 1865–1900,” in Gerald K. Haines and J. Samuel Walker, eds., *American Foreign Relations: A Historiographical Review* (1981). Three works that deal specifically with memory and the “forgetting” of the war are, *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream, 1899-1999*, Stephanie C. Klein, “Unremembering and Re-membering the Philippine-American War through the Composite Bodies of Re-enactment,” *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* 5.2 (2019), and Timothy D. Russell, “African Americans and the Spanish-American War & Philippine Insurrection: Military Participation, Recognition, and Memory, 1898-1904” (2013).⁵¹

⁵¹ A good source for additional works that cover historical memory is *The Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection, 1898–1902: An Annotated Bibliography* (Routledge, 2011). For those interested in Cuban understandings of the War of 1898, see Duvon C. Corbitt, “Cuban Revisionist Interpretations of Cuba’s Struggle for Independence,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 32 (August 1963), also consult Araceli García Carranza, *Bibliografía de la guerra de independencia, 1895–1898* (Havana, 1976), is the single most comprehensive annotated guide to the Cuban historical literature.

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