FROM THE FIELD: NATURE AND WORK ON AMERICAN FRONTIERS, 1876-1909

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In "From the Field: Nature and Work on American Frontiers, 1876-1909," I focus on the experiences of American soldiers in the Indian Wars and the Philippine-American War. With their writing and many other kinds of work, soldiers remade multiple frontiers. I use soldiers' diaries, reports, field books, and letters to argue for the centrality of ideas about nature to the debates that define the long Progressive Era: debates about what kind of empire, if any, America should have, and about what it meant to be modern, or to make "progress." Soldiers stationed in the field engaged with nature in surprising and complicated ways. To them, the environment could be many things, sometimes all at once: the site of hard physical labor, a set of obstacles to be cleared, scenery to be appreciated, or the source of scientific specimens for collection and study. Ultimately, my dissertation argues for the importance of examining the histories of nature and empire together.

In recent decades the New Western History has rewritten our understanding of American settlement and American expansion. The stories we tell and teach have themselves expanded beyond the experiences of explorers and settlers to include a fuller picture of the history of the

American West. But this scholarship has consistently overlooked soldiers or oversimplified them. My project pushes historians to take American soldiers seriously—to see them not simply as agents of empire (though they were certainly that), but also as complex individuals: workers and writers who occupied a critical place in the construction of American ideas about nature and empire at the turn of the twentieth century. They allow me to inject an environmental perspective into the transnational history of this period, and a transnational perspective into the period's environmental history.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Amy Lee Kohout is an environmental and cultural historian of the long Progressive Era. She received her B.A. in history from Yale University, and her M.A. and Ph.D. from Cornell University. Before graduate school, Amy worked in environmental organizing, international development, and wilderness education. These experiences continue to inform her teaching and her scholarship.

For Nanny

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I began graduate school, I never imagined that my dissertation would cross the Pacific. And while I've remained here in the United States to conduct my research, the soldiers I study have led me to some surprising places: the Surgeon's Quarters at Fort Verde State Historical Park, and the old wagon ruts that run alongside the road that leads east out of town; the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, where an army surgeon's papers brought me to an archive of bird bodies; the Fort Sill Apache Cemetery, where the boom of artillery practice sounded around me as I visited Geronimo's grave; and St. Louis, where, 1904 World's Fair map in hand, I wandered both present-day Forest Park and the surrounding neighborhoods looking for what had once been Arrowhead Lake.

I found the soldiers I study in a range of archives: the United States Army Military History Institute (USAMHI), the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution Archives, the Newberry Library, the National Archives, the Missouri History Museum Archives, the Center for Southwest Research at the University of New Mexico, the New York Public Library, and Yale University's Sterling Memorial Library. The archivists I met at these institutions were incredibly helpful, and I would like to thank, in particular, Dennis Northcott, Jaime Bourassa, and Molly Kodner at the Missouri History Museum Archives. A great conversation with John Aubry at the Newberry helped direct my research, and Diane Dillon, Anna Brenner, and Chris Cantwell made me feel so welcome while I was in Chicago. And at USAMHI, I learned the meaning of "hooah!"

Sheila Stubler, the ranger at Fort Verde State Historical Park, gave me a private tour of the grounds and shared research materials gathered by past park employees. At Fort Sill, First Lieutenant Jonathan Peters was kind enough to talk with me about the rhythms of life on a

military post. And I owe a huge thank-you to Christina Gebhard, Brian Schmidt, and everyone at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History's Division of Birds. On my very first trip to the Division, I was invited to share in a feast of holiday party leftovers, and the warmth I experienced on this trip had me excited to return. Christina, Brian, and I collaborated on a grant for a digital project connecting the papers of Edgar Mearns with the birds he collected, and the opportunity to work with them on this project (supported by the Smithsonian's Web Advisory Group and the COYPU Foundation) meant that I was able to learn far more about the birds themselves. Brian fielded all sorts of questions from me about collecting practices past and present, and Christina even spent a full day teaching me to skin and stuff a bird of my own, a blackbird that is now part of the Smithsonian's collection. This dissertation project is both different and better because of Christina and Brian. (And of course, any errors, especially on the bird stuff, are my own.)

This project would not have been possible without the financial support I received from a range of institutions. My research has been generously supported by the Cornell University History Department, the American Studies Department, the John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines, the Society for the Humanities (which supported me to take a birding course at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology), the Graduate School, and the Newberry Library. The feedback I have received from readers, fellow panelists, and listeners at the Cornell History Department Colloquium, the Cornell Science and Technology Studies Research Group, the North American Labor History Conference, and the annual meetings of the American Society of Environmental History, the History of Science Society, and the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association has been incredibly helpful.

Several individuals helped to make the financial support I have received stretch further

and, perhaps more importantly, made traveling for research anything but solitary. I can't say enough how much it meant to me to be able to combine research with visiting friends I don't see often enough. It's possible that the Bribriesco Family's move to St. Louis started this whole dissertation project in motion. Thank you to Alex, Brooke, Ava, Liam, and Mittens (and later, Marissa), for enthusiastically hosting me and my sweet dog, Boh, on multiple trips to St. Louis. Thank you to Jill and Scott MacVicar, Ali and David Scrymgeour, Paul Christensen and Smita Venkat, and Dan Nugent and his dog Hudson, for hosting me in their homes while I conducted research. And points to Paige Atkinson for providing an Adirondack farm getaway early in my grad school career. Josh Champagne and Nicole Durkin have my gratitude for hosting me for whole weeks at a time, but the prize goes to Maddy Fleisher and Matt McKenzie, who let me move into their guest room for two months in early 2013. Thank you, friends, for making room for me, and for supporting my work in this way.

Other friends helped by taking care of my dog while I traveled. Thank you to Kate Horning, Ryan Edwards, Matts Fibiger, Morgan Ruelle, Berk Esen, Josi Ward, Mari Crabtree, Jackie Reynoso, and Maria Fitzpatrick for showing Boh such a good time in my absence. And my parents, Charles and Mary Kohout, deserve a special thank-you for welcoming Boh to the their home (and giving him lots of treats) while I traveled for research and conferences.

Ithaca and Cornell have become home to me over these last seven years, and my graduate school community—formed over beers at the Chapter House after colloquium, and through coursework, teaching, reading groups, and writing groups—is the hardest part to leave. (Leaving might be a little easier because folks like Daegan and Talia Miller, Kate Horning, Mari Crabtree, Maeve Kane, and Tom Balcerski have already left Ithaca, and Josi Ward, Catherine Biba, and Susana Romero will leave when I do.) In particular, I want to thank Historians Are Writers!, a

reading and writing group that has been the center of my intellectual community. Thanks, Daegan Miller, Aaron Sachs, Heather Furnas, Josi Ward, Sarah Ensor, Katie Proctor, Melissa Gniadek, Laura Martin, Matts Fibiger, Joe Giacomelli, Molly Reed, Chad Randl, Rob Vanderlan, Jackie Reynoso, Christy Croxall, Tina Post, and so many other HAW!ers, for teaching me what generous, critical conversation can sound like.

I've found myself saying out loud to grad students early in the program that everyone should have a Daegan Miller. Of course, this is impossible, because there's only one. And I was lucky enough to have him a few years ahead of me in the program to show me the way. (And not just the way to surf rock and grilled ramp pizza.) Daegan is a dear friend, generous reader, and beautiful writer; he's the kind of scholar I want to be, and a friend I hope I'll have forever.

I have been known to describe graduate school as a kind of "choose your own adventure," and I feel lucky every day to have had the support, mentoring, and friendship of my committee to aid me in navigating grad school's twists and turns. I can't imagine a better advisor, mentor, or friend than Aaron Sachs, and this project owes so much to his encouragement over seven years of lunches, and to his extensive comments on everything I've written in graduate school. Sara Pritchard's influence—on this project, and in my life—is clear to me, too. Sara introduced me to Science and Technology Studies, and our work together paved the way for my engagement with natural history and museum studies. She models for me what it means to be an interdisciplinary scholar, and her feedback on my work (even while on sabbatical) has resulted (I hope) in arguments that are stronger and clearer. In some ways, Eric Tagliacozzo is responsible for the reach of this project. In a course on modern Southeast Asia, he pushed me to write a paper that might relate to my other interests, and suddenly I was exploring ways to connect representations of American nature at the 1904 World's Fair with ideas about Philippine

forestry. That paper opened up the possibility of pursuing more linkages between the American West and the Philippines, and pointed me toward the questions this dissertation explores. I am so grateful to Aaron, Sara, and Eric for their support, and for the ways they've modeled for me what it means to be wonderfully engaged scholar-teachers. I also want to thank Barb Donnell, Katie Kristof, Judy Yonkin, and Kay Stickane in the History Department for all they do to support graduate students.

The Cornell Roundtable on Environmental Studies created opportunities for conversations with Cliff Kraft, Paul Nadasdy, and Nancy Menning, and I am grateful to the Cornell Summer College for introducing me to Joan Jacobs Brumberg, and allowing me to work more closely with Stephen Frug and Jenni Lieberman.

Josi Ward, Maeve Kane, and Mari Crabtree provided crucial comments on very rough drafts of some of these chapters when we participated in a dissertation writing group together in 2012-2013. And Kate Horning has been reading things for me pretty much since our very first day of graduate school. But more than that, I'm grateful for these women and their presence in my life. Everyone should be so lucky to have friends like these in grad school—and beyond. I also want to thank Jenna Tonn and Megan Shields Formato for including me in a panel they put together for the 2013 History of Science Society meeting. That experience generated a different sort of dissertation writing group, grounded in accountability and support. Our spreadsheets, writing retreats, and Skype check-ins helped produce the pages that follow, and I know they'll help us to produce many more.

Maddy Fleisher, Josh Champagne, Kate Haber, and Dorian Needham have done a lot of listening over the last seven years. I am so grateful for their friendship, encouragement, and support. Thank you for believing that I would get here, even when I was having doubts.

I would like to conclude by thanking my family: my parents, Charles and Mary Kohout, my brother, James (who will always be Jimmy to me), and my Aunt Mary, Uncle Bob, and cousins Bob, Kate (and her family), and Ed. Most of the non-work-related trips I've taken over the last seven years have been to see you. Your love and encouragement have energized me when I've most needed it. And I strongly believe that February Turkey Dinner is a holiday all families should adopt. I didn't fully realize this until I sat down to write the introduction to this dissertation, but there are so many echoes between our family history and the questions I'm exploring in my work.

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Introduction

Dr. Edgar Alexander Mearns, an army surgeon and amateur ornithologist, was born in Highland Falls, New York. So was my grandmother. Mearns was born in 1856; my grandmother, seventy years later, in 1926. Highland Falls is the town right next to the United States Military Academy, and both Mearns and my grandmother would have interacted with West Point cadets and army personnel. They were children as war approached: for Mearns, the Civil War; for my grandmother, World War II.

Nanny actually grew up in the West Point cemetery — her father was the caretaker, and they lived in a cottage on the grounds. When I was ten, we took her back to see it all — the cemetery and the house, used now as an administrative office, the cadet chapel where she and my grandfather were married, the high school they both attended. I remember the gravestones. I don't think I dwelled on the idea of my grandmother as a girl my age, playing hide-and-seek among the headstones of Custer and Merritt.[1] I think about it now, though. What did she make of those markers, of the bodies in her backyard? I can't ask her now; she's lost those memories, and also the words to explain them.

Edgar Mearns was raised in Highland Falls. He learned to hunt and trap in its fields and meadows. He became interested in the natural world—birds, in particular. And this interest carried him all over the neighborhood and further afield in search of new-to-him species, in pursuit of new specimens to prepare and study.

My interest in Mearns has nothing to do with Highland Falls, but I find myself wondering sometimes, did he and Nanny cover some of the same ground, wander similar terrain generations

[1] I'm sure even the idea of cemeteries as a place where a girl might play makes more sense to me because of Aaron Sachs's work. See Aaron Sachs, *Arcadian America: The Death and Life of an Environmental Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

apart? It's a nice idea, this faint connection I can trace between my work and my family. He, learning to collect specimens, developing his knowledge of natural history during the Civil War and its aftermath; she, experiencing childhood during the Depression, surrounded by soldiers, some of them in the ground, others training for a war that loomed increasingly closer.

Nanny's memories have been sliding away slowly over the last several years. But until recently, each Thanksgiving, I would get out thick manila envelopes filled with old photos, her photos, and ask her to tell me about them. Partly, it was a way to talk to her once it became more difficult to carry on a conversation. With pictures in front of us—familiar pictures, pictures of things she'd lived, people she'd loved—we had something to talk about. And as both an aspiring historian and her eldest granddaughter, I wanted to know.

So many of these pictures were taken in the West Point cemetery. There's one picture in particular that I love: Nanny, in what looks like an airman's bomber jacket and hat, in front of the West Point cemetery house. Maybe the jacket belonged to her brother, or maybe it was Pop-Pop's.

"Pop-Pop" is what I called her husband, my grandfather. He served in the Philippines during World War II, and then came home and married my grandmother. They'd been high school sweethearts. He died in 1985, when I was three. I grew up hearing about a book, a diary of sorts that contained a record of his part in the war. He'd been a flight officer in the Pacific—the man in charge of dropping bombs while the pilot flies the plane. And when we moved Nanny into an assisted living facility a handful of years ago, my dad found the book, tucked into a box with other special things: the deed to my grandmother's house (we'd been looking for that), and a few letters from Nanny's brother. "I am certain I am coming home," he'd written. He was killed in '44, shot down over Germany.

The book was a gunner's manual, mostly instructions, with a few scattered illustrations of angles and sightlines drawn in by my grandfather. The last five pages contain his notes from the missions he flew: dates, descriptions of the ordnance dropped — some cluster bombs, a phosphorous bomb; a few details about the close call that earned him a Purple Heart. It is concise; just the facts. And then, next to the entry for Pop-Pop's last mission on August 15, 1945, there is a one-word sentence written in parentheses: "(Hallelujah.)"

My dad told me that Pop-Pop never talked about the war, but it certainly shaped him, made him focus on the life he returned to—returned for. Because not everyone came home, not everyone had the opportunity to trade battlefields for the meadows and cornfields beyond my grandparents' backyard.

Mearns grew up and became a soldier, and he, too, traveled halfway around the globe and made it home again. He was an army surgeon, and he served in the Indian Wars in the 1880s, at army posts all over the American West, and later completed two tours of duty in the Philippine Islands in the first decade of the twentieth century. He collected natural history specimens everywhere he served. After he returned, he continued collecting, even going with Theodore Roosevelt on his Smithsonian-sponsored expedition to Africa in 1909. He's not famous, unless you count the bird species named for him, but like Pop-Pop, he was a good soldier. When Mearns died in 1916, he left behind books, boxes of them, records of his service with the army, but also records of a different sort: field books, and an archive of birds, thousands of them, collected from Highland Falls, but also from all over the world.

And Mearns's birds—all of a sudden, really—made me think of Nanny and Pop-Pop's butterflies. They hung in a frame on the wall behind the dining room table in their house when I was growing up. The butterflies were real—captured, carefully pinned, and preserved—but from

a distance, the framed collection looked like a painting, butterflies in flight. Up close, though, it was clear that they were actual butterflies, paused forever behind the glass. When I think of those butterflies, I don't remember them as specimens. I see their colors in my head—so many shades of gold, hues of blue—and I see the lightness of it all, the possibility of movement somehow preserved in the artistry of the arrangement. The frame was hung high; I had to look up to see the butterflies, delicately, eternally immobilized above the dining room table. I have that table in my little house on the lake. But there's nothing on the wall above it.

Mearns's birds are mostly in drawers now, organized taxonomically and integrated into the enormous collection at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History's Division of Birds in Washington, D.C. Resting on their backs, feet crossed, they are sorted by species and separated from each other, the only link between them the identity of their collector, the handwriting on their tags. As they lie now, their individual places along the through-line of Mearns's life and work are hard for a visitor to see. But the line is still there, even if it winds up and over cabinets, down aisles, and through drawers of specimens, who wait to be studied, to be understood, or maybe, for their individual stories to be recovered.

I know very little of the story of my grandparents' butterflies. I mostly know how they affected me, how they continue to affect me. Now they hang in my uncle's dining room, so I still see them at family get-togethers. And when I look at them now, I see so much more than blues and golds, more than bits and pieces of my childhood reflected back to me. I see parts of the broader history I'm working to tell. I see the history of natural history in American culture, a culture that first gave Edgar Mearns a childhood hobby, and then offered him purpose, an occupation that he carried with him everywhere his professional military obligations required

that he go.[2] And I see Pop-Pop—the flight of these winged creatures echoing somehow his own time spent as a soldier high above the Philippines so long ago—and I wish I'd had the chance to really know him, wish he was here for me to talk to about the project I devoted myself to long before its resonances with our family's stores had become clear.

It might seem strange to begin this way, with Nanny's cemetery childhood and Pop-Pop's gunner's manual, with my grandparents' butterflies and Dr. Mearns's birds. But my larger project is exactly about the way the past is a tangle, about the way histories—and historiographies—often examined separately are actually intertwined. We know this, of course. Take my grandparents' butterflies, for example. These individual butterflies flew once; I am not enough of a *Lepidoptera* specialist to be able to tell you if they flew in the same, or similar places, and the collection offers the viewer very little to aid in figuring out exactly when they were alive. They were captured, killed, and collected; remade into specimens through the expertise of their preparers.[3] Perhaps they were killed as part of a commercial enterprise, to be arranged and sold to people like my grandparents.[4] Or perhaps they were at one time part of a larger collection, studied, or simply admired, appreciated, before being framed just so and making their way to my grandparents' dining room wall. Encountered in any one of these places, the butterflies are likely peripheral to the actors or the arguments at the center of any number of stories. But if the story is about the butterflies, they suddenly serve to link the landscapes where

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[2] I must confess that I also see Elnora Comstock, heroine of Gene Stratton-Porter's *A Girl of the Limberlost* (1909), in which Elnora collects moths in order to pay for her schooling. See Gene Stratton-Porter, *A Girl of the Limberlost* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1909).
[3] On nineteenth- and early twentieth-century butterfly collecting, see William Leach, *Butterfly People: An American Encounter with the Beauty of the World* (New York: Pantheon, 2013).
[4] On commercial natural history enterprises in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Mark Barrow, "The Specimen Dealer: Entrepreneurial Natural History in America's Gilded Age," *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 33, No. 3 (Winter 2000), pp. 493-534.

they lived, the practices, processes, and people who transformed them from living creatures to preserved specimens, and anyone who ever noticed them there on the wall, including me. But the point isn't simply to tell a different story; it is to consider what we might get from telling the story differently, from repositioning its center, or its point of view.

Soldiers are my butterflies. Though they figure into many stories, particularly the stories I am most interested in—stories about the American West and environmental history—soldiers aren't often at the center of these narratives. My project takes them down off the wall, and places them at the center of a story that is about both American nature and American empire. Doing so reclaims the complexity of soldiers' experiences as agents of empire, but also as actors who did more and thought about more than the tasks they performed in the service of the state.[5]

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[5] I appreciate, in particular, Paul Kramer's articulation of "imperial history" in the December 2011 issue of the *American Historical Review*. Kramer outlined the methodological differences between the history of American empire and imperial history: while the former may work to define and delineate the physical and temporal boundaries of a particular kind of power, the latter is "a way of seeing." Moving beyond empire to the imperial offers opportunities to reimagine regions and networks, to reframe the ways we think about the sites we study. I see this framing as encouraging us to examine the complexities of imperial actors, imperial processes. Imperial histories explore connection, circulation, and relationships, rather than limits and borders. "One of the cognitive advantages of thinking with the imperial," Kramer writes, "is that it represents a large-scale, non-national space of historical investigation that frames questions about long-distance connection and interaction" (1351). But the imperial can also be personal. Ann Stoler writes that her edited volume, *Haunted By Empire*, "explores the familiar, strange, and unarticulated ways in which empire has appeared and disappeared from the intimate and public spaces of United States history; how relations of empire crash through and then recede from easy purview, sunder families, storm sequestered spaces, and indelibly permeate—or sometimes graze with only a scarred trace—institutions and the landscapes of people's lives" (1). I appreciate the way the imperial can "crash through and then recede"; this sense of the messiness of empire, of the complexity of the actors experiencing and enacting the imperial, rings true to my reading of the soldiers I study. See Paul A Kramer, "Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World," *American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (2011): 1348-1392 and Ann Laura Stoler, ed. *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Duke University Press, 2006). Several scholars are doing work that fits into these articulations of what imperial history might be. See, for example, Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions In an Age of U.S. Imperialism.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), which examines the relationship between empire and the domestic gaze through a sustained

Recentering a Progressive Era story on soldiers' experiences creates space for their words and their work to matter, and for us to see just how soldiers participated in the construction of American ideas about the natural world.[6] Soldiers wrote extensively about the landscapes of their service. But soldiers didn't just describe nature; they worked in it, with it, and often against it. To soldiers, the environment could be many things, sometimes all at once: the site of hard physical labor, a set of obstacles to be cleared, scenery to be appreciated, or the source of scientific specimens for collection and study.[7] I track the different ways that soldiers in the American West

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consideration of women photographers; Penny Edwards, *Cambodge: The Cultivation of a Nation, 1860-1945* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), in which Edwards looks at the role of both the French and Khmer elite in the formation of Khmer-ness, paying particular attention to complicated people who negotiate the boundaries of French colonial systems and local or traditional ideas and practices; see also Aaron Sachs, "The Ultimate 'Other: Post-Colonialism and Alexander Von Humboldt's Ecological Relationship with Nature," *History and Theory* Vol. 42, No. 4, Theme Issue 42: Environment and History (Dec. 2003), pp. 111-135, in which Sachs argues against a totalizing postcolonial treatment of Humboldt, and instead for a more complex, nuanced reading of Humboldt as both an agent of empire, and as an important critic of imperial forces. Sachs suggests that seeing Humboldt as only an imperial agent makes it impossible to see the ecological perspective his scientific work helped him to develop. I am also inclined also to point to work on empire and imperialism in American Studies, specifically Donald Pease's and Amy Kaplan's edited volume, *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), but will avoid simply saying, "On imperialism, see" because of Russ Castronovo's "On imperialism, see…Ghosts of the Present in Cultures of United States Imperialism," *American Literary History*, Vol. 20, No. 3, Fall 2008, pp. 427-438. Castronovo examines the way the Pease and Kaplan volume has been wielded to refer to a particular (historical) moment in American imperialism, and suggests that American Studies scholars continue to examine the way imperialism shapes the present moment and the work we do in it.

[6] I find discussions about the periodization of the Progressive Era to be incredibly productive. I particularly appreciate the way Rebecca Edwards approaches late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century periodization. She argues for a "long Progressive Era" and for thinking through what we get from focusing on the continuities present in the period between the Civil War and the reforms of the 1910s (6-7). See Rebecca Edwards, *New Spirits: Americans in the Gilded Age 1865-1905* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[7] My focus on how American soldiers wrote about the nature they worked in is certainly inspired by Conevery Bolton Valencius's *The Health of the County: How American Settlers Understood Themselves and Their Land* (New York: Basic Books, 2002). Valencius draws on settlers' letters and diaries to link the language settlers used to make sense of both their bodies and their new homes. Some of her key sources are doctors; I didn't realize when I began this project that one of

and the Philippine Islands engaged with their environments, and I argue that soldiers, through their words and their work, helped to shape American ideas about nature in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

But more than simply repositioning the narrative or making room for a more complicated picture of soldiers' words and work, recentering Progressive Era narratives on soldiers makes visible linkages that, at least in other tellings, have been harder to see. Precisely at the time in United States history when most people were becoming more removed from nature than ever before, soldiers were uniquely positioned to understand and construct nature's ongoing significance for the work they were doing, and for the nation as a whole. When we think about the environmental history of the Progressive Era, we often focus on national parks, preservation, and conservation.[8] But these decades also mark the rise of formal American empire; American

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the historical actors anchoring my study of soldiers' notions of nature on multiple frontiers would be an army surgeon. But in addition to looking at how soldiers described their environments, I am also interested in how they engaged with the natural world. I am interested in thinking about soldiers as workers, and as such, have been influenced by Thomas Andrews's notion of "workscapes," and by the ways Richard White and Benjamin Cohen have explored the links between nature, labor, and knowledge. See Thomas Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); Richard White, "'Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?': Work and Nature," in William Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place In Nature* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1996); and Benjamin R. Cohen, *Notes From the Ground: Science, Soil, and Society In the American Countryside* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[8] When historians tell the story of the origins of modern environmental thought in the United States, the narrative often centers on John Muir (Sierra Club founder and advocate for the preservation of public lands) and Gifford Pinchot (key proponent of conservation, head of forestry under Theodore Roosevelt). As the story goes, both men were responding to the massive changes occurring in the latter part of the nineteenth century: industrialization, urbanization, and technological innovation. Their work to popularize their causes helped develop a broad environmental consciousness among educated, white, middle-class Americans. Foundational texts in environmental history, such as Roderick Nash's *Wilderness and the American Mind* (first published 1967, 4th ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Hans Huth, *Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957); and Samuel Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890–1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), affirm this

ideas and debates about nature evolved alongside discussions about the meaning of frontiers, about whether — or what kind— of empire America should have, about what it meant to be modern, to make "progress."[9] Soldiers stationed in the field were at the center of these questions,

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basic narrative. This narrative works on a number of levels, but as several historians have demonstrated, relying heavily on Muir and Pinchot to tell the story of preservation and conservation might narrow our focus too much. We also need the history of native dispossession as a precursor to the federal protection of national park lands, and we need the history of how conservation policies affected local people and practices such as subsistence hunting. See Mark David Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Louis Warren, *The Hunter's Game: Poachers and Conservationists In Twentieth-Century America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); and Karl Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves, and the Hidden History of American Conservation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003). Both Drew Isenberg and Jenny Price shift our focus from public lands to wildlife; Isenberg's *The Destruction of the Bison*: *An Environmental History, 1750-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) links social and economic factors to the ecological decline of North American bison herds, while Price's *Flight Maps: Adventures with Nature in Modern America* (New York: Basic Books, 1999) tracks birds through American culture, and highlights Progressive Era women's participation in Audubon Society campaigns to limit market hunting for plumage used to decorate ladies' hats. And Kevin Armitage, in *The Nature Study Movement: The Forgotten Popularizer of America's Conservation Ethic* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009) argues for broadening our understanding of nature in the Progressive Era to include nature-study as a way that a large number of children and their teachers learned about the world around them. All of these projects help to situate—and complicate—the narrative of national parks, preservation, and conservation we know. And more recent scholarly biographers of Gifford Pinchot and John Muir have critiqued elements of the traditional narrative that pits Muir against Pinchot, preservation against conservation. For example, Char Miller laments the static reading of Pinchot employed in most treatments of his views on conservation. Miller argues that Pinchot's trajectory hinted at more contemporary environmental ideas and strategies in Char Miller, "The Greening of Gifford Pinchot" *Environmental History Review*, Vol. 16, No. 3 (Autumn, 1992), pp. 1-20. See also Char Miller, *Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press/Shearwater Books, 2001). And Donald Worster, in his biography of Muir, *A Passion for Nature: The Life of John Muir* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) adds more nuance to Muir's relationships with Pinchot and to his intellectual development. Neither scholar makes very much of the place of American empire, despite the fact that both Muir and Pinchot traveled to colonial destinations in the early years of the twentieth century. Both, it seems, visited the Philippines. My project keeps our attention on these foundational decades in American environmental history, but argues for shifting our focus in a different direction, to the interplay between ideas about nature and ideas about empire in the long Progressive Era.

[9] In a 2013 *Journal of American History* roundtable, Linda Nash wrote that "By and large, American environmental histories are still written as if the nation's imperial engagements

mattered little to domestic stories, and conversely, as if environments mattered little to the culture and politics of American imperialism" (134). See Linda Nash, "Furthering the Environmental Turn," *Journal of American History* 100 (June 2013), 131-135. Nash isn't wrong; the environmental history scholarship that engages with American empire is rather limited, though it is growing. Ian Tyrell's *Crisis of the Wasteful Nation: Empire and Conservation In Theodore Roosevelt's America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015) is of particular relevance to my project. Tyrell explores the linkages between Roosevelt's conservation commitments and his vision for American empire, and situates Roosevelt's domestic conservation agenda in the context of broader, international conversations about scarcity and natural resource management. This interplay between continental and "Greater America" (which included American colonial possessions) concerns was a significant factor in American state formation in the early twentieth century. For other examples of work at the intersection of environmental history and empire, see, for example, Richard Tucker's *Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical World (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), identifies patterns and traces the pathways of natural resources extracted or exploited by "Yankee" power and capital in contexts of both formal and informal American empire. See also John Soluri, *Banana Cultures: Agriculture, Consumption, and Environmental Change in Honduras and the United States* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005). Soluri argues for the importance of connecting producers and consumers, especially when the distance between the two groups makes for a transnational project. The resulting project tracks the interplay of local growers, multinational companies, military intervention, and environmental change in Honduras's North Coast. Other examples of environmental histories engaged with American empire include Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006); Paul Sutter, "Nature's Agents or Agents of Empire? Entomological Workers and Environmental Change during the Construction of the Panama Canal," *Isis,* Vol. 98, No. 4 (December 2007), pp. 724-754; Ian Jared Miller, *The Nature of the Beasts: Empire and Exhibition at the Tokyo Imperial Zoo* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013) and Greg Bankoff's work, including "First Impressions: Diarists, Scientists, Imperialists and the Management of the Environment in the American Pacific, 1899-1902," *Journal of Pacific History*, 44, 3, 2009, pp.261-280 and "Breaking New Ground? Gifford Pinchot and the Birth of 'Empire Forestry' in the Philippines, 1900-1905," *Environment and History*, 15, 3, 2009, pp. 369-393. On empire and environment more broadly, see Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600-1860.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Greg Barton, *Empire Forestry and the Origins of Environmentalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). See also Tom Griffiths and Libby Robin, *Ecology and Empire: Environmental History of Settler Societies* (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1997), which focuses on the Australian context, Alan Mikhail's *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt: An Environmental History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), which considers the intersection of imperial power and environmental management in the Middle East, and a volume with global reach edited by Christina Folke Ax, *Cultivating the Colonies: Colonial States and Their Environmental Legacies* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2011). But if we broaden beyond projects explicitly focused on empire, and consider scholarship focused on

and they are where my project begins. Certain key ideas were forged in the American West immediately after the Civil War, but the Spanish-American War (1898-1899), and then the Philippine-American War (1899-1902) that followed, brought new environments into play.

These new environments were also new frontiers. And although historians have been thinking with (and thinking against) Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis almost since he articulated it in 1893, his presence in the history of the American West looms so large that we often adopt his periodization even if we might challenge the explanatory power of his ideas.[10]

American transnational environmental history, we have more models and examples to build on. See for example, Samuel Truett, *Fugitive Landscapes: The Forgotten History of the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Daniel Macfarlane, "'A Completely Man-Made and Artificial Cataract': The Transnational Manipulation of Niagara Falls," *Environmental History* 18 (October 2013): 759–784 for transnational environmental history on our northern border; Ian Tyrell, T*rue Gardens of the Gods: Californian-Australian Environmental Reform, 1860-1930* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); and Ian Tyrrell, "America's National Parks: The Transnational Creation of National Space in the Progressive Era" *Journal of American Studies* 46.1 (Feb 2012): 1-21 as well as the responses to his essay in the same *JAS* issue by Paul Sutter, Thomas Dunlap, and Astrid Swenson. I would also characterize Aaron Sachs's work on Alexander von Humboldt, *The Humboldt Current: Nineteenth-Century Exploration and the Roots of American Environmentalism* (New York: Viking, 2006) as transnational environmental history, though it is also a cultural and intellectual history of Humboldt and the place of his ideas in the development of environmental thinking. There is also a growing body of work oriented around Pacific environments, which is certainly transnational, if not always terrestrial! See, for example, David Igler, *The Great Ocean: Pacific Worlds From Captain Cook to the Gold Rush* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Gregory T. Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World: A Global Ecological History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and Helen M. Rozwadowski, *Fathoming the Ocean: The Discovery and Exploration of the Deep Sea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005). I also want to include Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011) in this note on transnational environmental history because while not exactly a work of history scholarship, I think there is much we can learn from Nixon's project, which moves comfortably back and forth across national boundaries to trace echoes and connections between environmental thinkers and writers while also building a sustained commentary on both environmental violence and justice.

[10] The sheer amount of scholarship responding to Turner speaks to the staying power of the narrative Turner offered as a foundation story of sorts for American history. On foundation narratives, see David Nye, *America as Second Creation: Technology and Narratives of New Beginnings* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003). Nye's foundation narratives—stories of identity that explain why, how and who we are, and yet have the power to influence the future in our ideas

Turner's frontier closed in 1890. Turner used the 1890 census to make his argument; others might point to the massacre at Wounded Knee that same year as a marker of the end of the frontier. The West had been won; American settler colonialism had been successful. Many historians have critiqued this framing of the history of the American West, and have suggested that continuity, rather than closure, might be more appropriate.[11]

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and imaginations—are mostly technological, stories of the ax, mill, canal, railroad, etc., stories that took root because of their "*apparent* ability to explain historical events and fuse them with cultural values (12)." Turner's narrative of the frontier as central to the formation of American identity stuck for some of these same reasons, and any historian grappling with the history of the American West—the history of the American frontier—still needs to reckon with Turner. Turner's frontier thesis was compelling, according to John Mack Faragher, because of its presentism; in 1893, Turner was "speak[ing] directly to the sense of crisis enveloping the intellectual discourse of the nation" (38). In announcing the end of an American era, Turner's essay contextualized the disorder of the end of the nineteenth century and labeled it transitional, pointing towards future progress, success and stability. See Faragher, "Introduction: 'A Nation Thrown Back Upon Itself': Frederick Jackson Turner and the Frontier" in Frederick Jackson Turner, *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: The Significance of the Frontier in American History, and Other Essays*, 1st ed. (New York: H. Holt, 1920 and 1947, Frederick Jackson Turner, and 1994 John Mack Faragher). And so, Turner's thesis became a central part of the history of the West, a history that could be written, perhaps, because it was "over." For one overview of the place of Turner in the scholarship of the twentieth century, see "Beyond the Agrarian Myth" and "New West, True West" in Donald Worster, *Under Western Skies: Nature and History in the American West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[11] The New Western History revisited Turner's arguments about the frontier, and debated the frontier—was it a place? was it a process? could it be both?—as well as whether its "closure" was an appropriate way to read Western history. Some historians, most notably Patricia Nelson Limerick, argued instead for continuity. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are not so different, said Limerick. The West needed a new paradigm, she suggested, and maybe it could be conquest. See Patricia Nelson Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*, 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 1987). Other historians identified additional problems—Turner's frontier was vague and ever shifting. Donald Worster preferred to focus on the West as a specific, well-defined place. See Worster, *Under Western Skies*. But some historians were more sympathetic to Turner. Faragher argued that there was a case for discontinuity, and agreed that "the West and the nation entered a new historical phase around the turn of the century" (7). See Faragher in "Introduction," Turner, *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner*. And William Cronon, Jay Gitlin, and George Miles, in their edited volume, *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), present a rather more redemptive reading of Turner. Sure, there was much he'd gotten wrong, but he did pay attention to the processes that Westerners experienced in the nineteenth century. "His most compelling argument about the frontier was that *it repeated itself*," they wrote in their opening

Indeed, even if we concede that there is something significant about this way of marking time, of marking a change, the American frontier did not end in 1890; in fact, it moved. And more specifically, if we understand a frontier to be, as Howard Lamar and Leonard Thompson defined it, "a territory or zone of interpenetration between two previously distinct societies," then it was American soldiers, men enacting the desires of their federal government, who made the Philippines an American frontier when they arrived there, defeated the Spanish, and then fought Philippine forces to establish control over the archipelago as an American colony.[12]

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essay, "Becoming West: Toward a New Meaning for Western History" (6). The New Western History did important work to revisit and destabilize old notions of the American Western History, and created room for a more expansive—and more critical—picture of the people and processes that transformed the region. This has made the resulting projects increasingly more difficult to characterize. Rather than offer a limited list of examples of the kind of work the New Western History may have encouraged or inspired, I will instead direct the reader to Elliott West's bibliographic essay, "Thinking West," in *A Companion to the American West*, edited by William Deverell (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), where West makes clear how difficult it can be to categorize scholarship that deals with the American West. But the New Western History seems to have been a mostly continental project; American empire did not yet figure into ideas about the American frontier, despite the fact that the project of expansion into the West was certainly an imperial project. In some ways, it is Kerwin Kline's *Frontiers of Historical Imagination,* a study more about the narrative Turner crafted and the ways Turner can help us to think about the work of constructing history than about the frontier itself, that might create some room to think about the expansion or reproduction of American frontiers beyond the California coast. See Kerwin Lee Klein, *Frontiers of Historical Imagination: Narrating the European Conquest of Native America, 1890-1990* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997). As we'll see, arguments about the continuity of American expansion were quite compelling to turn-of-the-century actors — soldiers, politicians, businessmen, maybe even fairgoers. But the New Western History doesn't seem to have properly reckoned with the violence of expansion and conquest. In the years since the New Western History, there has been a growth in scholarship working to position violence at the center of ideas about frontier, empire, and American identity. See, for example, Karl Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn: A Borderlands Massacre and the Violence of History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008); and Ari Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling Over the Memory of Sand Creek* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013); and Ned Blackhawk, V*iolence Over the Land: Indians and Empires In the Early American West* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[12] Howard Lamar and Leonard Thompson, *The Frontier in History: North American and Southern Africa Compared* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 7. I'm actually

Some of these soldiers had served on Turner's frontier years before, and they carried those experiences with them across the Pacific, further from their homes, and even further afield. "Frontier" is literally an expansive term. As sites of potential expansion—desired expansion, even—frontiers are placed in time, identifiable by the possibilities they possess. Wherever "the frontier" may be now, it will not always be there. The temporality of "the field" is more variable. Some fields are always fields; others are only temporary. Sometimes the field is a specific place, the name an indication of the kind of work that will happen there. In the context of scientific work, "the field" exists in relation to, or because of its distance from, the lab or the museum.[13] The field is where data, samples, or specimens are collected; it is away from the place where scientific study takes place. While it is a specific place, its boundaries are blurry, set by the range

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comfortable with a broader definition of frontier than Lamar and Thompson use (for them, a frontier requires territory, at least two groups of "initially distinct peoples" and then the process of their interaction). Perhaps it is a testament to the power of the frontier concept that we now also use it to describe the blurry borders and negotiations between ideas and even fields.

[13] On conceptualizing "the field" in the context of the history of science, the place to start is Robert Kohler, *Landscapes & Labscapes: Exploring the Lab-Field Border in Biology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), and Kohler with Henrietta Kuklick, "Introduction" to special volume of *Osiris* on Science in the Field (1996), in Vol. 11, pp. 1-14. See also Jeremy Vetter, "Cowboys, Scientists, and Fossils: the Field Site and Local Collaboration in the American West," *Isis*; an International Review Devoted to the History of Science and Its Cultural Influences 99, no. 2 (2008): 273-303. Jeremy Vetter's edited volume, *Knowing Global Environments: New Historical Perspectives On the Field Sciences*, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2011) contains several helpful essays that consider several different kinds of fields and fieldwork. On the relationship between field stations and universities and museums, see Philip J. Pauly, *Biologists and the Promise of American Life: From Meriwether Lewis to Alfred Kinsey* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Mary P. Winsor, *Reading the Shape of Nature: Comparative Zoology at the Agassiz Museum* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991); and Jenna Tonn, "Biology Building: Making Space for the Life Sciences at Harvard University, 1870-1930." Ph.D. dissertation in progress, Harvard University. On collecting from further afield, see Camilo Quintero Toro, *Birds of Empire, Birds of Nation: A History of Science, Economy, and Conservation In United States-Colombia Relations* (Bogotá, D.C., Colombia: Universidad de los Andes, Facultad de Ciencias Sociales-Centro de Estudios Sociales y Culturales (CESO), Departamento de Historia, 2012); Robert Kohler, "Finders, Keepers: Collecting Sciences and Collecting Practice," *History of Science* Vol. 45 No. 4 (December 2007), pp. 428-454; and Jim Endersby, *Imperial Nature: Joseph Hooker and the Practices of Victorian Science* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008).

of the material being gathered. In a military context, "the field" can function similarly, as a place apart from an army post. But the field can also be a battlefield. And when the field is a battlefield, we know its boundaries—maybe not during the battle, but certainly afterward.

American soldiers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were most likely to be on or in fields that were also frontiers. And the different ways that "field" can be deployed—field as battlefield, field as site of scientific practice, both as sites where different kinds of fieldwork occurs—illuminates the complex identities that some soldiers inhabited and performed, as well as the interplay between ideas about and experiences of both empire and the natural world. One soldier, in particular, Dr. Edgar Mearns, conducted many kinds of fieldwork—as a post surgeon, as a naturalist, as an officer in combat, as a specimen-collector. Other soldiers pursued interests in ethnography, linguistics, natural history, and autobiography alongside the work the army assigned. While their physical labor remade frontier landscapes, their words performed important work, too, both in scientific fields and in the writing they did to describe the landscapes they labored in to their families and to the nation.

Through their military careers, American soldiers linked frontiers separated by the Pacific Ocean. Those who had served in the Indian Wars before receiving orders to report to the Philippine Islands had a frame of reference for frontier army work. But even those soldiers too young to have served in the American West drew on an established set of cultural ideas about what the West had been like in order to make sense of the new landscapes and people they encountered, and the imperial work they performed. These soldiers moved back and forth across the territorial boundaries that seem to divide some of our contemporary fields of historical inquiry, and their complex interests encourage scholars to pursue the connections between fields such as the history of science, imperial history, military history, cultural history, and

environmental history. Using American soldiers to guide me, I follow soldiers from the West, across the Pacific to the Philippines, and home again. I also follow them as they do both military and scientific work, and as they make observations about nature and the work of empire on multiple American frontiers. Linking these landscapes—and the wars fought in them—as soldiers did reveals exactly how tangled the histories of American nature and American empire actually are: the language of wilderness appreciation creeps into the varied, violent work of war; natural history collecting practices are visible in the techniques used to manage Apache people; and soldiers' ideas about the imperial work of emptying frontier landscapes informs the ways these same soldiers describe the beauty and possibility of these landscapes to their families, and to broader audiences as well.

While connecting the American West to the Philippines may seem novel now, it wasn't at the turn of the twentieth century. Soldiers' experiences linked these landscapes, but politicians, businessmen, and ordinary Americans who lived during the Progressive Era made these connections, too. And nowhere was the tangle of nature and empire more evident than at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.[14] This fair celebrated the centennial of the Louisiana Purchase, and

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[14] On American world's fairs, see Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984) and Robert Rydell, *Fair America: World's Fairs in the United States*, (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000). On expositions and empire, see Marieke Bloembergen, and Beverley Jackson, *Colonial Spectacles: The Netherlands And the Dutch East Indies at the World Exhibitions, 1880-1931* (Singapore University Press, 2006); David Brody, *Visualizing American Empire: Orientalism and Imperialism in the Philippines* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010); Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism*, especially chapter 7, "The Missing Link"; and Paul Kramer, "Making Concessions: Race and Empire Revisited at the Philippine Exposition, St. Louis, 1901-1905," *Radical History Review* (1999) 73: 74-114. On the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair specifically, see also James Burkhart Gilbert, *Whose Fair?: Experience, Memory, and the History of the Great St. Louis Exposition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009) and Nancy J., Parezo and Don D. Fowler, *Anthropology Goes to the Fair: The 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

its planners paid special attention to the fruits of American expansion, both across the continent and further west, across the Pacific. One of the fair's most popular exhibits was its Philippine Exposition, a forty-seven acre fair within a fair that displayed the potential of the United States' newest possession. Of particular interest were the archipelago's natural resources. With the rest of the exposition centered on commemorating the addition of the American West to the nation, the parallels between successful continental expansion in the nineteenth century and the possibilities the Philippines presented in the twentieth century were clear. (Interestingly enough, fair narratives downplayed the role of American soldiers in doing the work that "won" the West, even as exhibits celebrated the products of that labor.) But although these arguments were prominently displayed, fairgoers, like soldiers, were sometimes critical. Just as American soldiers were not simply agents of empire, Americans who attended the fair were not universally accepting of the stories they encountered on display.

Concluding in St. Louis provides an opportunity to examine the American West and the Philippines, at least as refracted through the imaginations of exposition planners and museum curators, side by side. American soldiers understood the linkages between these landscapes. Now fairgoers could move back and forth between representations and replicas of the American West and the Philippines, too. The history of American ideas about nature is therefore more than a continental story. We need the history of American empire—of soldiers' imperial work, of their environmental encounters—to more fully understand the range of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century ideas about the natural world. Soldiers' work and their words make it possible to inject a transnational perspective into the environmental history of the Progressive Era, and an environmental perspective into the period's transnational history. But their words also make it possible to recover these men as individuals. These men were significant in part because they

were soldiers, but recentering our consideration of the Progressive Era on soldiers also forces us to think in more complicated ways about what it meant—and what it means—to be a soldier.

Chapter 1: "I Have Seen Enough of These Splendid Countries": Ambivalence and the Frontier Army

> You have never been stationed in a country as mean as that at Powder River. Tongue, where the post is to be, is bad enough, but has more cottonwood on [the] opposite side than at Powder. You may count on the miserable Yellowstone, out of God's world, as your future home.
>
> Samuel Ovenshine to Sarah "Sallie" Ovenshine
> August 11, 1876[1]

Ovenshine was camped with the Fifth Infantry on the Yellowstone River. And though even the word Yellowstone calls up otherworldly views and fantastical geological features, Ovenshine found nothing to celebrate in his experience of the West, not all that far from the boundaries of the newly established national park.[2] Over and over again, Ovenshine repeated his characterization of this region — remote, desolate, and uninspiring— in his letters to Sallie, who lived with their children in the home they had made at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

It is not hard to feel Ovenshine's sadness over their separation filter back into his descriptions of the places he encounters. Reading them, I wonder if any place apart from Sallie could possess hope or beauty for Samuel. "The only world we can have at such a place as this will be what we ourselves can make…It is as miserable [a] part of the U.S. as we could get into—that is as far as I have seen," he writes.[3] Sallie's letters back recognize the nature of the country, but her tone is less dismal: "…I would not care so much if we were to be up in that

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[1] Samuel Ovenshine to his wife, Sallie Ovenshine, August 11, 1876, Personal Correspondence, 1874, 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, United States Army Military History Institute (USAMHI), Carlisle, PA.

[2] Yellowstone National Park was formally established by Congress in 1872. See Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 4th edition, 2001) and Aubrey L. Haines, *The Yellowstone Story: A History of Our First National Park* (Yellowstone National Park, WY: Yellowstone Library and Museum Association, 1977).

[3] Samuel Ovenshine to Sallie Ovenshine, August 11, 1876. Personal Correspondence, 1874, 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

country, if I could join you in any reasonable time. What I most desire is to be where you are, I don't much care where that place is."[4]

The pages Samuel and Sallie sent back and forth are numbered and dated, an acknowledgment that the difficult terrain their words traversed—up mountains, down rivers—might delay a letter, disrupt the conversation. These letters followed the same path Ovenshine and the Fifth had taken from Leavenworth, the same path Samuel would take to return. Ovenshine's "disheartening" prospects find expression in the "miserably barren" country that surrounded him, far from his family and the rhythm and routines of service at an established army post. But the distance, though difficult, wasn't a new challenge for Samuel, and neither was the West. He'd already been a soldier for fifteen years, and had fought throughout Indian Territory against the Apache, Arapaho, and Cheyenne people who lived there. Perhaps the distance had always been hard; or perhaps something not in these letters made it harder. In 1876, Sallie and Samuel had been married for twelve years, twelve of the fifteen years Samuel had been in the army.

The letters he sent down the river and across the plains to Sallie are more than sweet words to his beloved.[5] They are also the words of a seasoned soldier, grappling with the conditions of his work, the work of the frontier army. Ovenshine's observations and his emotions show us the West, but from a perspective we rarely look from: that of the soldier.[6]

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[4] Sallie Ovenshine to Samuel Ovenshine, July 29, 1876, Personal Correspondence, 1874, 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

[5] "With my heart and soul full of love for you," he writes, and she, "I fall in love with you over again every time…" Samuel and Sallie Ovenshine, correspondence, July 13, July 22, August 11, 1876. Personal Correspondence, 1874, 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

[6] I appreciate the work of Sherry Smith here, particularly *The View from Officers' Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991). Her work focuses on how officers (and their wives) in the frontier army thought about native people and their work. I'm interested in exploring what happens when we incorporate soldiers' understandings

The history of the American West has traditionally focused on the westward movement of settlers: pioneers who packed up everything and set out for the frontier. These stories—of people moving west for land, for gold, in pursuit of possibility—were what Frederick Jackson Turner had in mind when he offered his famous "frontier thesis." For Turner, the frontier made America: "Up to our own day American history has been in large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West."[7] He understood it as a process, an encounter between savagery and civilization that occurred over and over again, an interaction that yielded a supposedly democratic (non-European) American identity. The West steadily—inevitably, for Turner—became America, even as the actual frontier line skipped and jumped through the diverse terrain of Indian Territory. Soon, the frontier was hard to find. The (white) population of the American West had reached a density that indicated settlements and civilization where before, according to Turner, newcomers had found wilderness and savagery. And in 1893, before a gathering of historians just outside the grounds of the World's Columbian Exposition, Turner declared the process complete, the frontier over: "The frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history."[8]

And opened the next—a period, presumably, where the new nation would mature, solidifying its power and place in the world. The close of the frontier signaled the start of the age of empire. Or so one story goes. Frederick Jackson Turner's arguments about the growth and development of the United States are still with us, though most historians agree that his thesis

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and interpretations of Western landscapes into a historiography that has traditionally focused on the experiences of (white) settlers, and has in recent decades broadened to consider the experiences of other Wests and westerners.

[7] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: The Significance of the Frontier in American History, and Other Essays*, 1st ed. (New York: H. Holt, 1994), 31.

[8] Ibid., 38.

turned out to have less explanatory power than he claimed. But the notion of the frontier —not simply as a process, but as a place and time—has proven remarkably resilient. It is an argument that makes the West central to the nation, an argument that acknowledges the spirit and labor of those pioneers. But the Turnerian narrative accomplishes much through omission. More recent histories of the American West have begun the work of locating some of the pieces—and the people—that are missing.

Some historians have argued not simply for repopulating Western history with everyone else who was there—native people, migrant laborers, nonwhite settlers—but for a complete reframing of this story. Rather than concede the "closing" of the frontier, Patricia Nelson Limerick has asked how our understanding of the West would change if we recognized that nothing ended in 1890, that Turner's narrative offered a false conclusion to an ongoing story about the West and its people, its resources, and its battles. Limerick has suggested that reading Western history as a narrative of conquest (and contestation) rather than a story of settlement yields more continuity and strikingly less closure than Turner's frontier framing.[9] I tend to agree.

But in both readings of the West, soldiers are overlooked—or at least oversimplified. The Turnerian focus on celebrating American pioneers erases, in many ways, the organized work of

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[9] Limerick's *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (1987) announced the New Western History– in theory, a radical break from Turner's frontier thesis and a potential way forward for historians interested in telling complex stories about the West and all of the people who helped to shape it. These historians questioned the usefulness of the Turner thesis, arguing that it did not describe what actually happened in the West. Limerick lambasted Turner for his limited focus on agrarian pioneers, his mistaken sense of the significance of 1890, and for his definition of the frontier as a process, rather than a place. Limerick proposed a new framework for the West, the framework of conquest. There is no "closing" of the frontier here: Limerick worked to debunk the Turnerian conception of a break (in 1890 or elsewhere), and argued for a more continuous reading of the West. "Deemphasize the frontier and its supposed end, conceive of the West as a place and not a process, and Western American history has a new look" (26-27). See Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest*. For more on the New Western History, see also Worster, *Under Western Skies* and Cronon, Miles, and Gitlin, *Under an Open Sky*.

soldiers employed by the nation to protect settlement communities and expand the role of the state. Limerick's emphasis on the processes of conquest and the experiences of the conquered does not ask many questions of the conquerors, though the outcomes of their actions are more visible when approached from this perspective. There are more stories of the West now — more Wests, even — and scholars continue to explore the experiences of non-white, non-male, non-agrarian residents of the plains, the mountains, and the coastal West. But there's still very little about soldiers in this assemblage of stories—very little about their experiences and their actions on the frontier.

There may have been more room for soldiers in the older historiography of the American West. For example, Bernard DeVoto began *The Year of Decision 1846* (1942) with the claim that his purpose was "to tell the story in such a way that the reader may realize the far western frontier experience, which is part of our cultural inheritance, as personal experience."[10] And William Goetzmann, in *Exploration and Empire: The Explorer and the Scientist in the Winning of the American West* (1966) noted in his introduction that in his treatment of the explorer, "I have been continually conscious of him as a man."[11] Though focused on a narrower narrative of American expansion, earlier scholars of the American West did tell soldiers' stories. And these stories matter.

What soldiers like Samuel Ovenshine thought about the West they encountered (and sometimes remade) during their military service matters because of their complex places in these landscapes. Soldiers serving at frontier outposts occupied a kind of hybrid position in frontier landscapes: temporary, but not tourists; stationed in these landscapes, though not stationary.

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[10] Bernard De Voto, *The Year of Decision 1846* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1942), 4.
[11] William Goetzmann, *Exploration and Empire: The Explorer and the Scientist in the Winning of the American West* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966), xiv.

They moved West, sometimes with their families, and made homes and lives at army posts. But they weren't settled there. They lived with the realities of their places within the command structure: new orders could arrive anytime. In some ways, they were placeless, grounded instead in routine and protocols, in communities defined by rank and regiment.[12] Their views of the West — especially this part of the West, so near to Yellowstone's "wonderland," so splendid in accounts sent eastward by travelers and pioneers — are different from the perspectives that often dominate nineteenth-century historiography. And the things they wrote, the stories they told, reveal not simply agents of empire, carrying out the work of conquest and colonization, but also thoughtfulness, variance, ambivalence, even, about both their assigned tasks and the landscapes of their service. These soldiers offer a more nuanced picture of how the West was "won" — with weapons, but also with words.

Samuel Ovenshine's service on the Yellowstone was part of the Indian Wars. We group them together now, this series of clashes between native groups and settlers or soldiers representing the United States, but this label is more of a category than a title. In many ways, collecting the history of these conflicts together as the Indian Wars serves to elide the details, the individual acts of aggression and transgression that are important for any understanding of the eventual (though not inevitable) confiscation and occupation of native lands. And yet, to speak of the Indian Wars all together is also to push the violence of American expansion to the center of

[12] For a demographic profile of the frontier army's officers and enlisted men in the second half of the nineteenth century, see the second chapter, "The Postwar Army: Command, Staff, and Line," pp. 10-43, in Robert Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891 (*New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1973). See also Edward M. Coffman, "Army Life on the Frontier, 1865-1898," *Military Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Winter, 1956), pp. 193-201; and Brian Linn, "The Long Twilight of the Frontier Army, *The Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Summer 1996), pp.141-167.

the story—a story that often focuses on westward movement and pioneer settlement rather than bloody battle and forced displacement.

Concerns about lands in the western portion of the continent —as resources with productive capacity for the United States, as abundant cultural capital for a still-new nation, as sites of both home-making and home-destroying — are a key part of understanding the nineteenth-century American West. These ideas, expectations, and interpretations of Indian Territory are central to both the shape of what we call the Indian Wars and to American ideas about the West, and thus, the nation. Ned Blackhawk has argued that "despite an outpouring of work over the past decades, those investigating American Indian history and U.S. history more generally have failed to reckon with the violence upon which the continent was built."[13] Too often we tell the story of the West as if it were inevitable, unstoppable, the only possible way things could be. And this kind of narration is one way of naturalizing the violence of the Indian Wars, of reading these conflicts as events leading to a foregone (and positive) conclusion: American victory. Blackhawk suggests—and I agree—that we have more work to do to understand the central role of violence in the making of America. But in recovering the violence in the story of the American West, it is important that we also recover the range of soldiers' work—and their ideas about it—so that we situate military violence in its cultural frame. Just because American victory was the outcome of the Indian Wars does not mean American soldiers were of a single mind about the work they were doing. And though American soldiers helped to win that victory, fighting Indians in the West wasn't all they were doing.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, American soldiers built roads over challenging country and constructed temporary camps and new outposts. They implemented

[13] Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land*, 3.

federal Indian policy, which often meant enforcing the reservation system. Sometimes soldiers accompanied surveyors and scientists through new, hard terrain. "Few people have a fair conception of the amount of work the United States army performs on the frontier," wrote Will Barnes, who began his army service as a private in the United States Signal Corps. "The man who enters the United States Army…will find that he works as hard as any day laborer who ever lived, and often harder. Almost the entire work of improvement falls on the troops, and this, with constant field service, escorts, and scouting, keeps them continually on the go."[14] In the frontier army, soldiers' work was difficult and varied, much of it focused on living in or moving through a demanding landscape. But their labor did more than rework the West's physical features; it also produced in soldiers an intimate, working knowledge of the American West.

On the Yellowstone

On July 12, 1876, less than three weeks after Custer and the Seventh Cavalry fought the Lakota and lost at the Little Bighorn, and only one week after the news of Custer's defeat reached the world via the telegraph at Bismarck, Dakota Territory, Ovenshine's company and several others from the Fifth Infantry left Fort Leavenworth for the Yellowstone River.[15] Though some soldiers had been stationed in western territories during the Civil War, the strategy in the West was different than what many American soldiers had experienced in the East. The army established a series of small forts across the Western landscape, most of them perpetually understaffed, and positioned "as much in response to demands of settlers for markets and visible

[14] Will C. Barnes, "In the Apache Country," *The Overland Monthly*, N.S. 9 (February 1887): 172-180, in Peter Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars 1865-1890 Volume 1: The Struggle for Apacheria* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2001), 622.
[15] Samuel Ovenshine, Entry for July 12, 1876 in a diary labeled 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

protection as to strategic considerations."[16] Though the substantial number of soldiers ordered to the Yellowstone after Little Bighorn was the exception, rather than the rule (more often, small groups of soldiers swept and scouted their assigned patrol areas, using frontier posts as jumping-off points), the work of Ovenshine's company was certainly representative of the frontier army experience: *hard*. Robert Utley highlights the particular challenges presented by unfamiliar (and often, unforgiving) Western landscapes: "Vast distances and climatic extremes combined with sparsity of natural foods, fuel, and water to make geography a more formidable foe than the Indian. Few navigable streams afforded access by steamboat, as in the East, and supplies had to be hauled hundreds of miles by wagon."[17] Ovenshine's letters to Sallie describe grueling days of road-building in extreme weather conditions: one day so hot that Ovenshine couldn't touch the metal of his belt, the next day gray, damp, and rainy. From his regiment's second camp out from Yellowstone at Rosebud Creek, Ovenshine wrote, "Our company marched with the train to assist it to day. The assistance consisted in pushing the wagons up hill, letting them down by ropes, digging roads, fixing crossings and all that nature of work. As we have over 200 wagons, you may know it was no easy task. It was so cold we made fires whenever it was possible and no one expressed any desire for ice water. We left camp at 5 A.M. and got into camp about 5 P.M. taking 12 hours to make ten miles. All this is owing to the train[,] as roads for it have to be made."[18]

The marching Ovenshine described was part of a strategy developed in the immediate aftermath of Custer's losses. On July 22nd, Congress approved the construction of two posts on

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[16] Robert M Utley, *The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), 41.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Samuel Ovenshine to Sallie Ovenshine, August 9, 1876, Personal Correspondence, 1874, 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

the Yellowstone, and additional troops were ordered to the region in pursuit of the Lakotas (Sioux). Crook, Terry, Miles, Merritt, Otis: all headed for the Rosebud and Yellowstone Valleys with the men they commanded. The Fifth Infantry under Miles, of which Ovenshine was part, marched with a column of soldiers roughly 1,700 strong on August 8 and 9, 1876. This is the march that Ovenshine described to Sallie, as much road-building as marching. On August 10, forces under Terry and Crook unexpectedly converged in the Rosebud Valley following the paths of the Lakotas. Coordinating their efforts, Terry ordered Miles and his men (Ovenshine among them) to the Yellowstone River to prevent the possibility that those they were chasing might flee to Canada. Rain and mud further slowed Crook and Terry's forces, and plans to continue their pursuit — search might be a better word — fizzled. Miles and his men were detailed to the Yellowstone Valley for the winter months, and the challenge of transporting wagons and supplies added to the hardship of these orders.[19]

The nineteenth-century West was a place filled with the work of reshaping the landscape: agrarian families worked at farming and home-making while others toiled for low wages in mines, along railroads, and providing services to those who came West for these opportunities. More recent scholarship has begun to examine work and workers in the West.[20] Thomas

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[19] Utley, *Frontier Regulars*. See, in particular, Chapter 15, "The Conquest of the Sioux, 1876-81," 267-295.

[20] See, for example, Susan Lee Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000); Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1989); Truett, *Fugitive Landscapes*. Also of note are recent books by environmental historians Mark Fiege and Richard White. Fiege's *The Republic of Nature* works to bring environmental history questions and approaches to larger narratives of American history. His chapter titled "Iron Horses: Nature and the Building of the First U.S. Transcontinental Railroad" focuses on the labor of men and machines in remaking the West. See Mark Fiege, *The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United State*s (Seattle, Wash: University of Washington Press, 2012). And Richard White's *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: Norton, 2011), looks at

Andrews defines a workscape as "a place shaped by the interplay of human labor and natural processes." He explains that while a landscape suggests a fixed view, "a scene that can be taken in at a glance," a workscape is necessarily dynamic, "a constellation of unruly and ever-unfolding relationships." Andrews's workscape foregrounds the ways that people and landscapes work on each other, as well as the work required to construct and maintain particular landscapes.[21] Andrews uses this concept to explore the workscapes of Colorado miners, but it is useful on a much broader scale.

What happens when we think about the post-Civil War West as a workscape? And what happens when we think about soldiers as workers? First, we make room for an understanding of the West that encompasses many kinds of work and workers, a West with room for both settlers and soldiers, for pioneers and poorly paid laborers. Second, the West becomes dynamic: a workscape of movement, labor, and thus, transformation. Forests become fields, valleys and rivers become transportation routes, trees become logs become homes. And third, this framing of the West as a workscape pushes us to think about other kinds of work: about not simply the physical labor of remaking the West, but about the participation of nineteenth-century Westerners in constructing popular understandings of it.

Gilded Age capitalists and railroad men (with a section on railroad laborers) to examine the interplay between the state, corporations, and workers as they all took part in the transformation of the American West. For an overview of western labor history and historiography that demonstrates the range of laborers earning attention in more recent decades, see James Gregory's "The West and the Workers, 1870-1930" in Deverell, *A Companion to the American West*, 240-255.

[21] See Andrews, *Killing for Coal*, 125. In arguing that too often the Ludlow Massacre is considered in a vacuum, and in working to re-contextualize this moment in American history, Andrews offers an environmental history of the relationships between industrial capitalism, coal seams, and miners. He presents a nuanced picture of the ecology of mine workscapes, of the links between nature and labor. I find Andrews's "workscape" particularly useful as a way to foreground labor — especially soldiers' labor—in a space like the American West.

Writing about the West—personal experiences of overland travelers, letters to family members, how-to-style instruction manuals for others hoping to make the trip, short and long fiction about this new, exciting, dangerous place—was everywhere.[22] And though settler accounts seem to have earned more attention, soldiers' writings are also part of the record of the West. Like so many others who found themselves far from family, soldiers wrote letters home. Officers, like Ovenshine, who'd brought their families west to army posts, sent letters back to the fort while in the field. But many officers wrote more than letters. They drafted official prose: telegrams, orders, reports. Some kept diaries. Many wrote up their reminiscences at the end of their careers. Some memoirs were published; others were just for family. They wrote because the army encouraged them to record the West, but also because they had something to say. Historian Sherry Smith highlights that army officers "were among the most educated, articulate, and informed people in the West."[23]

Ovenshine, though not a product of the military education system, fit this description. He'd been en route to a career in law before the Civil War, and enlisting changed his course. In his letters to Sallie, Samuel offered candid comments about his professional obligations. Perhaps Ovenshine had once held optimistic views about the work of the army, about what the West could offer him. If the frequency of these letters is any indication, we have only a fraction of the

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[22] For histories of settlement that both draw on and engage with nineteenth-century epistolary and writing practices, see Annette Kolodny, *The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984); Elliott West, *The Contested Plains: Indians, Goldseekers, and the Rush to Colorado* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); John Faragher, *Sugar Creek: Life on the Illinois Prairie* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); Valencius, *The Health of the* Country; Brian Roberts, *American Alchemy: the California Gold Rush and Middle-class Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

[23] Sherry Smith, *The View From Officer's Row*, xiv. In this book, Smith focuses on what officers and their wives were writing about Indians and federal Indian policy. She limits her scope to "the comments the officers made in the context of their work as soldiers rather than as explorers, scientists, agents, or other roles they sometimes took on" (p. xv).

pages Ovenshine sent home during his years of military service.[24] Earlier correspondence might have been hopeful, might have embraced the possibilities of new terrain, new landscapes. But not these. In a letter dated August 11, 1876, Ovenshine wrote, "It is also thought likely that our Regt. will get stuck at some of the Sioux Agencies on the Mo. River—all fearful places—as these agencies are on or will be turned over to the Military. I am disgusted with this whole business and were it not for bread and butter would get out of the Army. I can tell you more about things if I ever see you."[25] "This whole business" was the everyday work of the frontier army: finding, fighting, and forcing Indians into more contained spaces under more regulatory control. These letters that remain between Samuel and Sallie Ovenshine are from July, August, and September of 1876. As Ovenshine looked ahead to winter on the Missouri, the fate of Custer and his men at Little Bighorn can't have been far from his mind.

The Black Hills

Though not technically in the Black Hills, Custer's Last Stand cannot be understood without considering the region's geology. Disputes over access through and rights to the Black Hills — and whatever gold might be found beneath them— shaped federal policy and military engagement with the Lakotas and their allies. In fact, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer had led an 1874 expedition to the Black Hills in order to scout a location for a new fort and to explore possibilities — especially the geological possibilities — of this territory, despite

[24] Ovenshine's papers do not contain any more letters from that fall or winter. In fact, the next folder in his papers at the United States Army Military History Institute contains materials pertaining to his service in the Philippines in 1898-1899. There aren't any letters from his earlier service, either, though a document titled "Grandpa Ovenshine's Indian Campaigns" lists the highlights of his career, which included his presence at the surrender of Sitting Bull at Fort Buford in 1881. "Grandpa Ovenshine's Indian Campaigns," Autobiographical and Biographical Outlines of His Military Career, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[25] Samuel Ovenshine to Sallie Ovenshine, August 11, 1876, Personal Correspondence, 1874, 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

treaty arrangements that affirmed Lakota ownership of this land.[26] Looking back on these days from 1891, Colonel John Gregory Bourke, an aide to General Crook, described the "smouldering discontent among the Sioux [Lakotas] and the Cheyennes, based upon our failure to observe the stipulations of the treaty made in 1867 [1868], which guaranteed to them an immense strip of country, extending, either as a reservation or a hunting ground, clear to the Big Horn Mountains…Reports of the fabulous richness of the gold mines in the Black Hills had excited the cupidity of the whites and the distrust of the red men." Indeed, Custer helped create this hype, reporting, according to Bourke, that the Black Hills contained gold "from the grass roots down."[27]

In 1875, the federal government, through the Office of Indian Affairs, authorized a scientific expedition to the Black Hills to assess its mineral wealth at the same time that Oglala and Brule delegations made their way to Washington for meetings about their lands and treaty rights. The scientific expedition was assigned a military escort. While not uncommon—western scientific expeditions were still ventures into contested territory—this pairing illuminates the blurriness of the borders between scientific and military aims. Colonel Richard Irving Dodge, the officer assigned to command the military escort of this expedition, crossed paths with Sioux leaders Red Cloud and Spotted Tail. They were on their way to Washington; Dodge was en route to Fort Laramie to report for his highly publicized assignment. "They say I will have trouble, possibly a fight with northern Sioux who are now in Black Hills," Dodge wrote in his journal on

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[26] See Jeffrey Ostler, *The Lakotas and The Black Hills* (Viking: New York, 2010), pp.38-68 for a discussion of the terms and possible interpretations of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty.
[27] John Gregory Bourke, *On the Border with Crook.* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1971), 241–242. Custer quoted in Bourke, 242. Writing in 1891, Bourke had attained the rank of colonel; at the time of the Black Hills Expedition, he held the rank of lieutenant.

May 9.[28] At Fort Laramie, the expedition was assembled: Bourke was assigned as engineer officer, and Wayne Jenney, a civilian geologist, headed the scientific mission. Dodge's sixteen-year old son, Fred, joined the expedition, and once it was underway, even Jane Dalton (better known as Calamity Jane) was discovered among the group, disguised as a cavalry officer.[29]

The 1875 Black Hills Expedition was an extensive undertaking: five months of route-finding, road-making, and gold-seeking. The military escort included 452 men (and Jane), 376 horses, and 71 supply wagons, and these, "with a proportionate number of civilian employees—not to mention the scientists with their gear—were to be moved together over yawning divides, across treacherous streams carrying unhealthy alkaline water, through thickets, and by some means over a more than 2000-foot rise in elevation into the central hills."[30] From the perspective of Dodge and his superiors, the expedition was an unqualified success: peaceful confirmation of the possibilities waiting beneath the surface of the Black Hills. This expedition "opened up more than 1,500 miles of wagon road, and the scientists and surveying parties had established more than 6,000 miles of horse trail."[31] Though there had been no trouble of the sort Dodge had been warned about, the expedition— its presence a violation of the terms of the 1868 Fort Laramie treaty— made marks on what was, to Lakotas, a sacred landscape.[32]

Black Elk remembered the caravan. He told John Neihardt that "in the spring when I was twelve years old (1875), more soldiers with many wagons came up from the Soldiers' Town at

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[28] Richard Irving Dodge and Wayne Kime, ed., *The Black Hills Journals of Colonel Richard Irving Dodge* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 39.
[29] Wayne R Kime, *Colonel Richard Irving Dodge: The Life and Times of a Career Army Officer* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 195.
[30] Wayne Kime, in introduction to Dodge, *The Black Hills Journals*, 13.
[31] Ibid., 23.
[32] The Black Hills, known to Lakotas as *Puha Sapa* or *He Sapa* (Black Hills or Black Mountains), are home to Wind Cave, where, according to Lakota beliefs, the earth's first humans and buffalo emerged from below the ground. See Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills,* 3-6.

the mouth of the Laramie River and went into the hills."[33] Black Elk remembered Custer's expedition from the previous year, and also the way that "yellow metal" made soldiers and settlers "crazy." "Our people knew there was yellow metal in little chunks up there;" he said, "but they did not bother with it, because it was not good for anything."[34] But it was exactly what Dodge, Jenney, and Bourke were looking for.

Colonel Dodge filled several diaries on this expedition (picture a reporter's notebook: small, with a stiff cardboard backing and pages that flip up allowing a person to write on the reverse side). Army officers were expected to document their observations when traveling in new country; Dodge knew he'd have a report to write, as the whole purpose of this trip was to get the lay of the land, both above and below ground. And the journals he kept cover this ground and more: a recounting of each day's route and events, important milestones in Fred's experiences riding and shooting and hunting, reflections on Custer's earlier trip through much of the same territory, frustration with the reporters accompanying the expedition, and more personal details: that the gypsum in the water made him ill, the quality of his sleep, the view from his tent. May 30: "Had to build a corduroy & bridge over 200 feet long. It took three solid hours of work."[35] June 11: "Wagons had a hard day—"; and June 12: "Bog, bog, all the time- 16 mules on a team, & as many men as could get hold prying & lifting the bed out of the mud."[36] And later that afternoon: "Today we struck for the first time - Gold - undeniable unmistakeable. It is only a

[33] Black Elk and John Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux*, (Albany: SUNY Press, 2008), 63. The first edition of *Black Elk Speaks* was published in 1932.
[34] Black Elk and Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks,* 62.
[35] Dodge, *The Black Hills Journals,* 52.
[36] Ibid., 81.

little 'show'= but it is gold. "[37] Wayne Kime has painstakingly edited Dodge's journals, making them far more accessible — and legible — to researchers, but I looked at this section in the original journals at the Newberry Library. Something about that line, "undeniable unmistakeable" made me want to see the words in Dodge's hand, "Gold" underlined, both times.

Dodge carefully documented the determination and muscle each mile demanded, and so when I arrived at this entry about gold, *undeniable unmistakeable*, Dodge's underlining of the element — Gold, gold— felt exuberant. Dodge's entry continues, drawing conclusions from this confirmation of wealth in the hills: "In ten years the Black Hills will be the home of a numerous & thriving population, & all the Administrations & Interior Departments cant [sic] stop it. It is not an Indian Country."[38] Dodge's forecast for the region revealed an expectation that the work of the expedition, the mapping, route-finding, and path-breaking they were doing, would ease the way for this "thriving population." Dodge and his men encountered miners who had been drawn to the region by reports and rumors of gold. Their presence was not sanctioned by the federal government, and the military was under orders to remove miners found in the Black Hills. Though aware of these instructions, Dodge chose to interpret his responsibilities as the escort to Jenney and his team of scientists as absolving him from the responsibility to round up miners in violation of federal policy. He didn't have the resources or manpower to perform his duties as commander of the expedition and enforce these instructions, and also, he didn't want to. On June 16, Dodge sent a letter to his commanding officer, General George Crook, in which he offered his vision for the future: "All the power of the Administration cannot keep this country in

[37] See Black Hills Journal #2, Box 1, folder 2, Richard Irving Dodge Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago. In the published volume, see Dodge, *The Black Hills Journals*, 83.
[38] Ibid.

possession of the Indians, and I confess my sympathies are all with the miner and settler."[39] This sense of inevitability, the push of a particular kind of progress, runs through all of Dodge's writing—he wrote it this way, a foregone conclusion, a determining kind of description waiting for fulfillment. Which is not to say that Dodge was uncritical of the path forward.

The following week, he wrote in his journal, "The mail brings us information that the Indian Chiefs have returned from Washington badly snubbed, & in an ill humor, which means war, & the death of a many good men. From the newspaper reports of the conferences, there is no doubt that this end is intended."[40] Here, Dodge hinted at his opinions about the management (or mismanagement) of Indian affairs in the West, a topic he would later write quite forcefully about. Despite his vocal critiques, Dodge's articulations seem to grow out of assumptions about native people as primitive wards of the state, not as autonomous and capable peoples, tribes, nations. He advocated uplift and assimilation into a preordained American destiny rather than room to negotiate for the chance to imagine and shape their own futures.

Dodge had already chosen the kind of narrative he would write, the story he was part of: a linear story of expansion that moved westward across the map, a steadily upward story of progress. "I am very sure that no part of the wilderness is as well known as the Black Hills are now," he wrote to General Crook on September 4, 1875. After all, he was leading the military escort of the team that would make it known. He was most of the way through the five-month expedition, and beginning to turn his attention to report-writing and map-making. In the same letter, he asked Crook if he could supervise the map, rather than handing it off to the engineers.[41] This map accompanied his military report, which Dodge mined for a small volume published in

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[39] Dodge, *The Black Hills Journals*, 105.
[40] Ibid., 107.
[41] Ibid., 206-208.

1876. Dodge explained the book project this way: "It is not my purpose to attempt to follow the expedition in all its windings, its explorations, its labors, its troubles, and its pleasures; but so to sum up the information gained as to give an idea, as perfect as possible, of the nature of the country, its climate, soil, resources, and value."[42] *An idea, as perfect as possible, of the nature of the country*.

For John Bourke, the Black Hills initially provoked "a feeling akin to loneliness." Bourke compared the "undulation of these immense fields" to the "gentle roll of the sea in a time of calm." This ocean-like landscape created by "the erosive action of the numerous streams and their tributaries which course this region" generated "gulches, ravines, and crevices without number" that "in bewildering entanglement so add to the difficulties of passage."[43] Dodge, however, focused on the possibility of this new landscape.

"The scenery is very grand and beautiful," wrote Dodge. "The valley, owing to the number of streams, is a rich green. On each side rise ranges from one to two thousand feet, their tops covered with the dark, thick growth of pine which gives the name 'Black' to the 'Hills.'"[44] Gone is the focus on the work of moving through this landscape. The often back-breaking challenges of route-finding and road-making that were constant concerns throughout the group's five-month journey figure into Dodge's published treatment of this newly reconnoitered landscape only when the details add to the expedition's accomplishments. The labor slips under the text; the words describe landscapes of beauty. "Each portion of the Hills has its own especial

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[42] Richard Irving Dodge, *The Black Hills. A Minute Description of the Routes, Scenery, Soil, Climate, Timber, Gold, Geology, Zoölogy, Etc.* (New York: J. Miller, 1876), 28. Note the difference between Dodge's *The Black Hills* and Dodge's journals (edited by Kime), *The Black Hills Journals.*

[43] John Gregory Bourke and Charles M Robinson, ed., *The Diaries of John Gregory Bourke, Volume 1* (Denton, Tex.: University of North Texas Press, 2003), 171.

[44] Dodge, *The Black Hills*, 25. This quotation seems to be drawn almost directly from Dodge's journal entry of June 9, 1875. See *The Black Hills Journals,* 72.

peculiarities of scenery. The tops of the grand mésas are lovely with long grass and flower-covered slopes, set as it were in frames of the dark green forests of pine. Lower down, the slopes become ravines, then cañons."[45]

Dodge offers a picture that alternates between gentle and impressive: hills robed in flowers "become ravines"; ranges rise to shelter a verdant valley. Dodge emphasizes the view, but the value he sees extends beyond the visual pleasure of this landscape. For Dodge, the scenery held deep development potential for those pioneers willing to labor in this paradise. His vision for this landscape aligned, in some ways, with what Frederick Jackson Turner would later celebrate. This wilderness, thanks to the Black Hills Expedition, was now known — and ready to be put to use. And this knowledge—*an idea, as perfect as possible*—had been constructed with words and with roads. Dodge wrote and built a picture *of the nature of the country*, and his published account, *The Black Hills. A Minute Description of the Routes, Scenery, Soil, Climate, Timber, Gold, Geology, Zoölogy, Etc.*, conveyed that vision to his readers. Of course, others had described these hills before—most recently, Custer, but before that, Francis Parkman had written about "the stillness of these lonely mountains" in *The Oregon Trail* (1849) (though Parkman was describing his 1846 experiences in the Wyoming portion of the Black Hills) and Mark Twain offered up a description of Laramie Peak in *Roughing It* (1872).[46] Twain saw Laramie Peak as "looming vast and solitary," an "old colossus frown under his beetling brows of storm cloud."[47] But in addition to further describing this "hostile Indian country" (Twain's words), Dodge's

[45] Dodge, *The Black Hills*, 49.
[46] Francis Parkman, *The Oregon Trail* (New York: The New American Library, 1961; first published 1849), 192.
[47] See Mark Twain, Chapter IX, "The Black Hills," *Roughing It* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1872), digitized by Project Gutenberg, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3177/3177-h/3177-h.htm, accessed 12 March 2015.

expedition, with its expert scientists, could offer a definitive picture of the possibilities in the Black Hills, and could address the rumors of what might lie beneath them.[48]

Dodge's vision—an assessment of the current condition and future potential of the Black Hills that he shared with the scientific arm of the expedition and with Custer's earlier findings—revised contemporary realities about the Black Hills and their use by the people who, by presence and by formal treaty negotiations, owned this land. In *The Black Hills*, Dodge focused on the future: opportunities for settlement, development, even tourism in an area ripe and ready for American expansion. While he expressed some sympathy for the treatment of native peoples, especially by corrupt officials, Dodge made it quite clear that any value the Black Hills held for Lakota people mattered less than their potential use value for the United States.

And one way to make this case was to argue that the Lakotas weren't actually using the land. This idea, consistent with much of the legal framework for settling the West, that claims could be validated through a very particular kind of improvement, erased Lakota uses — and thus, the legitimacy of Lakota claims. Historian Jeffrey Ostler calls this the "thesis of Lakota nonoccupancy": Lakota people did not live in the Black Hills and only visited occasionally, and thus, might agree (or be forced) to sell or cede them. Key members of the Black Hills Expedition made this argument in their private and public writings, though these sources also offer plenty of evidence to contradict this interpretation of the Black Hills as devoid of sustained Lakota use.[49]

Bourke's personal papers reflect an understanding that openness did not necessarily mean emptiness. He saw and described evidence of Lakota life in the Black Hills, and he wondered at what appeared to him to be their unusual absence. Early in the Black Hills Expedition, he wrote

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[49] Ostler cites the writings of Colonel Richard Irving Dodge, geologist Walter Jenney, and botanist A.B. Donaldson in exploring this idea that the Lakotas didn't actually live in or use the Black Hills. See Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, 88-90.

in his diary, "The absence of Indians means something, in my opinion; none have come near us thus far, altho' it is evident we are now in a part of their country often visited if not permanently occupied by them." *Their country.* Bourke's entry continues: "Great trails have been seen, broad and well travelled, and the indications of a great camp having been here not many months ago can be found in all directions."[50]

Dodge's own writings suggest the active work necessary to construct a version of the Black Hills as an insignificant place for Lakota people. Early in *The Black Hills*, Dodge offered up an anecdote about one of the scientists needing another blanket because his horse was developing saddle sores. This man used a green blanket the group had found wrapped around "dry bones" in an Indian grave.[51] Dodge went on to describe the scientist's discomfort each time the group encountered Lakota people as they traveled — meetings that "occurred so frequently" that the scientist's reaction, which was to "immediately [find] something specially important in another direction" seems, for Dodge, to be worth retelling in his book. Dodge introduced the story with an observation about Sioux burial practice and the significance of the color green: "In almost all of the graves examined by our party, the blankets in which the remains were wrapped were green."[52] Dodge and the expedition regularly encountered Indian people, and, it seems, routinely dismantled (and dismembered) the contents of Indian graves. On June 1st, Dodge confessed that he felt sorry, though he did nothing, when a grave in a cottonwood tree "was rifled by the Doctors of the Expedition (there are two (2) military and several civil Doctors) & the head &all curious articles carried off."[53] If some of this collecting was for science, not all of

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[50] Ibid., 179.
[51] "After some natural hesitation the blanket was appropriated as the Indian contribution to science," wrote Dodge. For the full anecdote, see Richard Irving Dodge, *The Black Hills,* 19-20.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Dodge, *The Black Hills Journals*, 58.

it was. Dodge notes that Dr. McGillycuddy "got the lower jaw, which he proposes to take home as a present for a dear friend to be used as a pen holder."[54] Graves and evidence of large camps, big trails, and regular encounters with Lakota people did nothing to change Dodge's position on the Black Hills as underutilized territory.

After Dodge's anecdote about the scientist's saddle sores early in *The Black Hills,* he shifted his focus to describing the geology, topography, and scenery of the area. While he noted where the party encountered miners, Indians are mostly absent, except below the surface, in the names of streams ("Minne-catta" and in translation, Spear-Fish Creek) and buttes like Devil's ("The Bad God's") Tower. The resources are described in terms of the kinds of use Dodge envisions: "These trees are just the right size for railroad ties, and this forest will furnish enough for all the roads which are likely to be constructed within a reasonable distance in the next hundred years." Dodge continues, in case his meaning wasn't clear: "These poles are also admirably suitable for building small log houses, barns, cribs, etc.; and scattered through the smaller growth are larger trees sufficient to furnish the boards necessary for floors, doors, etc."[55] This is what use — and occupancy— looks like. And if this had happened in the Black Hills, if they really were a home, these signs should be present. Dodge dismissed the possibility that the Black Hills were home to Crow Indians before the Lakota, writing, "If this country had been used as a residence, even thirty years ago, some marks of its occupation would still be visible." Dodge didn't see these marks; he saw only movement, peripheral use for the occasional lodge-pole, the occasional hunting party. In a word: nonessential. He overlooked graves, camps, trails

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[54] Ibid. McGillycuddy, though trained as a medical doctor, also had experience as a topographer, and it was in this capacity that he served on the Black Hills Expedition. For a narrative of McGillycuddy's experiences in the Black Hills, see Cindy Moulton, *Valentine T. McGillycuddy: Army Surgeon, Agent to the Sioux* (Norman: The Arthur C. Clark Company, University of Oklahoma Press, 2011), especially pp.43-65. (Moulton's account does not mention the jawbone.)
[55] Dodge, *The Black Hills,* 101-102.

and treaties, and stated clearly his position on the subject of homeland: ”My opinion is, that the Black Hills have never been a permanent home for any Indians.”[56] It is curious that permanence was part of what made a home, especially given the constant movement of military men—and the increased mobility of Americans all over the continent during the late nineteenth century.

Even Bourke seemed to adopt this thesis in later diary entries. He wrote, “Look where we might, turn where we would, new beauties obtruded their claims upon our bewildered attention, each demanding, each in turn receiving the palm of superiority.”[57] The Black Hills became beautiful scenery in Bourke’s account, picturesque parks that required a photographer to capture their full loveliness so that “the sun-portraits [may] speak for themselves.” Gone is the sense of the Black Hills as Bourke initially described them, “an immense area of country with scarcely a tree to give shelter against the cutting edge of the wintry ‘Norther’, or the fervid rays of the noonday sun.” Some of this shift might have to do with actual changes in what Bourke was seeing. The expedition covered a lot of ground, and it is possible that he found parts of the landscape more compelling, more beautiful. But allowing for changes in the scenery doesn’t explain the erasure of Indian people in his account of these landscapes. Bourke articulated both the land’s under-utilization and its potential in the form of a question. Why, he asked, “have these Black Hills, greater in area than several of the New England states, and which have never been of any value to the nomads who claim them as their own, and are never visited even save at rare intervals to obtain lodge-poles for the Sioux and Cheyenne camps—why have these lovely vales and hills been sequestered from the national domain…?”[58] The Black Hills, in Bourke’s

[56] Ibid., 136.
[57] Bourke, *The Diaries of John Gregory Bourke, Volume 1,* 185.
[58] Ibid., 188.

telling, had become pristine again. No longer "their country," these landscapes were remade as sites waiting for both American appreciation and settlement.

And some Americans were already staking their claims. Dodge encountered miners in the Black Hills who had already been removed and returned multiple times. Meanwhile, the federal government set a January, 1876, deadline for Lakotas to gather at agencies inside designated reservation lands under threat of force. Additional troops began moving into the Plains as spring approached, and many Lakotas and their allies began preparing to fight. At a Sun Dance held on the Rosebud River in early June, Sitting Bull had a vision of American defeat. In the Battle of the Rosebud, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, and their men forced back General Crook and his men. The following week Custer's Seventh Cavalry entered the Little Bighorn valley. Few left alive.[59] Though a clear victory on the battlefield, this particular win solidified the loss of the Black Hills for the Lakotas.[60] At the next treaty negotiation, the United States offered the Lakotas this choice: surrender claims to the Black Hills or the federal government would cease all monetary and in-kind support. President Grant sent the Manypenny Commission to the Black Hills to formalize Lakota compliance with the government's demands. Though fraught (also, illegal—the terms of an earlier treaty required the signatures of three-fourths of adult men for land to be ceded and the Commission had gathered only ten percent), the Commission did as it was asked.[61]

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[59] Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black* Hills, 94-97.

[60] In *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*, Winona LaDuke talks with Gail Smalls, a Northern Cheyenne activist. LaDuke recounts Custer's defeat: "when the American flag went down on the battlefield, the tribes picked it up and counted coup (victor) on the United States. "'I remember hearing the old people tell this story often when I was growing up in Lame Deer,' Gail continues the story. 'And it always ended with the moral that war does not bring peace.'" Winona LaDuke, *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life* (Cambridge: South End Press, 1999), 78.

[61] Ostler describes "an angry Congress" that demanded that the Lakotas relinquish their rights to all territory outside a permanent reservation assigned to them. If they did not agree, Congress would stop allocating resources for the Lakotas, regardless of prior arrangements. Ostler

This agreement created the Black Hills that soldiers like Custer, Dodge, and Bourke described: empty, unused, and ready for American settlement and development. In many ways, their expeditions, their reports, and their published accounts did the work of remaking the West, of enacting the visions painted on those pages of a new West, an empty West, an American West.

In the varied descriptions they offered of Western landscapes, soldiers' words helped to construct the West as an idea. Brutal landscapes became beautiful. Through prose, homelands were emptied. This process of erasure—part of the construction of the American notion of wilderness in the nineteenth century, an idea that persists in policy and cultural attitudes today—is visible in soldiers' writings.[62] Bourke's "feeling akin to loneliness" recedes. Dodge emphasizes wonder over work. Soldiers, like other Western writers, both reflected and produced contemporary cultural ideas about the American West. Their experiences and writings need to be seen as part of the construction of this quite pervasive myth of the West as a garden ready to be occupied—a garden they helped to prepare.

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continues, "Although Congress had abolished treaty making in 1871, most of its members thought it would be unseemly to authorize a unilateral seizure of the Black Hills. They preferred to foster the illusion of assent." See Ostler, *The Lakotas and the Black Hills*, 98-103, for a discussion of the terms proposed and the process by which the Manypenny Commission secured Lakota "support."

[62] On the construction of "wilderness," see William Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness; Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in William Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature. (*New York: Norton, 1995). In this essay, Cronon offers a compelling history of the development of the American wilderness idea. But his discussion of the shift that takes place in the nineteenth century—the transition from the frontier itself to the pursuit of a frontier experience in the West—centers on elite tourists escaping cities for an authentic wilderness vacation. I'm interested in how soldiers are participating in this process of constructing an idea of the West that others—their families, their eastern readers—then encountered. These wilderness ideas weren't only shaped by elites, by explorers, by gentlemen tourists; soldiers contributed to cultural ideas about American wilderness even as they labored in these landscapes.

But not all of their writing fits into this category. In fact, as workers in direct contact with the physical space that supposedly correlated to this idea of the West, they were perhaps best equipped to challenge the mythology of the West. And sometimes they did.

Wonderland

"It is spoken of as a splendid country but Leavenworth will suit me. I have seen enough of these splendid countries. They rarely ever turn out to be what they are said to."[63] Samuel Ovenshine wrote these words to Sallie in late July of 1876. When Ovenshine spoke of the Yellowstone, he meant the Yellowstone River, an almost 700-mile long tributary of the Missouri River that flows northward out of the Rockies, through Yellowstone National Park and then north and eastward across present-day Montana and South Dakota. There, it reaches the Missouri. Though significantly east of Yellowstone National Park, the site Ovenshine was heading toward, a future post at the confluence of the Tongue and Yellowstone Rivers, might easily have been connected with ideas and images of the park, in both the popular and military imagination.

Yellowstone National Park was created by Congress and signed into existence by President Grant in 1872. Yellowstone was to be "set apart as a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people."[64] This designation set a significant preservation precedent, though the decision was less about a commitment to wilderness than it was about limiting certain kinds of private development in the region.[65] Support for the protection of

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[63] Samuel Ovenshine to Sallie Ovenshine, July 25, 1876, Personal Correspondence, 1874, 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[64] United States Statutes at Large, 1872, as quoted in Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 108.
[65] In 1864, Yosemite had been set aside as a state park in California, but Yellowstone was the first park to receive federal protection. On the history of national parks, see Alfred Runte,

Yellowstone grew out of a series of expeditions undertaken to survey the region in 1869, 1870, and 1871, each expedition contributing to the energy spurring on the next. In the summer of 1869, Charles Cook, David Folsom, and William Peterson explored the area, and the following year, Henry Washburn led a larger Yellowstone expedition accompanied by an army escort under Lieutenant Gustavus Doane.

It is spoken of as a splendid country. By whom? Certainly, by Nathaniel Langford. Langford, one of the expedition's members, published a two-part piece in *Scribner's Monthly* the following year titled, "The Wonders of the Yellowstone."[66] Langford's articles described a journey "through a country until then untraveled." The group encountered marvel after marvel, each one surpassing the next: "A grander scene than the lower cataract of the Yellowstone was never witnessed by mortal eyes," he wrote, and then the group reached the upper falls. "The sun shone brightly, and the laughing waters of the upper fall were filled with the glitter of rainbows and diamonds." They'd never seen anything like it. "Nature, in the excess of her prodigality, had seemingly determined that this last look should be the brightest, for there was everything in the landscape illuminated by the rising sun, to invite a longer stay."[67]

National Parks: The American Experience (3rd ed. Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*; and Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness*.

[66] Langford's words reached an audience beyond the *Scribner's Monthly* readership. Other publications reported on the pieces in *Scribner's*, and described sections of Langford's account to their subscribers. (See, for example, pieces published in the *Ohio Farmer, The New England Farmer and Horticultural Register*, and the *Maine Farmer*, among others.) The *Overland Monthly* also published coverage of the expedition. Also, see Louis Crampton, *Early History of Yellowstone National Park and Its Relation to National Park Policies* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1932) for a compilation of documents pertaining to early Yellowstone expeditions and to the formation of the park. Of particular interest is the "Yellowstone Bibliography," pp. 69-75, which details newspaper coverage, lectures, reports, and Congressional discussion of the Yellowstone region.

[67] All quotations from Nathaniel Pitt Langford, "The Wonders of the Yellowstone," *Scribner's Monthly.* 2, no. 1–2 (1871).

The trip wasn't all "rainbows and diamonds," though. Langford detailed the challenges of traveling ("but another name for scrambling") through the terrain, and noted moments of fear in reaction to possible Indian attacks and grizzly bear and mountain lion encounters, though the scariest part of this particular expedition was the disappearance of Truman C. Everts, who lost his way and spent "Thirty-Seven Days of Peril" in the Yellowstone before being rescued.[68] Langford described the "greatest wonders on the continent" in published prose and public lectures. F. V. Hayden, Director of the Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories, attended a Langford lecture and added Yellowstone to the itinerary for his 1871 expedition.[69]

As the Washburn Expedition's leader, Lieutenant Gustavus Doane submitted a report to the Secretary of War, who then shared it with the Committee on Territories of the United States Senate. Doane's report corroborated Langford's assessment of the Yellowstone region as splendid. He described a geyser in Firehole Basin as "the most lovely inanimate object in existence." On waterfalls, he wrote, "Every great cascade has a language and an idea peculiarly its own, embodied, a[s] it were, in the flow of its waters."[70] Doane's report, intended for his military superiors (and perhaps Congress) is filled with measurements, distances, and details. Like Col. Dodge, he paid attention to the region's use value, noting areas suitable to settlement and irrigation, and even pointing out cedars "yielding most beautiful material for small cabinet work, and of a nature susceptible of an exquisite finish."[71] These observations are more common

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[68] "Thirty-Seven Days of Peril" was the title of the account Everts published in *Scribner's Monthly* in November of 1871.
[69] Langford, "The Wonders of the Yellowstone," and Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind,* 111.
[70] Letter from the Secretary of War, communicating the report of Lieutenant Gustavus C. Doane upon the so-called Yellowstone expedition of 1870. United States. [Washington : G.P.O., 1871?]. http://hdl.handle.net/2027/njp.32101079825236. Accessed 8 September 2013 via the Digital Public Library of America, 29, 13 [hereafter cited as Doane Report].
[71] Ibid., 3-4.

at the start of Doane's report; once deep into geyser, sulphur-spring, and mountainous territory, he no longer makes these recommendations. Instead, he focuses on describing what he sees. Even though this is a work (read: official) document, Doane's language slips easily into more lyrical imagery: "Standing on the brink of the chasm the heavy roaring of the imprisoned river comes to the ear only in a sort of hollow, hungry growl, scarcely audible from the depths, and strongly suggestive of demons in torment below."[72] Doane drew on notions of the sublime to convey the scene: "It is grand, gloomy, and terrible: a solitude peopled with fantastic ideas; an empire of shadows and turmoil."[73]

These descriptions painted quite the picture of the Yellowstone region for military and popular readers. Members of both houses of Congress received copies of Langford's "The Wonders of the Yellowstone" and Doane's military report to aid them in deciding to vote on S. 392 and H.R. 764, identical bills that would create Yellowstone National Park. Park supporters worked to aid the bill's passing, including F. V. Hayden, who brought specimens from his 1871 survey trip to display in the Capitol's rotunda, along with sketches by Thomas Moran and photographs by William Henry Jackson. (Both men had participated in Hayden's expedition.)[74]

The bill passed, though not, as Roderick Nash has pointed out, because of a commitment to the "wilderness" idea. Rather, the bill sought to protect Yellowstone's "natural curiosities" from private ownership. Many of Yellowstone's early visitors forecasted the park's use as a

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[72] Ibid., 6. Even the fish are better. Doane celebrated the trout of the Yellowstone region with these words: "They do not bite with the spiteful greediness of eastern brook trout, but amount to much more in the way of subsistence when caught. Their flesh is of a bright yellow color on the inside of the body, and of a flavor unsurpassed." Ibid., 3.

[73] Ibid., 6. For more on the sublime, see Nash, "The Romantic Wilderness" in *Wilderness and the American Mind,* 44-66 and Chapters 1 and 2, "The Sublime" and "The American Sublime" in David Nye, *American Technological Sublime* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994), 1-43.

[74] For a discussion of the bill's introduction and passage through Congress, see Haines, *The Yellowstone Story*, especially Chapter 6, "The New Creation."

place for tourism and scientific study, but not as a place for settlement and agriculture.[75] Even Doane, in the conclusion to his military report, called it an unparalleled "country for sightseers" and also "probably the greatest laboratory that nature furnishes on the surface of the globe."[76] And General William Tecumseh Sherman, in a note accompanying the report, reminded readers who might be swept up in the seemingly fantastical experiences of Doane and his men of the value of these words for those "studying the resources of our new Territories."[77]

Sherman's note described terrain already subdued and ready for exploration and development—an idea that is clearly stated in Doane's report. Of Yellowstone's Indian inhabitants, Doane wrote, "Appearances indicated that the basin had been almost entirely abandoned by the sons of the forest." Doane reported "no recent traces of them," and even offered this popular (if untrue) explanation: "The larger tribes never enter the basin, restrained by superstitious ideas in connection with the thermal springs."[78] Historian Karl Jacoby explained that these erasures were grounded in American ideas about land and property; not actual use. He wrote, "Drawing upon a familiar vocabulary of discovery and exploration, the authors of the early accounts of the Yellowstone region literally wrote Indians out of the landscape, erasing Indian claims by reclassifying inhabited territory as empty wilderness."[79] Dodge did the same with the Black Hills landscape a few years later. Despite evidence to the contrary—well-worn

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[75] For Nash's discussion of the motivations underlying the creation of Yellowstone National Park and of the ways that later actions by Congress to limit railroad development through the park helped to establish Yellowstone as a wilderness worthy of protection, see Chapter 7, "Wilderness Preserved," in Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*.
[76] Doane Report, 37.
[77] William Tecumseh Sherman, in note accompanying Doane Report, 40.
[78] Ibid., 26.
[79] "What this ideology of dispossession overlooked was that Indian migratory patterns were not a series of random wanderings but rather a complex set of annual cycles, closely tied to seasonal variations in game and other wild foodstuffs." See Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature,* 85.

paths in Yellowstone, evidence of large camps in the Black Hills—explorers, army men, and settlers misread these landscapes as devoid of prior use and full of potential.

In spite of its emptiness, the newly established park required policing, and in 1886, the United States Army was deployed to Yellowstone. Though understood to be temporary, the military management of Yellowstone that began during the Indian Wars stretched on for more than three decades.[80] The soldiers deployed to Yellowstone, in particular, found themselves at the intersection of two Wests: a West filled with the hard work of the frontier, and a West that was 'wonderland.'

American frontier soldiers experienced both Wests—and helped to construct them with both their labor and their words. They were raised amidst ideas about what America was and could be — and about the role of the West in those visions. These men were not separate from notions of progress and ideas about the future circulating in American culture in the late nineteenth century. But they didn't universally embrace them, though their professional responsibilities were steeped in an ethos of the inevitability of westward expansion. Soldiers, as representatives of the United States, legitimated settlers' claims to the West with their presence, and often with their actions. But, as Sherry Smith suggested in *The View From Officer's Row: Army Perceptions of Western Indians*, "there was no monolithic military mind."[81] The writings of these men reflect attempts to make sense of the work they were doing, and some even demonstrate compassion for Indians affected by American policy.[82] Although these concerns did

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[80] For more on the army at Yellowstone and what Jacoby calls "the militarization of conservation," see Chapter 4, "Nature and Nation" and Chapter 5, "Fort Yellowstone," in Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature* and Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness*.
[81] Smith, *The View from Officer's Row*, 182.
[82] The same can be said for their wives. The letters, diaries, and memoirs of army wives demonstrate complex and sometimes contradictory ideas about Indian people and frontier army life. See Sherry Smith, *The View from Officer's Row;* Sandra L. Myres, *Westering Women and*

not lead to a full-scale critique of American empire and the worldview sustaining it, they do demonstrate that anxieties about the particular shape of American progress in the late nineteenth century extended beyond the sectors of society where we tend to look for and locate alternative perspectives. Soldiers themselves were unsure of this work.

"A Special Record"

Richard Irving Dodge didn't limit himself to writing about the Black Hills; he spent many of his evenings, even while leading the Black Hills Expedition, working on his first book manuscript, a project based on his years of military experience on the plains.

> When I was a schoolboy my map of the United States showed between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains a long and broad white blotch, upon which was printed in small capitals, 'The Great American Desert--Unexplored.'
>
> What was then 'unexplored' is now almost thoroughly known. What then was regarded as a desert supports, in some portions, thriving populations. The blotch of thirty years ago is now known as 'The Plains.' Like an ocean in its vast extent, in its monotony, and in its danger, it is like the ocean in its romance, in its opportunities for heroism, and in the fascination it exerts on all those who come fairly within its influence.[83]

These words open *The Hunting Grounds of the Great West: A Description of the Plains, Game, and Indians of the Great North American Desert*. Part natural history, part hunting how-to guide, the book was Dodge's definitive treatment of the West as it was, and as he thought it should be. Born of a friendship and collaboration with William Blackmore, an English lawyer and venture capitalist interested in the American West (and in Indians, more specifically), the volume was

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the Frontier Experience, 1800-1915 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982); Anne Bruner Eales, *Army Wives on the American Frontier: Living by the Bugles* (Boulder: Johnson Books, 1996); Michele J. Nacy, *Members of the Regiment: Army Officers' Wives on the Western Frontier, 1865-1890* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000); and Christiane Fischer Dichamp, *Let Them Speak for Themselves: Women in the American West, 1849-1900* (Hamden, Conn: Archon Books, 1977).

[83] Richard Irving Dodge, *The hunting grounds of the great West; a description of the plains, game, and Indians of the great North American desert, by Richard Irving Dodge* ... with an introduction by William Blackmore (London: Chatto and Windus, 1877), 2.

published in both London (1876) and the United States (1877). The American edition carried an alternate title: *The Plains of the Great West and Their Inhabitants, Being a Description of the Plains, Game, Indians, &c., of the Great North American Desert*. Blackmore, an English investor and philanthropist with an affinity for hunting, encouraged Dodge to write this book, and helped see it through to publication.

The book begins with the impact the plains have on a man: "The first experience of the plains, like the first sail, with a 'cap' full of wind, is apt to be sickening." Or at the very least, unsettling. But once that feeling passes, the plains offer a man unique opportunities: "At no time and under no circumstances can a man feel so acutely the responsibility of his life, the true grandeur of his manhood, the elation of which his nature is capable, as when his and other lives depend on the quickness of his eye, the firmness of his hand, and the accuracy of his judgment." Dodge pitches the Great West as a place to be a real man, to be one's best self, to do good work building the nation. "There is no lack of such occasions on the plains."[84]

Or that's how it once was. The West Dodge knew as an officer had disappeared; all Dodge had left was his "special record of a particular time and place." To traverse the plains used to be "the work of a whole summer," he wrote, and groups attempting the route were "lost to the world." In this, of course, Dodge's nostalgia remakes the world he remembers. Though filled with uncertainty and struggle, most of Dodge's adventures occurred within the framework of the army and its web of printed orders, letters, and telegrams— hardly a world of "no mails, no news, no communication of any kind with civilisation."[85]

"Now," Dodge wrote in the nation's centennial year, "all is changed. There is no longer an unknown." He compared civilization to a cuttlefish with incredibly destructive powers. It "has

[84] All quotations this paragraph, Dodge, *The Hunting Grounds*, 2.
[85] All quotations this paragraph, Dodge, *The Hunting Grounds*, 99.

passed its arms of settlements up almost every stream, grasping the land, killing the game, driving out the Indian, crushing the romance, the poetry, the very life and soul out of the 'plains,' and leaving only the bare and monotonous carcass."[86] Civilization did these things, Dodge wrote, but in developing this metaphor, he failed to make explicit his own position in this process. As an officer in the United States Army, Dodge participated in "crushing the romance" of the plains.[87] The nostalgia Dodge expressed for a West he'd helped to reshape through his service, his hunting, even his writing, is a particular kind. Anthropologist Renato Rosaldo called it "imperialist nostalgia," a kind of lament "where people mourn the passing of what they themselves have transformed."[88] For Rosaldo, it isn't that actors like Dodge aren't able to acknowledge their place in these changes, but rather, that they lived with the tension, with complicated feelings about their role in change, in the 'civilizing' process.[89]

Other soldiers, reflecting on military careers spent in the West, articulated similar emotions as they relived memories of their service, especially long after the fact. William H.C. Bowen, of the same Fifth Infantry that Samuel Ovenshine served in, wrote extensively about his military experiences, both in an unpublished autobiography of his army career and in shorter

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[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.
[88] See Renato Rosaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia" in *Representations,* No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring, 1989), 108. Rosaldo explores this idea in the context of his own fieldwork among the Ilongots in the Philippines, and examines his own letters, field journals, and memories to think through moments of imperial nostalgia in his own experience. He writes, "The memories that evoke moods of imperialist nostalgia both reproduce and disrupt ideologies" (121).
[89] Rosaldo describes talking with a missionary who expresses sadness over the ways Ilongot practices have changed—they wear t-shirts now, no one threatens head-hunting, they no longer sing traditional songs—even though these changes are part of her broader religious agenda. And for his part, Rosaldo reads his own letters and finds evidence of imperial nostalgia in his letters. The piece is a thoughtful reflection on what it means to have these feelings. See Rosaldo, "Imperialist Nostalgia," 121. William Cronon also highlights the importance of "frontier nostalgia" in his examination of the origins of the wilderness idea. See Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness," 77-79.

pieces detailing specific battles and campaigns. His papers contain longhand manuscript drafts of "One Trip," an account of an 1880 expedition against Indians who had raided the pony herds of ranchers on the Porcupine River. Bowen was stationed at Fort Keogh that spring, on the Yellowstone River. News of the raid came late in the afternoon, and Bowen's company was ordered to attempt to "overtake the spoilers and recover the stock."[90] Bowen's account is undated, but the appreciation for the bitter cold that creeps into his words suggests that he was home, safe, and warm as he wrote: "A march through the snow on a cold Winter night is not the most cheerful and enjoyable amusement imaginable but after all there is something in it which stirs the blood of the young and keeps it tingling." Still in pursuit the following day, the company encountered a herd of deer, and that evening, the men cooked bacon and venison, "the odors from which were enough to make the ghosts of the dead and gone frontiersmen arise from their graves and join us at the feast."[91] Bowen narrated his company into a thick and glorious past — the spirits of those already departed approve, and are summoned by the spoils of the hunt. He gloried in a lineage he saw himself as part of—the ghosts of those who had gone before, though not the ghosts on the other side of these campaigns. In later writings, Bowen recognized his place in the West's transformation, but also the challenges faced by his opponents.

Charles Rhodes, a career army man who served in the Indian Wars, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine-American War, and World War I, typed up his diary entries for posterity much later in life. In a preface to his entries from his service in the Pine Ridge Campaign of 1890-1891, he acknowledged how the passage of time made him look back fondly at this period of hardship: "Log fires, slumber on hard floors without beds, canned food,—all are

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[90] William H. C. Bowen, "One Trip," Box 1, William H.C. Bowen Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[91] Ibid.

happy recollections, at this later date, of the frontier, now gone forever!"[92] Others recalled "feelings of sadness" even in the immediate aftermath of frontier service. In his unpublished autobiography, "From Reveille To Retreat," Eli Helmick wrote of the "vast progress" that had been made since his service in the West. Much of it was positive, but as Helmick looked down from an airplane over the site of his former service, he noticed that "industry had placed its blighting hand on one of nature's most beautiful spots." Despite the recognition of all that was different, Helmick wrote that he was still able to see the past: "But time could not take away the memories that came back across the decades…It came to me that when we left our first regiment back in the '90s—the historic old Fourth Infantry—we did not realize what a vital part of our lives had been molded into it and by it."[93]

Nostalgia for bygone days, for the memories of military service in remote places, was not limited to recollections of the American West. Walter L. Cutter introduced "Wearing the Khaki: The Diary of a High Private," an unpublished manuscript detailing his experiences serving in the Philippines, in this way: "If the telling of my experiences helps others to recall those sunlit isles as they were in the days that are gone, then my effort has not been in vain."[94] Here Cutter is explicit in his purpose: to assist others in remembering. Cornelius Cole Smith went further, articulating what he brought to the task of documenting the frontier. In "Notes on Tucson," he acknowledged that his work "in the art of writing, might not carry much merit from a literary standpoint." But what he could offer was authenticity—firsthand knowledge of the Southwest. After all, he "spent a good part of his life there, in times called pioneer days," and he claimed

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[92] Charles Rhodes, "Brule-Sioux Diary," Box 1, Charles Rhodes Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[93] Eli Helmick, "From Reveille to Retreat, an Autobiography by Eli A. Helmick, Major General, United States Army, Retired," Box 1, folder 4, pp.56-57, Eli and Charles Helmick Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[94] Walter L. Cutter, "Wearing the Khaki: The Diary of a High Private," Box 1, Walter L. Cutter Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

that he actually knew the people whom better writers described.[95] Smith placed perhaps singular importance on recovering what he believed to be the truth of the frontier, and it seems that he devoted his retirement years to reading multiple accounts of particular battles and campaigns, gathering new information, and assessing the validity of the various stories in circulation.[96] But while this impulse to revisit both his frontier days and the more famous (infamous?) frontier days of others became Smith's focus decades after his service, other soldiers took to collecting the frontier even as their work transformed it.

Col. Richard Irving Dodge did so in words. *The Plains of the Great West* is filled with detailed descriptions of the game and the Indians of the West. Part two, "Game," is a mixture of instruction—the first section is titled "How To Get It"—and description of individual species, their habits, and their habitats. Part three, "Indians," might best be characterized as amateur ethnography: while engaging, it is utterly of its time. Even the structure of the book suggests the fluidity of late-nineteenth-century notions of natural history and anthropology—animal traits and behavior followed by a discussion of Indian characteristics and practices.[97] After *The Plains of the Great West*, Dodge began working on *Our Wild Indians: Thirty-Three Years Personal Experience Among the Red Men of the Great West*, more than fifty chapters of detailed

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[95] Cornelius Cole Smith, "Notes on Tucson," Box 1, folder 1, Smith Cole Family Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

[96] Cornelius Cole Smith's papers, at least, suggest that he devoted his later years to researching and writing about the frontier and its heroes and villains: Gatewood, Cochise, Billy the Kid, Geronimo, etc. His papers contain one of the most detailed maps of the West I've ever seen: hand-drawn and extensively annotated, the map contained references to individual skirmishes (marked by crossed rifles, with more description in a key that stretched across most of the white space surrounding the United States) as well as the multiple names of routes, paths, and roads, as well as important landmarks and topographical features. I've quite honestly never seen anything like it. This map is located in Box 2 of the Smith Cole Family Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

[97] Dodge offers abstract "truths" grounded in anecdotes from his experiences in the West; the focus is on what Indians do, and Dodge often speaks of the generic Indian rather than the cultural practices of particular groups, though he sometimes uses specific examples from his experiences to illustrate his points. See "Indians" in Dodge, *The Plains of the Great West*.

observations and anecdotes about Dodge's interaction with native people, as well as commentary on army life—both general "plainscraft" and specific conflicts. Amidst chapters on religion, death, art, weaponry, and governance, Dodge articulated his position on the treatment of native people by the U.S. government and its agents. He offered strong critiques of the rampant corruption among Indian agents and government officials, as well as of federal Indian policy. He described what happened when treaties were made and not kept, when the food that was promised was not delivered, when corrupt bureaucrats and white "squaw men" gamed the system, and he wholly condemned it. William Tecumseh Sherman wrote the book's introduction and found much to praise in Dodge's "minute and careful study of the social or inner life of the wild Indian of the present day" (Dodge's words, not Sherman's).[98] But Sherman wasn't shy about stating his disagreement with Dodge's ideas and conclusions about the treaty system, the behavior of the federal government, and the character of Indian agents and traders in the West. Sherman's opening letter to Dodge affirmed the government's work in the West, and invited Dodge's audience "to read this book carefully, to the end that public opinion may aid the national authorities to deal justly and liberally with the remnants of that race which preceded us on this continent."[99] Dodge's writing in *Our Wild Indians*, in his earlier books, and in his diary, suggests more ambivalence about the transformation of the West—and specifically, the treatment of Indian people, than Sherman was willing to concede. Granted, his solutions (if they can be called that), read as racist to a twenty-first-century eye. Dodge advocated assimilation and "civilization," and repeatedly characterized Indian peoples as primitive. But he also found value

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[98] Richard Irving Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*: *thirty-three years' personal experience among the Red Men of the great West. A popular account of their social life, religion, habits, traits, customs, exploits, etc. with thrilling adventures and experiences on the Great Plains and in the mountains of our wide frontier* (Hartford, CT: A.D. Worthington and Co., 1890) xi.
[99] William Tecumseh Sherman, "General Sherman's Introduction," dated January 1, 1882, in Dodge, *Our Wild Indians*, xxxix.

in his interactions with native people over three decades of army service—interactions that prompted him to document his observations, to critique federal Indian policy, and to participate in the process of preserving, in some form, knowledge of the "remnants" Sherman wrote of.

And it seems he had an audience. Dodge's work prompted letters from politicians like Henry Dawes and conservationists such as William Hornaday, who wrote to ask about buffalo herds, as well as offers to write about his experiences among the Indians for a children's magazine, though it seems that the drafts he submitted were deemed unsuitable for the magazine's audience. The editor wanted lively stories, but Dodge was offering observations.[100] This mismatch illuminates the different ways in which Dodge was contributing to a body of knowledge about the American West: while *The Black Hills* described the landscape and offered encouragement to potential pioneers, both *The Plains of the Great West* and *Our Wild Indians* described animal behavior and human cultural practices. This emphasis on description of people and animals in decline is linked with the nostalgic laments offered by Dodge and others about the transformations they'd not only witnessed, but had helped to usher in.

Anthropologist Jacob Gruber coined the term "salvage ethnography" to describe the impulse of nineteenth-century anthropologists to collect as much information as they could about people and communities in decline: "Throughout the century and within whatever theoretical framework, the refrain was the same: the savage is disappearing; preserve what you can; posterity will hold you accountable."[101] Of course, the notion that native people were destined to vanish was a particularly pernicious part of the progress narrative that shaped the ideas and

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[100] See Box 3, folders 26, 30, 35, Richard Irving Dodge Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.
[101] Jacob W. Gruber, "Ethnographic Salvage and the Shaping of Anthropology," *American Anthropologist.* 1970: vol. 72, no. 6, 1293. Gruber makes this particular statement after giving evidence of similar ideas about the urgency of ethnographic collecting in the nineteenth-century American West from Joseph Henry, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, Samuel Morton, and John Wesley Powell.

practices of many nineteenth-century people and institutions. Historian Steven Conn suggests that consensus on native disappearance had been reached well before the Civil War; this sense of American Indians as part of the nation's past, but not its future, undergirded American policy toward Indian peoples well throughout the century.[102] Recognizing, though, that nineteenth-century actors like Dodge saw, aided, and were saddened by the changes taking place on the frontier, we can understand how Dodge and his colleagues might have been compelled to preserve pieces of what they perceived to be an eroding past. Dodge wrote multiple volumes based on his experience and observations in the West, but he also supported the efforts of the Smithsonian Institution and the Bureau of Ethnology in their attempts to gather information and artifacts from native people. Dodge corresponded with Garrick Mallery at the Bureau of Ethnology about Indian languages and communication. Mallery was working on a glossary of Indian signs, and sent diagrams and word lists for contributors to fill in with drawings and prose. Clearly sensitive about his position in Washington (not in the field or on the frontier), in one letter Mallery boasted that he'd had plenty of opportunities to communicate with Indian delegations who made trips to Washington: "The Sec. of the Interior gives an order- and the Indians and interpreters are mine- for days or weeks."[103] Dodge assisted in this project — a project with clear military and political benefit in addition to the ethnographic value of preserving linguistic practices—but he also helped to grow the Smithsonian's collection of specimens and artifacts. His correspondence with Spencer Baird, then Secretary of the

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[102] See Steven Conn, *History's Shadow: Native Americans and Historical Consciousness in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 30. For more on this, see all of Chapter 1, "Native Americans and the Problem of History, Part I." Conn goes even further, highlighting the way this understanding that native people were disappearing contributed to their particular place in ideas about and representations of (western) America — that they were seen "as part of natural, rather than human, history" (30).

[103] Garrick Mallery to Col. Richard Irving Dodge, July 6? 1880, Box 3, Folder 31, Correspondence, Richard Irving Dodge Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.

Smithsonian, reveals that he sent "plants and flowers" as well as ethnographic objects: "a 'cradle' as a 'mass of beadwork' and 'a magnificent specimen.'" In acknowledging the receipt of these things, Baird asked for bird eggs, smaller mammals, and "well-preserved aboriginal relics in the form of pottery, pipes, scrapers, hammer stones + the like."[104] Understanding Indians as inevitably declining, and encountering them, through military work, as either enemies or wards of the state, meant that the acquisition of ethnographic and archaeological material—from the living and the dead—did not appear problematic to many of these collectors. But Dodge's collecting work, much like his written work, also helped to construct a particular vision of the West: the removal of Indian artifacts and human remains helped to empty Western landscapes.

John Gregory Bourke had aided this emptying of the West with prose of his own. Like Dodge, Bourke kept a detailed diary. And like Dodge, Bourke was interested in Indian cultural practices and artifacts.[105] Though Bourke did not publish accounts of his military experiences until the 1880s and 1890s, his position as General Crook's aide de camp provided him with access to a wider audience. His work as a press agent for Crook included articulations of the thesis of non-occupancy in ghost-written newspaper articles, advocacy for American expansion into the Black Hills, and war with the Lakotas—but after 1876, something changed in him. His biographer points to the end of the Sioux War as a turning point for Bourke's ideas about native people: "After 1876 he came as a student of their cultures, not as an enemy soldier."[106]

1876 had been a hard year for Bourke: lots of campaigning in brutal landscapes and bitter weather. He'd been with Reynolds at Powder River in March and nearly lost his foot to frostbite.

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[104] Spencer Baird to Richard Irving Dodge, March 22 and October 25, 1880 and August 31, 1881, Box 3, Folder 25, Correspondence, Richard Irving Dodge Papers, The Newberry Library.
[105] Bourke also collected artifacts for the Smithsonian Institution, including some particularly gruesome souvenirs of war. See Joseph Porter, *Paper Medicine Man: John Gregory Bourke and His American* West (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 56, 63.
[106] Ibid., 59.

Bourke fought in the Battle of the Rosebud alongside Crow and Shoshoni allies. And then he fought in the press amidst controversy over the performance and character of officers involved in the conflict. And then Custer died, and Crook and Terry set off in pursuit of the Sioux. Bourke's diary, according to Porter, "became a litany of the miseries that followed the column" in the same country that Samuel Ovenshine had called "mean" and "miserable" in his letters home to his wife Sallie.[107] Bourke's Indian-fighting on the Plains ended in the village of Morning Star (Dull Knife).

After 1876, Bourke moved to Omaha. He traveled often to fulfill his military duties, sometimes purchasing supplies or conducting inspections, other times participating in court-martial cases or General Crook's hunting trips, including an 1880 expedition to Yellowstone National Park. In 1881, Bourke met Major John Wesley Powell, the director of the Bureau of Ethnology.[108] Powell recognized the value of Bourke's work, and encouraged him to continue his studies of American Indian life and culture. Rather than work for the Bureau of Ethnology, Bourke asked Lieutenant General Sheridan for approval to study Indian tribes under the auspices of the army. With Sheridan's approval and Crook's support, Bourke embarked on eight months of careful observation among the Bannock, Shoshoni, Lakota, Oglala, Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni people.[109] These travels generated more than a thousand pages of notes, and Bourke returned to Omaha to review them—and to rest. But Bourke's first obligation was still to the military. In the summer of 1882, General Crook and Captain Bourke received orders to return to Arizona.[110]

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[107] Porter, *Paper Medicine Man,* 35, 51 and Samuel Ovenshine to Sallie Ovenshine, August 11, 1876, Personal Correspondence, 1874, 1876, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[108] Porter, *Paper Medicine Man*, 71-73.
[109] For a detailed treatment of Bourke's travels and research between March 1881 and September 1882, see Porter, *Paper Medicine Man*, 89-141.
[110] Ibid., 146.

Bourke and Crook had been stationed in Apacheria a decade before.[111] It was where they began working together, where Bourke's interest in native cultures and practices had originated. And now he was returning, bringing with him all that he'd seen and learned in the intervening years. He'd changed some of his opinions about Indians and Indian policy, and Porter describes Bourke after 1880 as a more troubled man, a man with more darkness, more worry, more doubt than he'd displayed before. In *Witnesses to a Vanishing America*, Lee Clark Mitchell implores his readers to "not ignore that mixed strain of regret about the process of westering that ramified so variously, so vigorously through the nineteenth century."[112] Ovenshine's not-so-splendid-country, Bourke's "feeling akin to loneliness," even Dodge's description of civilization as a cuttlefish—all evoke the complexity of soldiers' work in the service of the frontier army.

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[111] Bourke's first assignment after graduating from West Point was in the Southwest. (He'd served in the Civil War before attending the academy.) Bourke reported for duty in September of 1869. Crook was assigned to Arizona Territory in 1871, and in September, Bourke became his aide de camp. See Porter, *Paper Medicine Man,* 9-12.

[112] Lee Clark Mitchell, *Witnesses to a Vanishing America: The Nineteenth-Century Response* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 279.

Chapter 2: Collecting the West: Working with "Specimens"

When General Crook and Captain Bourke returned to Arizona Territory in 1882, they found disorder and distrust. White settlers were angling for Indian land, hungry for what glimmered beneath the ground.

Crook was first assigned to command the Department of Arizona in 1871, and by the time he was ordered to the Plains in 1875, he'd won significant military and administrative victories over Western Apache and Chiricahua Apache groups.[1] Crook had worked to establish his authority quickly, using strategies that became hallmarks of his style of campaigning. He

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[1] A quick, if fraught, summary of Apache tribes, sub-tribal groups, and bands. (I say fraught because it is important to acknowledge that the following categories and determinations come from without; even the meaning and origin of the word "Apache" is debated. Historically, "Apache" referred to seven different tribes: Plains-Apache, Lipan, Jicarilla, Navajo, Western Apache, Chiricahua, and Mescalero. Today, the Navajo are often excluded from this grouping of Apache tribes. As the head of the Department of Arizona, Crook would have been responsible for territory that included the homelands of Western Apache and Chiricahua Apache people, in addition to some groups of Yavapai Indians. The Western Apache pre-reservation groups and sub-groupings scholars agree on today seem to be grounded in the ethnographic field work of Grenville Goodwin in the 1930s. (Later anthropologists and linguists have challenged some of the groupings he identified.) The Western Apache were divided into four sub-tribal groups: White Mountain, Cibecue, San Carlos, and Dilzhe'e (Tonto). (Goodwin further divided Tonto into Northern Tonto and Southern Tonto.) Some Yavapai from the Kwevkepaya (Southeastern Yavapai) also lived in the Tonto Basin area, and intermarried with Dilzhe'e people. These families were bilingual, and often had both Tonto and Yavapai names, though not all gave equal weight to these dual identities. Further south, the Chiricahua were divided in four or five sub-tribal groups: Chihenne (Warm Springs) and Mimbrenos (sometimes combined with the Chihenne), Bedonkohe, Chokonen, and Nednhi. I use "were" instead of "are" to acknowledge the complexity of contemporary Apache identity. As will become clear, the reservation system forced people from different bands, groups, and tribes onto the same land. Contemporary tribal nations, boundaries, and governments reflect the violent dislocation of native people in the late nineteenth century. See Daniel Herman, *Rim Country Exodus: A Story of Conquest, Renewal, and Race In the Making,* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), especially Chapter 1; Edwin R. Sweeney, *From Cochise to Geronimo: The Chiricahua Apaches, 1874-1886* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010); Keith Basso, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996) and *Western Apache Witchcraft*, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1969); and Angie Debo, *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976).

hired Indian scouts (taking advantage of existing politics shaping the relationships between different tribes and sub-tribal groups), and instructed his men in the art of mule-packing.[2] He divided his troops into mixed groups of soldiers and scouts, and sent them into the Tonto Basin in search of "renegade" (off-reservation) Indians. The Tonto Basin was, in Crook's words, "some of the roughest country in the United States and known only to the Indians."[3]

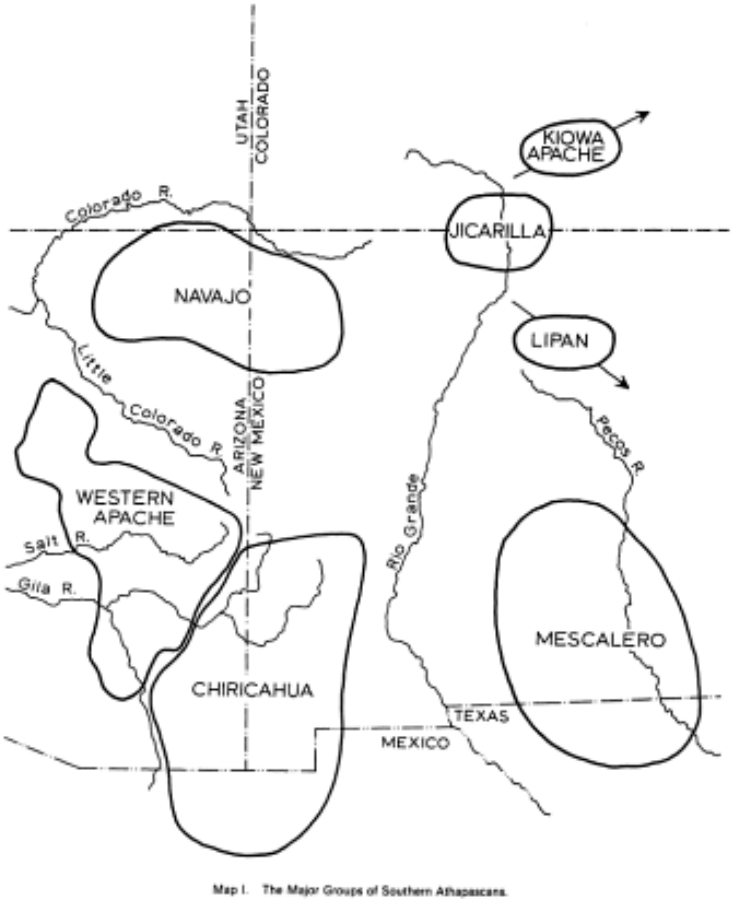

Figure 1. Map of Apache tribal group.[4]

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[2] Crook's mule-packing boiled down to bringing only the essentials, to pack light to be as nimble as possible over always variable terrain.
[3] George Crook, *General George Crook: His Autobiography,* ed. Martin Schmitt (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), 179.
[4] From Keith Basso, *Western Apache Witchcraft*, 8.

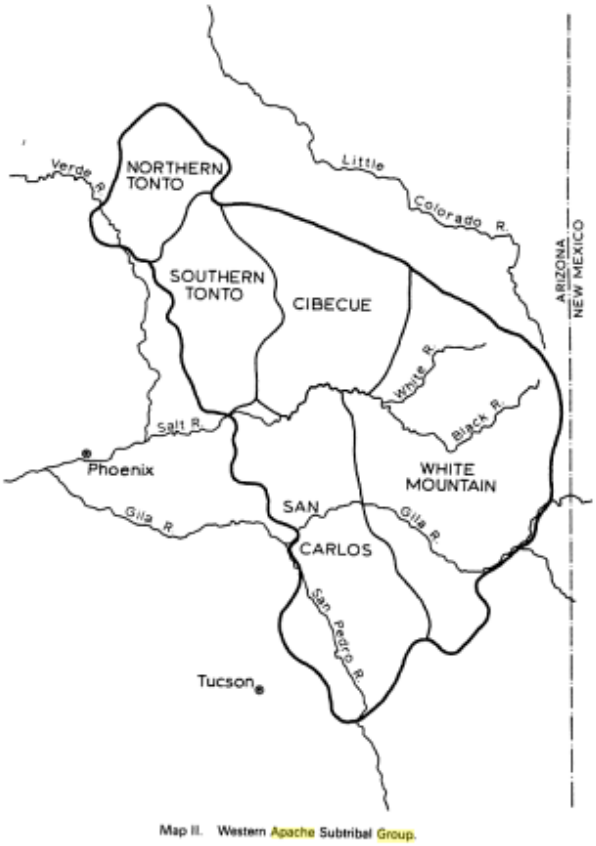

Figure 2. Map of Western Apache subtribal groups.[5]

It was also an Apache homeland. It had remained so until 1860, its ruggedness perhaps delaying an influx of European and American settlers. Trappers and surveyors passed through Arizona earlier in the nineteenth century, but even those heading West to California in the 1850s via Yuma stayed away from central Arizona and the Tonto Basin's difficult terrain. But news of gold in the early 1860s lured them in — first La Paz, then near Prescott, then Kingman. This rapid growth — thousands of placer mines, and a rush of miners and settlers—set the stage for conflict. Men in search of good farmland found the Verde Valley, "a Shangri-la by Arizona

[5] From Keith Basso, *Western Apache Witchcraft*, 10.

standards, fed by no fewer than six perennial streams."[6] Settlers moved in, using rocks from nearby ancestral puebloan ruins to mark sites for future homes. The Verde Valley, just northwest of the Tonto Basin, was already home to many Yavapai and Dilzhe'e (Tonto Apache) people. Raids and targeted acts of violence — an Indian family murdered by a local militia, an army man killed by Indians — prompted the establishment of a string of military posts in the area: Whipple Barracks, Camp Verde, Camp McDowell, and Camp Date Creek.[7] Thus began the Tonto Basin campaign, though it would be a few years before Crook assumed command of the department in 1871.[8]

The stakes were high. An 1868 *Overland Monthly* article described the power and persistence of the Apache place in the West this way:

> Prominent among the tribes stands the Apache race. Occupying the largest regions of the public domain, holding possession of a belt which must soon become a grand national highway, wielding a sanguinary sway over two extensive and naturally rich territories, and filling the most important intervening space between the Atlantic and the Pacific states, we have as little real knowledge of them this day as we possessed when our acquaintance first commenced. Twenty-odd years of unremitted warfare have added comparatively nothing to our knowledge, but have cost thousands of lives and millions of treasure.[9]

Bourke, of course, had been slowly growing his collection of ethnographic material pertaining to the tribes of the West, but the real task before the army in Apacheria was to protect settlement

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[6] Herman, *Rim Country Exodus*, 43. See Herman's first chapter, "Kinship, History, Home" for a deep history of Apache migration and settlement in the Southwest.
[7] This narrative is drawn from Herman, *Rim Country Exodus*, 43-44.
[8] Crook received orders to take over the Department of Arizona in May 1871, just after (and likely in response to) the Camp Grant Massacre in Aravaipa Canyon, Arizona Territory, April 30, 1871. See Karl Jacoby's examination of this massacre and its memory from all sides, *Shadows at* Dawn. For Crook's orders, see Crook and Schmitt, *General George Crook: His Autobiography*, 160.
[9] John C. Cremony, "The Apache Race," *The Overland Monthly* 1, no. 3 (September 1868): 201-209 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars Volume 1*, 9.

(by ending the aforementioned "sanguinary sway") and in so doing, clear the pathway for the "grand national highway" envisioned for the future.

Crook's Tonto Basin campaign sought to force the Indians to surrender. In many ways, the army was in a tough position. Many local settlers wanted the Indians gone, permanently. But the army's assigned task wasn't eradication; rather, they were instructed to control the Apache and contain them on reservations. Crook's strategy was to "harass them until they could no longer grow crops, hunt, or even rest."[10] And Crook's strategy was also to win. Two clashes helped assure Crook's victory. Indian scouts located a group of over one hundred Dilzhe'e and Kwevkepaya sheltering themselves in a cave tucked into a tall canyon wall. At dawn on December 27, 1872, Crook's men began firing into the cave, their targets captive, their bullets bouncing off of the stone in all directions. Today this place is called Skeleton Cave. A few months later, the Turret Mountain Massacre prompted more Apache people to surrender. In March of 1873, scouts tracked a group of Yavapai and Dilzhe'e to the Agua Fria River. Soldiers scaled the mountain in the middle of the night, and attacked the group at dawn. Most of the Indians died, some from enemy bullets, and others from jumping off the butte they'd been cornered on.[11] The killing continued, but in smaller skirmishes, as Crook's scouts and soldiers crisscrossed the Tonto Basin looking for any remaining renegades.[12]

Crook had stressed its ruggedness, but the Tonto Basin's beauty was not lost on army men and their families. Even as Crook's men were working to find every last hiding place within

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[10] Herman, *Rim Country Exodus*, 75.
[11] These descriptions are drawn from Daniel Herman's *Rim Country Exodus*. See pp.78-82, in particular.
[12] Herman wrote, "The soldiers and scouts—many of them Dilzhe'es and Yavapais—ringed Tonto Basin, riding across some of the hardest terrain in the territory. In the seven months from November 1873 to May 1874, they killed perhaps 250 Indians." See Herman, *Rim Country Exodus,* 84.

the Basin, Martha Summerhayes, wife of an officer assigned to Arizona Territory, was marveling at the scenery. Summerhayes published a memoir of her adventures out West titled *Vanished Arizona: Recollections of My Army Life*. The book includes a reflection on what she understood to be an almost singular experience of the view of the Basin, even decades later:

> The scenery was wild and grand; in fact, beyond all that I had ever dreamed of; more than that, it seemed so untrod, so fresh, somehow, and I do not suppose that even now, in the day of railroads and tourists, many people have had the view of the Tonto Basin which we had one day from the top of the Mogollon Range. I remember thinking, as we alighted from our ambulances and stood looking over into the basin, 'Surely I have never seen anything to compare with this—but oh! would any sane human being voluntarily go through with what I have endured on this journey in order to look upon this wonderful scene?[13]

Summerhayes pointed out the pristineness of the vision before her, the expansiveness of the scene she encountered. Though not a tourist (as her account of "joining the army" with her husband Jack well attests), when she reflected on the experience of looking into Tonto Basin, Martha Summerhayes evoked the rhetoric used by many to describe the wonders of the American West: "wild," "grand," "untrod," "fresh." Her words echo descriptions of Yellowstone, and the possibilities soldiers like Dodge and Bourke saw in the Black Hills. Nowhere did she mention the ongoing work of soldiers, her husband among them, to remake the Tonto Basin as "untrod" and "fresh" by removing the Basin's residents.

Crook's success in Arizona earned him a promotion to brigadier general. By early 1874, most Apache people in Arizona Territory were on reservations and under agency coordination. Crook worked to encourage agriculture and ensure markets for Apache products. Not everyone was pleased. After an irrigation ditch had been dug, a water-wheel constructed, and fifty-seven acres of produce planted by Western Apache and Yavapai people newly settled at the Rio Verde

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[13] Martha Summerhayes, *Vanished Arizona: Recollections of My Army Life*, (Chicago: The Lakeside Press, R. R. Donnelley & Sons Co., 1939), 80.

Reservation—not quite the Tonto Basin reservation they'd requested, but close to it and to other sites of deep significance to them—orders to relocate everyone to the reservation at San Carlos arrived. Those orders had been spurred by the influence and interests of a group of powerful businessmen and politicians. This land, too, was desirable, and local leaders wanted to see it used for something other than Apache homes. Not only was the decision disruptive; it was dangerous. In his autobiography Crook wrote, "These Indians…were a mountain Indian, and the heat and dust of San Carlos agency was quite equal at times to that of Yuma, besides being malarious…Their removal was one of those cruel things that greed has so often inflicted on the Indian."[14] But the greed Crook described did not stop with this relocation order. Even its implementation was particularly unkind: the agent assigned through the Indian Bureau demanded that the relocation occur on foot, following not established roads and pathways between the Rio Verde Reservation and San Carlos, but a straight line on the map: up and over mountains, across creeks and streams swollen with late winter snowmelt, through the rugged country of the Tonto Basin with all that they had. The journey took three weeks, and 140 lives.[15]

And when they arrived at San Carlos, the approximately 1500 migrants from the Rio Verde Reservation joined the Warm Springs, San Carlos, and Chiricahua Apaches already collected and contained on the reservation.[16] Though the majority of the residents were Western Apache, the Dilzhe'e, Warm Springs, San Carlos, and Chiricahua subgroups had their own practices and politics. Some of these divisions had been further strengthened by the army

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[14] Crook, *General George Crook: His Autobiography*, 184.
[15] For more on the march from Rio Verde to San Carlos, ee Herman, *Rim Country Exodus*, pp. 97-103.
[16] This estimate of 1500 people from the Rio Verde reservation comes from www.valleyverdearchaeology.org/YavapaiApache. Herman describes "four to five thousand Indians confined at San Carlos" in the late 1870s (104).

practice of hiring Indian scouts to aid in tracking "hostile" groups. Federal policy forced groups of people who did not necessarily get along to live and work in close quarters.

In the years that followed Crook's 1875 reassignment to the Plains, whatever stability had been established in Arizona Territory slowly disintegrated.[17] Corruption, mismanagement, and negligence were all clearly visible to Crook and Bourke upon their return to Arizona in 1882. As they made the rounds, they were repeatedly told of Indian agents selling goods and rations intended for agency residents to nearby white settlers, of unlawful restriction of reservation lands, of punishment without trial, of destruction of Apache property.[18] As a result of these—and all the previous challenges to Apache livelihoods—a large group of Chiricahua Apaches (including Juh, Geronimo, Chatto, and Naiche) left reservation lands for the Sierra Madre mountains of Mexico, which provoked a stream of vitriol from the pioneers of Arizona Territory. Leaving the reservations, after all, meant crossing through lands claimed by pioneers. Unlike Crook, who later wrote that "When the Indian appeals to arms, his only redress, the whole country cries out against the Indian," local settlers called for violence, even total decimation of the Apache population.[19] The extreme position of Arizona settlers sometimes makes Crook appear to be a moderate. In some ways, when it came to Indian policy, he was. He'd made a name for himself as an advocate for fair treatment for native people, and he regularly defended

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[17] The Cibecue Rebellion of 1881-1882, which began with army officers arresting a medicine man and led to an ambush and a mutiny by Indian scouts, marked perhaps the height of these tensions between Apache people, the U.S. Army, and local settlers. Many people fled the reservations in the aftermath of the initial uprising, and the execution of some of the men suspected to be involved prompted others to head south to join up with Chiricahuas in Mexico. See Herman, *Rim Country Exodus*, "Rebellion," pp.104-127; Bourke, *On the Border With Crook*, pp.433-434; Crook and Schmitt, *General George Crook: His Autobiography*, 241-243; Robert Utley, *Geronimo*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), pp.108-110; and Edwin Sweeney, *From Cochise to Geronimo*, pp.177-184.

[18] Porter, *Paper Medicine Man*, 147.

[19] Crook, *General George Crook: His Autobiography*, 184. See also Porter, *Paper Medicine Man*, 147-150.

his strategy of hiring Indian scouts in army work, a practice many disliked. But Crook's sense of decency (albeit within a paternalistic frame) did not extend to critiquing the larger structures and projects that earned him a reputation as not only a fair man, but also an incredibly successful Indian fighter. Returning to lead the army's operation in the Southwest meant going after the Chiricahuas hiding out in northern Mexico, returning them to designated reservations, and reestablishing order in Arizona Territory.

Examinations of this period in army-Apache-settler relations are often dominated by the capture (or surrender, depending on who is telling the story) of Geronimo in 1886. Geronimo's capture essentially concluded Indian resistance in the Southwest. A few years later, the 1890 massacre at Wounded Knee would mark the end of the Indian Wars, the so-called close of the frontier, the permanence of American settlement in the West.

But we are not there yet. Even in 1882, when Crook and Bourke returned to Arizona Territory, much of the country still appeared to be as Martha Summerhayes had described it: "wild," "grand," "untrod," "fresh." Of course, the trail Summerhayes and her husband's regiment had traveled along in 1874 had become an established route for traversing the hard country. And new settlement in the territory continued apace. But much of the territory was still hard ground for soldiers and homesteaders to move through. John Bourke described the Southwestern landscape this way: "To look upon the country was a grand sensation; to travel in it, infernal."[20] For soldiers, especially new soldiers seeing the Southwest for the first time, there was much to look upon. But looking wasn't all they were doing.

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[20] John Bourke, *An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre: an Account of the Expedition in Pursuit of the Hostile Chiricahua Apaches in the Spring of 1883.* (New York: Scribner, 1958), 83.

Like the labor required of men like Samuel Ovenshine on the Plains, the varied work of the frontier army (cutting paths, moving supplies, constructing posts) in the Department of Arizona was demanding.[21] And this work shaped how army men engaged with and thought about the landscapes of their service. But army men engaged with more than landscapes; they observed, hunted, and collected what they found in these landscapes. And these outside interests—interests literally outside, in the plants, animals, and people around them—were deeply intertwined with their military assignments. Sometimes army work shaped, limited, or enabled scientific work; sometimes scientific work influenced military practice.

For example, though not necessarily a man of science, George Crook was an able naturalist. His skills as a hunter and outdoorsman were certainly useful professional qualifications in his particular line of work. But Crook's backcountry prowess was matched by the joy it brought him to be in the wilderness. Bourke, too, pursued interests outside the scope of his formal military responsibilities. His amateur ethnography had earned him the notice of John Wesley Powell, and

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[21] Michael Tate uses the term "multipurpose army" to highlight the varied work of soldiers on the frontier. In the introduction to *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*, Tate notes that despite the New Western History's return to Frederick Jackson Turner and narratives of expansion, that these new histories demonstrate "an almost total neglect of the frontier army as an element in the westering story" (xiv). Tate points out that the army has been "stylized in a negative way" in the work of the New Western History, and he offers the example of well-known massacres and aiding corporations during labor strikes in the late nineteenth century. His project, in *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*, is to return to arguments made by Francis Paul Prucha in *Broadax and Bayonet: The Role of the United States Army in the Development of the Northwest, 1815-1860* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1953) about the centrality of the army for the development of the West and broaden the focus to cover a more fuller swath of the frontier throughout all of the nineteenth century. I appreciate Tate's commitment to examining the full range of army work; his book makes clear that army men did far more than fight, and deserve more than the kind of stereotypical portrayal Tate is writing against. I certainly agree with Tate that the army in this period is more complex, but beyond broadening our sense of the army, I am interested, in particular, in the ways army men made sense of the labor they performed (including the bloody and brutal parts), and how this labor helped to shape their ideas about the landscapes they worked in. In this chapter, specifically, I plan to focus on one project pursued by army men: specimen collecting. See Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).

even when on assignment with Crook, he continued to document his observations of native people and culture alongside the writing he did as Crook's most trusted aide. But Crook and Bourke weren't the first—or the only—soldiers with "outside" interests.

In 1883, Dr. Edgar Mearns and his family arrived at Camp Verde.

A Surgeon and a Naturalist

Dr. Edgar Alexander Mearns applied to become an army surgeon shortly after completing medical school. An avid naturalist, he understood the opportunities that military service might offer him to explore the natural world beyond his home in Highland Falls, NY. Though not yet thirty years old at the time of his first military assignment, Mearns had been cultivating his interest in birds and mammals for years. His father, who died when he was a teenager, taught him to hunt and trap. "Every natural object interested and attracted him," both as a boy and as a young man.[22] Natural objects —botanical specimens, especially—also attracted Ella Wittich, and perhaps were part of the attraction between Ella and Edgar. They were married in 1881 after Edgar finished medical school. Mearns sat for the Army medical examination in 1882, and then, while awaiting his commission, devoted the following winter to curating a cabinet of vertebrate zoology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

In September 1883, Mearns attended the first meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU). The participants were invited by the organization's three founders: J. A. Allen, William Brewster, and Dr. Elliott Coues.[23] Mearns had already begun corresponding with Allen,

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[22] Charles Richmond, "In Memoriam: Edgar Alexander Mearns," *The Auk,* Vol. 35 (1918), 2.
[23] For a detailed account of the founding of the American Ornithologists' Union, see Daniel Lewis, *The Feathery Tribe: Robert Ridgway and the Modern Study of Birds*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), pp. 70-113. See Mark Barrow's *A Passion For Birds: American*

an ornithologist and zoologist at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology. And Mearns certainly would have been familiar with the work of Coues, especially his *Key to North American Birds*, first published in 1872. Coues was an army surgeon, and his military career offered him exceptional opportunities for pursuing his ornithological work. He collected, studied, and published prolifically while serving at posts all over the West until he was named the secretary and naturalist of the Geological and Geographical Survey of the Territories. He resigned his military commission at thirty-nine to pursue natural history work full-time.[24] Mearns received his army commission in December, and was offered a choice of posts. Mearns selected Fort Verde, in Arizona Territory.[25] Coues had begun his military medical career in the Southwest, too.

Other giants of American ornithology were in attendance at that first meeting of the AOU, including Captain Charles Bendire. As an enlisted man in the dragoons, the infantry, and the cavalry, Bendire began paying attention to birds. While serving in the West — first in New Mexico and Arizona, and later in Louisiana, California, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington — Bendire developed an interest in oology, the study of birds' eggs. During a leave of absence in 1883, Bendire became the Honorary Curator of the National Museum's Department of Oology.[26] This position made it possible for Bendire to travel to New York for the AOU's inaugural meeting.

Ornithology After Audubon (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998) for more on the development of American ornithology.

[24] Edgar Erskine Hume, *Ornithologists of the United States Army Medical Corps,* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1942), pp. 52-89.

[25] Richmond, "In Memoriam: Edgar Alexander Mearns," 5-7.

[26] Bendire's private collection of 8,000 specimens is a key part of the Smithsonian's oological collection. Edgar Erskine Hume, *Ornithologists of the United States Army Medical Corps,* pp.22-37. (Bendire is included in Hume's volume because he also served as a Hospital Steward, allowing the Army Medical Corps to count him as one of theirs, at least for a little while.)

Coues and Bendire weren't the only military men engaged in ornithological work, though their examples would have been encouraging to the young Dr. Mearns, and perhaps to other surgeons who would become Mearns's peers and colleagues throughout his twenty-five years in the army's employ. The opportunities that government service could provide for young men interested in the work of exploration were well known. For example, Robert Ridgway, the curator of birds at the Smithsonian, had begun his formal career in ornithology at sixteen years old when he joined Clarence King's 1867-1869 survey of the 40th parallel as the expedition's zoologist.[27] Large surveys under the leadership of King, Wheeler, Hayden, and Powell were a central feature of American exploration in the middle of the nineteenth century. Though these surveys had military escorts (and though some of the expedition members were veterans of the Civil War), these were civilian operations.[28] Of course, some of the information generated from these civilian expeditions would be put to military use: the availability of mineral resources certainly influenced paths of expansion and extraction, and the maps and reports pointed the way. Aaron Sachs cautions against reading these explorers solely as agents of empire, though. He reminds us that alongside studying, surveying, and documenting, explorers like King, Wheeler, Hayden, and Powell "expanded our sympathies." The products of their labor sometimes aided and encouraged imperial projects—no small thing. But just because their work was used to settle the West, to dispossess native people, to extract valuable resources from the land, doesn't mean these men were universally in support of these aims —or the means by which

[27] See Daniel Lewis, *The Feathery Tribe*, especially Ch. 1, "The Making of a Bird Man," pp. 1-34.
[28] Donald Worster notes that after a trip with a military escort to the Badlands went poorly, Powell stopped requesting military escorts. See Worster, *A River Running West: The Life of John Wesley Powell* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 271.

they were accomplished. Though their work prepared the way, these explorers sometimes "resisted the course of empire."[29]

Of course, General Crook, Captain Bourke, and Dr. Mearns were not in the southwest to make maps and locate mineral wealth; their assigned tasks were even more explicitly imperial than the surveys that had crossed the West in earlier decades. As officers of the United States Army, they were representatives of the United States in Arizona Territory, charged primarily with containing Apache people on designated reservations and ensuring peace (and the protection of pioneer property) amidst steadily growing (white) settlements. This work was the priority. But even this work left room for the pursuit of outside interests: hunting, natural history, ethnography, archaeology. In fact, military responsibilities created scientific possibilities, at least for those looking for them. And Dr. Mearns, who'd selected an assignment in the Southwest for the chance to study new surroundings, was certainly looking.

In March of 1884, Edgar and Ella, together with their daughter Lillian, not yet two years old, began the journey west to take up their post in Arizona Territory. "The Collecting List of Edgar A. Mearns," an oversized leather-bound book with catalog and narrative entries describing birds seen, walks taken, and specimens prepared, also contains a narrative account of the trip. "On the top of one of many huge dead trees, standing beside the Railroad sat a Pileated Woodpecker (Heylatomus pileatus). As the train passed it flew into the forest, its red crest gleaming in the sunlight. Thence to St. Louis."[30] These birds live in my yard in Ithaca, New

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[29] Aaron Sachs, *The Humboldt Current: Nineteenth-Century Exploration and the Roots of American Environmentalism* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 30, 18.

[30] Edgar Alexander Mearns, "The Collecting List of Edgar A. Mearns," entry for March 13, 1884, Box 8, folder 7, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), Washington, D.C. Boxes 8-27 currently held at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, Division of Birds, where they are numbered 1-20. The

York. There's a tree right outside the enclosed porch where I write that is peppered with woodpecker holes. When I sit facing south, I have a clear view of this tree. I looked up once a few weeks ago to find one perched there, working to enlarge a fresh hole. And just yesterday I saw the telltale flash of red swoop south into a tree in my neighbor's yard. I hear these woodpeckers far more often than I see them, though—the call is distinctive, a shrill repetition of short sounds, sometimes increasing in speed. And I hear them drumming, tapping their beaks to announce their presence, claim territory, or attract a mate. They aren't the only ones drumming in my yard, but they drum the loudest.

Edgar was looking and listening through the windows of the train, making notes about species he recognized and those he'd never seen or heard before. He also described the trees, shrubs, and flowers they observed along the way. Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona. Yucca, cottonwood trees, cacti — all new, all evocations of the Mearns' new home. At Ash Fork, Arizona Territory, while waiting for a military ambulance to fetch them and bring them to Fort Verde, Dr. Mearns "went out to see the country."[31] On this day trip, Mearns brought along his gun, and so together with his observations, the entry for March 17 includes descriptions of two specimens, his first in the West. Mearns wrote, "Near the Cañon I saw a number of ravens, one of which I made a good wing shot at and 'collected.'" Mearns didn't mince words; he regularly acknowledged the killing that is part of the work of ornithological collection. Here,

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boxes at the Smithsonian Institution Archives are numbered 1-7. I have chosen to follow the numbering system of the finding aid, but will include in my notes the 2015 location of the source as either Smithsonian Institution Archives (SIA) or NMNH. Note that when matching my citations to the finding aid, Box 8, Record Unit 7083, NMNH, will be physically labeled as Box 1 on the shelves in the NMNH Division of Birds.

[31] Mearns, "The Collecting List of Edgar A. Mearns," entry for March 17, 1884, Box 8, folder 7, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, USNM.

though, he puts "collected" in quotes, pointing, perhaps, to the ways that this particular word obscures the violence that collecting requires.[32]

The ambulance arrived, and on March 18, the Mearns family began the final leg of their journey. Edgar described how they "rattled over the malapai roads, through mud of unknown depth, and over rocks until we were all three nearly pounded into jelly."[33] By the 20th of March, the Mearns family was in Prescott, Arizona Territory. Mearns received his official assignment to Fort Verde, and the family spent a few days exploring while waiting for their luggage to arrive. A "short ramble in the woods amongst the tall pines which we used to read about with envy in the writings of Dr. Elliott Coues" was clearly a highlight. "Now we were free to tread where his illustrious feet preceded us, and much we enjoyed doing so."[34] Mearns was getting ready to begin his military career mere miles from where Coues had made key advances in ornithology, all while serving as an army surgeon. It seems Mearns hoped to do the same.

Edgar, Ella, and Lillian arrived at Fort Verde on March 25, 1884. Edgar's entry for this day describes several bird species encountered on the descent into the Verde Valley. The party was warmly received by the officers and their wives.[35] Mearns described his new home this way: "Verde is built on a little plain in the open Valley, about 100 feet above the River, which, upon the Post side has low sandy banks, but on the farther side the bank rises through several irregular terraces crowned by grassy mesas to high steep and rocky walls of limestone rock,

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[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid., entry for March 18, 1884. Also, note "malapai," a variation on "malpais," Spanish literally for "bad land," this word was used (and still is used) to describe the terrain of cooled lava flows in the Southwest. Perhaps the Mearns family was traveling through—or near to—El Malpais, now a National Monument in New Mexico. See http://www.nps.gov/elma/index.htm.
[34] Ibid., entry for March 20, 1884.
[35] Mearns also noted that Dick ah Moon, a Chinese man they hired in Prescott, received "tendered courtesies from his countrymen." Mearns separates his ornithological record-keeping from his other writing and correspondence, which means that these kinds of details are not often included in Mearns's scientific papers. Ibid., entry for March 25, 1884.

which were occupied by Aztec inhabitants, whose cave dwellings may be seen from the Post."[36] These ruins, evidence of the deep human history of the Verde Valley, would occupy much of Mearns's free time. But already there was work to do. The next day, Dr. Mearns traveled the six miles to Middle Verde through snow and hail to see a patient. The day after that, he went shooting with one of the lieutenants, and his entries begin to detail the wildlife he encountered in the Verde Valley and surrounding area. And then, not long after Mearns and his family arrived at Fort Verde, the entries in this volume stop. Pressed between blank pages near the end of "The Collecting List" though, are three botanical samples. Two are reddish and one is brown, but all seem to be from the same plant. They aren't described, documented, and catalogued like the rest; only kept, keepsakes, perhaps, from the westward journey or their new desert home.

Edgar, Ella, and Lillian moved into the surgeon's quarters at Fort Verde. Unlike other officers and their families, whose housing depended on rank, and thus, could change with fluctuations of personnel (a newly arrived higher ranking officer could displace you), the post surgeon was assigned a home where he was also expected to see patients and perform medical procedures as necessary. At Fort Verde, the surgeon's quarters faced an open, rectangular parade grounds. Some version of this layout was common to most frontier posts: officers's quarters, the hospital, and the quartermaster's building were arranged around a large space that could be used for assembling troops or conducting military exercises. The surgeon's quarters at Fort Verde still stand. The adobe walls are whitewashed now, just as they are in photographs from Mearns's era. There is a generous wraparound porch. I know it isn't new because someone took a picture of Dr. Mearns here.

[36] Ibid.

Figure 3. Mearns on the porch of the Surgeon's Quarters at Fort Verde.[37]

He is sitting in a rocking chair. His legs are crossed, and he appears to be reading, or to have been reading moments before the picture was taken. Rocks, and fossils, maybe, are arranged on a stand near the door. *Metates*, stone surfaces that ancestral puebloans ground grains against, are lined up under the window, revealing the doctor's interests outside the realm of medicine.

I imagine these artifacts piling up inside as well, though perhaps not in quite the way the Surgeon's Quarters are outfitted today. Contemporary visitors to the fort walk in through the front door. To the left, one sees living quarters; to the right, a doctor's workspace. An examining table occupies the center of the room. A desk and a side table display carefully laid out surgical

[37] Author photo of an image in a folder on Mearns at Fort Verde State Historic Park, August 2012.

tools: scissors, scalpels, pliers, and what looks to be a bone saw in a case. On one of the bookshelves there are labeled bottles: cough cure, milk of magnesia. A lower shelf houses cotton stuffing, tongue depressors, and several smaller bottles of liquids and powders. Every other surface in the room supports specimens and artifacts: arrowheads, animal skulls, pottery, taxidermy.

Figure 4. Surgeon's Quarters, home "office," Fort Verde State Historic Park. Photo taken by author, August 2012.

Of course, this isn't how Mearns left it. He wasn't the last surgeon to serve here, and the fort's land and outbuildings were privately owned for eighty years before the state of Arizona acquired

them.[38] But the presence of far more than medicines and medical tools here might suggest that post surgeons with interests beyond the medical weren't so unusual. Beyond that, this doctor's office turned curiosity cabinet reveals more about the fort's history and its trajectory from private parcel to public park and museum than it does about Mearns's time there. The inside of the surgeon's quarters must have looked different in Mearns's day, but the view from the back porch hasn't changed too much.

Figure 5. "Verde Valley and Beaver Creek, from our quarters, Fort Verde, Arizona," taken by Edgar Mearns. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.[39]

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[38] The story of Fort Verde State Historic Park is complicated, and involves the hard work of many Camp Verde citizens, most notably Harold and Margaret Hallett. For more, see the Fort Verde Historic Park website: http://azstateparks.com/Parks/FOVE/index.html.

[39] Edgar A. Mearns, photographer. "Verde Valley and Beaver Creek, from our quarters, Fort Verde, Arizona." Photographic print, c1884-1887, no. 204. Edgar A. Mearns Collection, Library

I took a similar picture when I visited Fort Verde State Historical Park in August 2012. I stood on the back porch and looked out across the Verde Valley, over the river and toward the buttes and mesas in the distance.

Figure 6. View from Surgeon's Quarters, Fort Verde State Historic Park. Photo taken by author, August 2012.

Mearns wrote of getting used to life at Verde, and to the unfamiliar chorus of song from the Brewer's blackbirds that covered the parade grounds each morning.[40] As an army surgeon, Mearns was assigned to the post, rather than to a regiment or to the detail of a particular general,

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of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/95506031/ Accessed 30 March 2013.

[40] Mearns, "The Collecting List of Edgar A. Mearns," entry for March 28, 1884, Box 8, folder 7, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, USNM.

like Bourke was. Fort Verde became his home—and the home of Ella, Lillian, and later, Louis di Zerega, the Mearns family's second child. It seems that they embraced army life; photographs show the whole family camping at Baker's Butte or on horseback or with other officers and their families, and the picture of Ella—admittedly, a picture refracted through Edgar's prose in the letters he sent her when he was away from the post on army business—is bright. Edgar—Ned, to family—wrote to Ella, "It is a lot of fun to get your letters, darling" and peppered his reports of his activities with things to tell Lillian—the antics of his horse, or that he's going to bring her a bird, or that she should "kiss mamma every night once for Pappa."[41]

Field Work

At Verde, Mearns had plenty of opportunities for adventuring further afield. The work of the army in Arizona Territory involved managing Apache reservations, and General Crook crisscrossed Arizona Territory meeting with Indian agents and Apache leaders. In letters, Mearns boasted that Crook was "particularly interested in my pursuits, and [he] has chosen me to accompany him on two long expeditions through the wildest and least known portions of Arizona."[42] The first of these took Mearns all over Arizona in October of 1884, from Whipple Barracks near Prescott to Fort Apache and the San Carlos Indian Reservation, and then back to Whipple by way of Globe.

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[41] Letters dated April 19, 1885 and April 6, 1885, Box 1, Folder 2, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts and Archives Division, Washington, D.C.

[42] Mearns to Mr. Robert Donald, March 16, 1885, as quoted in Richmond, "In Memoriam," 7. Mearns' notes from these expeditions are filled with Crook's skill as both a hunter and a naturalist. Take, for example, this anecdote from Mearns's entry for October 15, 1884: "In the evening Gen'l Crook called out to me as I sat talking to Dr. Davis 'Say, Doctor, did you hear that note? That was the Gila Woodpecker!' I snatched up my gun and after waiting among the scattered cottonwoods a little while I Shot the first specimen I ever saw." Edgar Alexander Mearns, "Journal of the Natural History of the Expedition conducted by Brig. General George A. Crook, Whipple Barracks, Prescott, to San Carlos Indian Agency, October 1-October 27, 1884," Box 12, folder 2, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

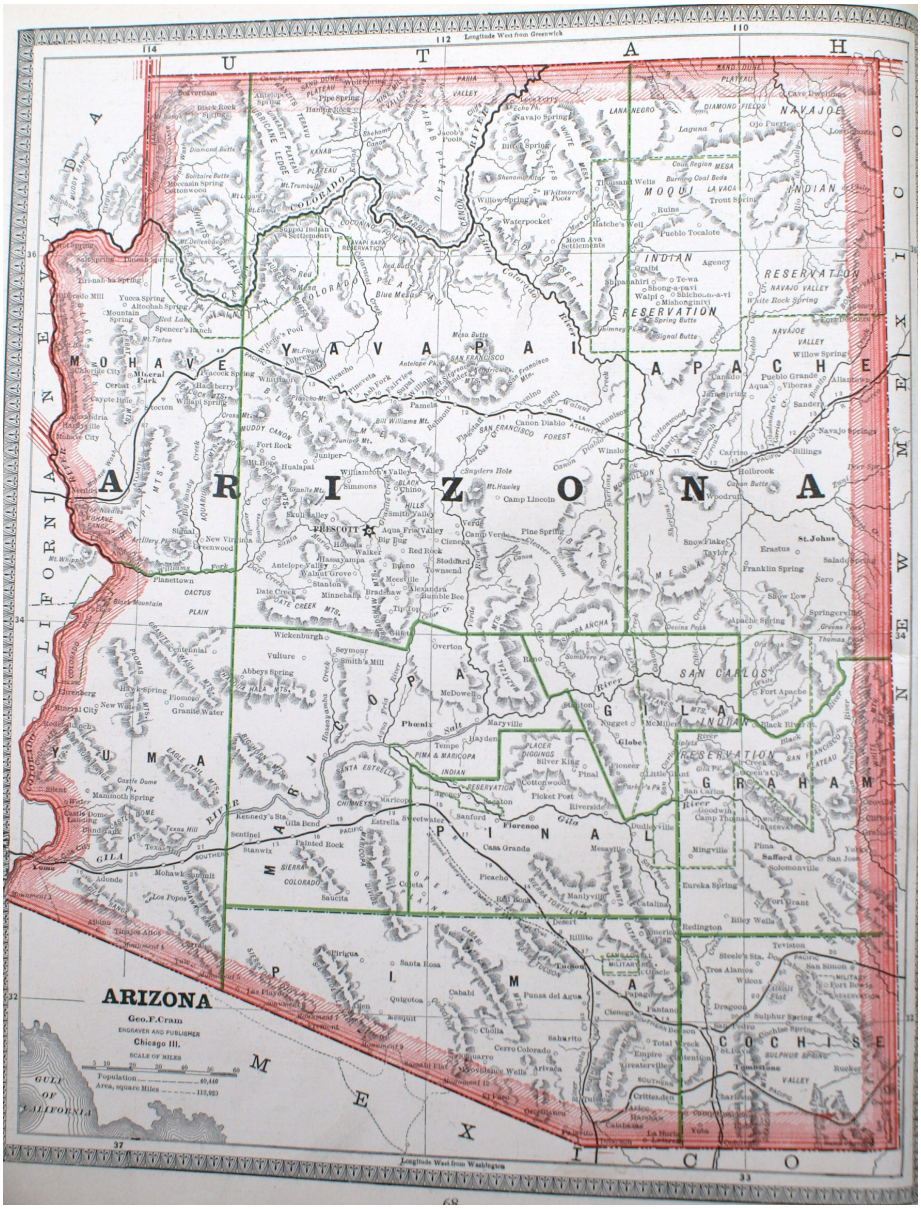

Figure 7. 1883 Map of Arizona Territory. From Crown King Historical Society Virtual Museum.[43]

The purpose of the expedition was to meet with Western Apache and Chiricahua chiefs. In the spring of 1883, Crook, his men, and a substantial number of Indian scouts headed south into the Mexican Sierra Madre. They located renegade Chiricahuas, and convinced them to

[43] 1883 Map of Arizona Territory, *Crams Unrivaled Family Atlas of the World,* via Crown King Historical Society Virtual Museum, Crown King, Arizona. http://www.crownkinghistoricalsociety.org/gallery3/index.php/MAPS/1883-Crams-Map-of-Arizona-Territory/002-1883-Arizona-Map-full-view Accessed 18 February 2015.

return to San Carlos. Some returned with Crook's men, while others, including Geronimo, agreed to follow after gathering additional Apaches. They did not reach San Carlos until March, 1884.[44] They were not to stay there, though, and a few months later they moved to Turkey Creek, not far from Fort Apache. The Chiricahuas were settled under army supervision, at least for the moment, but the situation remained rather precarious. The October 1884 expedition, though, was routine. Most accounts of this period in Army-Apache relations gloss over late 1884; Geronimo was on the reservation, not out raiding. It was a period of relative peace.

This was the context for the expedition Mearns accompanied, but it is hard to locate much of anything related to the military objectives of the journey in his account. There are occasional details of the military work being conducted along the way— on one afternoon Mearns describes "a grand pow-wow with the Apache Indians" organized by General Crook— but it is observations of birds, mammals, and the terrain of the Arizona Territory that occupy the pages of Mearns's report. In fact, even this detail about the meeting at Fort Apache only serves as a jumping-off point for Mearns's true focus: "I spent half of the day listening. In the afternoon I followed the south Fork of White River up into the cañon and climbed up a high hill to get a [view] of the country, and a magnificent panorama I saw — a view to be remembered."[45] Occasionally there was official medical work to be done. On the following day, Mearns wrote, "Gen'l Crook asked me to stay behind and assist Dr. Fisher, the Post Surgeon [at Fort Apache] to perform the operation of extirpation of both mammary glands for the cure of cancer. We did not

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[44] For a more detailed treatment of the Sierra Madre campaign and the eight months between Crook's meeting with Geronimo and Geronimo's arrival at San Carlos in 1884, see Chapters 16 and 17 in Utley, *Geronimo*, pp. 134-148; also Bourke, *An Apache Campaign*; and John Gregory Bourke, *On the Border With Crook* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1971, reprint of 1891 edition), 433-464.

[45] Mearns, "Journal of the Natural History of the Expedition," entry for October 13, 1884, Box 12, folder 2, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

leave Apache until 2:15 P.M." And from there, Mearns offers a list, shifting from medicine to natural history with a phrase that has become quite familiar to me: "The following birds were noted…"[46]

Mearns was already an accomplished list-maker by the time he took up his post in Arizona. In his notes for this particular expedition, Mearns kept three kinds of lists: birds seen, mammals seen, and specimens collected. Mearns listed scientific names, always underlined, often accompanied by common names. Some list entries are accompanied by a bit of description. For example, Mearns's bird list for October 3 includes an entry for Maximilian's Jay: "Large flocks were flying about before daylight, uttering their loud, plaintive cry. They were very abundant in the vicinity of the Tanks, doubtless coming there in search of water. They seldom alighted, but flew in long, straggling flocks, crying loudly. Occasionally a few would drop out of the ranks as they skimmed over the pine tops; but they were too shy to be easily shot."[47] Some entries were descriptive, like this one; others simply documented the presence of a particular bird or its call. Mearns was up early that morning (and many other mornings of the expedition) to observe and collect natural history specimens before beginning that day's sixteen-mile march from Mud Tanks to Baker's Butte. This morning time must have been precious; it certainly seems to have produced more success for Mearns, at least in terms of specimens.

Specimen-collecting and marching were not an ideal pairing, as Mearns well understood: "The objection to rapid marching in field collecting and observation is that nearly everything that

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[46] Ibid., October 14, 1884.

[47] Edgar Alexander Mearns, "Notes on the Natural History of the Expedition conducted by Brig. General George A. Crook, U.S.A., commanding the Department of Arizona from Whipple Barracks, Prescott, A[rizona] T[erritory], to San Carlos Indian Agency, via Forrest Dale and Fort Apache, and thence back to Whipple Barracks via Globe City, Fossil Creek, etc., between the dates of October 1st and October 27th, inclusive, 1884," entry for October 3, 1884, Box 12, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

is small, inconspicuous or shy is almost certain to be overlooked."[48] Mearns praised his horse Daisey, "a lean cadaverous beast," because he stood still enough that Mearns was "even able to kill birds on the wing from his back."[49] Or at least those birds not scared away by the movement of a marching column of soldiers.

Though these remarks serve to highlight the challenges of doing scientific work at the same time one is following military orders to march, they also reveal Mearns's exceptional skills as a naturalist (not to mention a marksman). I struggle to match birds and their songs from the excellent vantage point my porch offers, and even in the most ideal circumstances, it requires all of my attention. (And my binoculars and bird book.)[50] Mearns was in a new-to-him place, encountering species he'd never seen before. The details captured in his field books betray more than a hobbyist's skill and ability. Though it would be easy to frame Mearns as an army surgeon first, and a naturalist second — after all, it was through the military that he earned his paycheck for twenty-five years — this approach to understanding Mearns's professional identity strikes me as too simple, as ultimately imprecise. We're often quite quick to categorize people according to their profession; this is one of the ways we make sense of the people we encounter in both the present and the past. But for someone like Mearns, work was a many-layered thing.

And it is the nature of Mearns's work, the way Mearns the medical officer and Mearns the naturalist co-exist, share time, need each other, that demonstrates how deeply intertwined the spheres of nature and empire could be. The writer Rebecca Solnit has said, "What escapes

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[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid. And yes, Daisey is the name of Mearns's male horse.
[50] Even as I write this, I can hear birdsong, loud and clear, that must be coming from the black walnut in my front yard, and try as I may, I cannot find the bird that is singing. Mearns's field books have convinced me to at least learn the basics of birding, and I'm far more impressed with what he was able to notice and record now that I've attempted even basic bird identification in my yard, supported by field guides and decent binoculars.

categorization can escape detection altogether."[51] This danger is present in Mearns's story, but perhaps less in the challenge of labeling his work, and more in the questions we ask of Mearns and historical actors like him, and in the stories we choose to tell. Mearns might occupy a line or two in a narrative about soldiers serving during the "twilight" of the frontier army, or in a history of American ornithology, but these stories, told separately, would miss the ways in which Mearns the officer and Mearns the ornithologist shape each other.[52] They don't exist without the other. In her discussion of fixity, of labels and categories, and the concrete, Solnit relies on a fitting analogy: "I used to joke that museums love artists the way that taxidermists love deer." Mearns might understand her connection. She continues,

> something of that desire to secure, to stabilize, to render certain and definite the open-ended, nebulous, and adventurous work of artists is present in many who work in that confinement sometimes called the art world. A similar kind of aggression against the slipperiness of the work and the ambiguities of the artist's intent and meaning often exists in literary criticism and academic scholarship, a desire to make certain what is uncertain, to know what is unknowable, to turn the flight across the sky into the roast upon the plate, to classify and contain.[53]

The United States Army in the 1880s is not the world of Virginia Woolf that Solnit is writing about, and yet, this comment that academic work desires "to make certain what is uncertain" suggests the kind of boundary-drawing that obscures stories, lives, and work like Mearns's.

I expected Mearns's experience in the military to be highly regimented — all marching and order-following, every moment accounted for. But this is not the army Mearns served in, at

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[51] Rebecca Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me* (Chicago: Haymarket, 2014), 100.
[52] In the context of the British empire, geographer Kirsten Greer's work also brings together soldiers and birds (and the "life geographies" of both) in order to explore the ways that ornithological practice shaped understandings of the British Mediterranean and the linkages between Europe and Northern Africa. Ornithological practice, for the soldiers Greer studies, did imperial work. See Kirsten A. Greer, "Red Coats and Wild Birds: Military Culture and Ornithology Across the Nineteenth-Century British Empire," Ph.D. dissertation, Queen's University, 2011.
[53] Solnit, *Men Explain Things to Me*, 100.

least not while he was stationed in the Southwest. (Indeed, I'm not sure it was the army anybody served in, at least in the nineteenth century.)[54] On this expedition, there are many examples of Mearns wandering off from the group. Sometimes this is intentional: Mearns leaves a meeting at Fort Apache to hunt specimens, or he wakes up early to do some birdwatching near the previous night's camp. But sometimes he just gets lost, or lets himself get lost, and then takes advantage of the opportunity. This practice, of course, wasn't available to just anyone; Mearns's position as an officer and a surgeon afforded him far more flexibility than the average enlisted man had access to. The day after writing about the challenges of collecting on horseback, even with a horse as fine as Daisey, Mearns managed to separate himself from the group while hunting turkey, and found himself lost: "The day was cloudy, and, not being able to see the sun, I had no idea in which direction to strike out for the trail, so I amused myself with looking for specimens…"[55]

Getting lost had the obvious benefit of distancing Mearns from the group of marching soldiers—and, more specifically, from the noise and commotion that their daily marches produced.[56] When the sun appeared, he located the trail, hiked back for Daisey, and then continued onward to camp: "I trotted swiftly over a trail where I would have delighted to linger for days. At length I came to an open space to the right of the trail and, riding out into it I beheld

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[54] My sense of the military, drawn from history and from life—a favorite cousin, exactly my age, is a Marine, and I watched him enlist, serve, fight, and retire—didn't include wandering, or "straggling," a practice Kathryn Meier describes as common among Civil War soldiers who dropped out or hung back from their regiments for a day or two, often in the service of self-care, only to rejoin their units later. See Kathryn Shively Meier, "'The Man Who Has Nothing to Lose': Environmental Impacts on Civil War Straggling in 1862 Virginia," in Brian Allen Drake, ed., *The Blue, the Gray, and the Green: Toward an Environmental History of the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015).

[55] Mearns, "Notes on the Natural History of the Expedition," entry for October 4, 1884, Box 12, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

[56] On getting lost, see Rebecca Solnit, *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* (New York: Viking, 2005).

one of the grandest, most exquisite scenes that could be imagined. I found myself upon the very verge of the high rim-rock of Tonto Basin! and looking down from the top of the gigantic wall of rock, a hundred times hig[h]er than the great wall of China, which shuts in this beautiful basin." Continuing, Mearns broke from scientific observation and specimen collection to reflect on the scene before him:

> As far as the eye could reach the beautiful pine forest, open and park-like, with wide patches of greensward stretched out in gentle undulation, the inequalities in elevation scarcely(?) apparent when looking down from above. A miniature and beautiful world seemed spread before me, making a panorama so exquisite in its loveliness, so naturally beautiful, and so delightfully solitary and lonely, that I stood entranced until aroused by the sight of a Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus naevius) which settled upon a dead pine-top.[57]

Mearns wasn't the first to be "entranced" by the Tonto Basin; recall Martha Summerhayes's narrative of arriving at the Basin a decade earlier and finding it "beyond all that [she] had ever dreamed of."[58] Indeed, the descriptions of the Tonto Basin offered by Summerhayes, Mearns, and many others evoke many features common to landscapes considered lovely: rolling hills, green forests, an expansive view. It must have been a sight, especially when contrasted with the less-watered portions of Arizona's desert landscapes. But what strikes me about Mearns's description here isn't just how taken he is with the beauty of the Tonto Basin; it's his attention to how alone he is as he stares into this void. That Mearns describes the scene as "delightfully solitary and lonely" certainly captures the enormity of the view, the sheer spread of this "miniature and beautiful world," but it also highlights a key condition of Mearns's ability to wander into the Basin in the first place: its emptiness. A decade earlier, the Tonto Basin had been Western Apache territory. But the army's work—finding, fighting, and containing native people

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[57] Mearns, "Notes on the Natural History of the Expedition," entry for October 4, 1884, Box 12, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[58] Martha Summerhayes, *Vanished Arizona: Recollections of My Army Life*, 80.

on reservation lands—had been largely successful, leaving the Tonto Basin relatively safe for Mearns to wander through on his own, away from the officers and enlisted men of the expedition. Though not part of this description of the scenery, Mearns knew this history, knew of the violence that preceded his journey to the Southwest and his participation on this expedition.

A few days later, though the command began marching at dawn, Mearns and the expedition's steward stayed behind to hunt and collect specimens. Mearns described this day as "the pleasantest one of the trip. The trail was excellent, birds were abundant, and the part of Tonto Basin through which we rode was the most beautiful place that I ever saw." And then Mearns connected this vision of the basin to the work assigned to Crook's command, writing, "It seems little wonder that the Apaches were so brave and fierce in defending their beautiful home from the whites."[59] *Were so brave and fierce.* Mearns's use of the past tense here wasn't wrong; most of the Apache community had been relocated to reservation lands, and even well-known Apache warriors like Geronimo and Chatto were farming at Turkey Creek in the fall of 1884. Still, Mearns's acknowledgment of the violent history of the recent past articulates an important piece of the construction of "naturally beautiful" and "delightfully solitary" landscapes like the Tonto Basin, the Black Hills, and countless other panoramas: Indian removal made them empty, and army occupation kept them that way. Even the trail Mearns was following that day was the product of the army's work in this landscape. It had been built to move men and supplies between Prescott and San Carlos; today much of it is part of a state route named General Crook Trail Road. In some spots along the roadside you can still see the wagon ruts, the cuts into the hillside made by Crook's men in the 1870s and then traveled steadily afterward.

[59] Mearns, "Notes on the Natural History of the Expedition," entry for October 8, 1884, Box 12, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.


Figure 8. Nineteenth-century wagon ruts remain visible along the state route named General Crook Trail Road. Photo taken by author, August 2012.

Mearns emptied the Southwestern landscape in a different way. He even took a shot at the Peregrine Falcon he spotted as he looked out over the expanse of the Tonto Basin. He knocked a few feathers off of the bird, but didn't severely injure it — a fact that pleased him once he realized that if he'd killed it, "the bird would have fallen down perhaps a thousand feet before striking the side-wall and would of course have been lost."[60] So perhaps "empty" is too strong a verb for the specimen collecting Mearns did; after all, his papers and field books are also filled with loss. There are missed opportunities everywhere — the birds that got away, the specimens that were shot but not preserved. While the physical record of Mearns's service is an extensive set of specimens, the papers provide a fuller picture of his birds in the context of what

[60] Ibid., entry for October 4, 1884.

might have been. But what the field books don't adequately describe is the process of preparing a bird specimen.[61]

For that, you need a specialist. Ornithologists and natural history museums still prepare birds in much the same way that Mearns would have; nineteenth-century methods have persisted because they work, and also because field conditions in remote locations today present many of the same challenges that naturalists would have encountered much closer to their homes in the past.[62]

When Edgar Mearns collected a bird, here's how he probably did it. First, he shot the bird with appropriate ammunition—the small stuff. There's a reason we call it "birdshot."[63] Birds shot while marching or wandering would likely go into his saddlebags, or sometimes the ambulance wagon, until Mearns could find time to prepare the specimen. Preliminary notes made in the moment could be expanded and refined later. Many specimens were lost at this stage of the process to rot and ruin. Bad weather (especially rain) or a lack of free time resulted in spoilage. (Sometimes birds were too damaged to preserve — in July, 1884, Mearns noted that he was only preserving a particular specimen temporarily because "its head was shot off entirely." One entry for a specimen shot in April, 1885, was crossed out, the words "dog ate it" written in red beside

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[61] I wish they did, though I'm not sure why they would. After all, by the time Mearns was serving in the Southwest, he'd had plenty of practice preparing specimens.

[62] I am grateful to Christina Gebhard at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History's Division of Birds for inviting me into the lab to watch specimen preparation, answering my questions, and providing me with the following guides: "How to Prepare Bird Study Skins," a PowerPoint presentation by Ildiko Szabo; "Preparation of Avian Specimens for Research Collections," by Sergei V. Drovetski (2007); and Kevin Winker, "Obtaining, Preserving, and Preparing Bird Specimens," in the *Journal of Field Ornithology*, 71 (2): 250-297.

[63] For a detailed overview of shotgun shells and the shot inside them, see the Wikipedia entry for "shotgun shell." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shotgun_shell

it.)[64] But if a specimen survived, Mearns might have followed steps like the ones I followed when I skinned and stuffed a blackbird:[65]

1. Get your tools ready: ruler, forceps, a blade, pliers or scissors, maybe; also cotton (or some other stuffing); something to protect against rot and infestation (arsenic, in Mearns's time-current best practices do not recommend pesticides); a needle and thread; sawdust or something like it to absorb fluids.

2. Measure everything. Mearns regularly documented many different parts and dimensions of his birds: length, alar expanse, wing, tail, culmen and cere, cere, culmen, nostril, gape, bare tibia, tarsus, middle toe and claw, and claw alone.[66]

3. Next, make a vertical incision in the lower portion of the bird's belly, sternum downwards, being careful not to graze any of the feathers, and use your blade to gently cut through the fascia that joins the skin to the bird's insides. (This part should be familiar to anyone with experience dissecting something in science class.)

4. Separate the internal organs from the skin. This requires clipping through muscles and a few bones. Scientific study skins contain only the bones of the head, wings, and legs. The bones below the knee and the "arm" bones need to be broken so that everything else can be removed.[67]

5. Turn the skin inside out and pull it over the neck until the skull is visible. Separate the neck and body from the skin, and set aside.[68] Remove the eyes, tongue, and brain.[69] Making sure that

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[64] For the entry on the decapitated bird, see Edgar Alexander Mearns, Box 12, folder 8, p.151, under July 29, 1884; for the dog's meal, see Box 12, folder 7, entry numbered 86, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

[65] Many thanks are due to Christina Gebhard for giving me a day-long tutorial on February 14, 2013 in bird skinning and stuffing. I never imagined that my dissertation research would take me to a museum prep lab, and I'm so grateful for the chance to observe and try my hand at bird preparation. I'm grateful also to the Division of Birds for hosting me and for fielding all of my questions, no matter how strange. And of course, any errors in this description of bird preparation are mine alone.

[66] See chart headings in Edgar Mearns, "A Catalogue and Description of the Birds taken," pp.1-15 in "A Journal of a Journey from Fort Verde, Arizona To Deming, New Mexico and Returning, Performed on Horseback: Distance about 912 miles," Box 12 folder 6, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

[67] Find the knee, and clip through the bone below it. Do this on the other side. Find the humerus on one side; use the forceps (from the outside) to break it. On the inside, clip off the muscles around the bone. Repeat this on the other side. Snip through the vertebrae at the base of the spine, being sure not to cut through the tail feathers. Clip the shoulder joints.

[68] Remove the internal organs, and look inside. Record stomach contents, and the measurements of the bird's sexual organs (which indicates whether the bird is breeding, or mature enough to breed).

the skin is smooth and not too dry, turn the skin right-side out by carefully feeding the beak back through the neck.

6. It's time to work on the other end of the bird. Locate and remove the preening gland, which is full of oil. (Do not burst.) Look at the inside of the skin. Carefully scrape the visible feather tracks free of fatty deposits. Next, tidy up the leg bones and wrap the ends with thin cotton fiber. Gently tug on the legs from the outside to return them to their natural position. Secure the wing bones to each other with thread, allowing them to remain in a resting position. (Imagine that you are lying down, shoulders flat against the ground, relaxed. Your bird should be in a similar pose.)

7. After skinning comes stuffing; eyeballs first. Fold a small piece of cotton into a tight ball, and grasp with forceps. Snake the forceps up through the chest cavity and throat into the skull, and insert from the inside into one of the eye-holes. Repeat on the other side. Next, use your blade to make several shallow hashmarks on a stick or a dowel, which will help the cotton you're going to wrap around it for the brain and body to stay put. Using the same technique you might use to serve tightly-wrapped cotton candy, shape a bird-brain around the edge of the dowel, using the volume of grey matter removed during the skinning process as a rough guide. This is harder than it looks, so if you aren't happy with the brain you've constructed out of cotton, remove it and start again.

8. Next, shape the body, keeping in mind that an airy, fluffy cone is far better than a densely matted ball of cotton. Pull out a fiber or two from the top of the cone and twist, as if you were using a spindle. Insert the body around the stick, and thread the lead up through the bird's neck.

9. Time to suture. Using a needle and thread, sew up your initial incision with a needle and thread, sternum on down. There are several ways to do this, all equally effective. Wait until you're finished to snug up the thread, and just be sure to stay away from any feathers — those should lie naturally over the sewn incision once the bird is finished.

10. Almost done: cross the feet at the "ankle" and tie a square knot. (A modern intervention: use a tiny bit of super glue to secure the beak shut.) Take your time preening the feathers so that nothing is out of place — once the skin dries and hardens, you won't be able to adjust anything. There are several methods for stabilizing the bird as it dries. Mearns might have wrapped birds in a cushion of cotton and secured them in a special box or tray.

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[69] Loosen ears from skull, and remove eyeballs from their sockets by first severing the optic nerve. Remove the brain and tongue by clipping through the ligature on either side of the jaw.

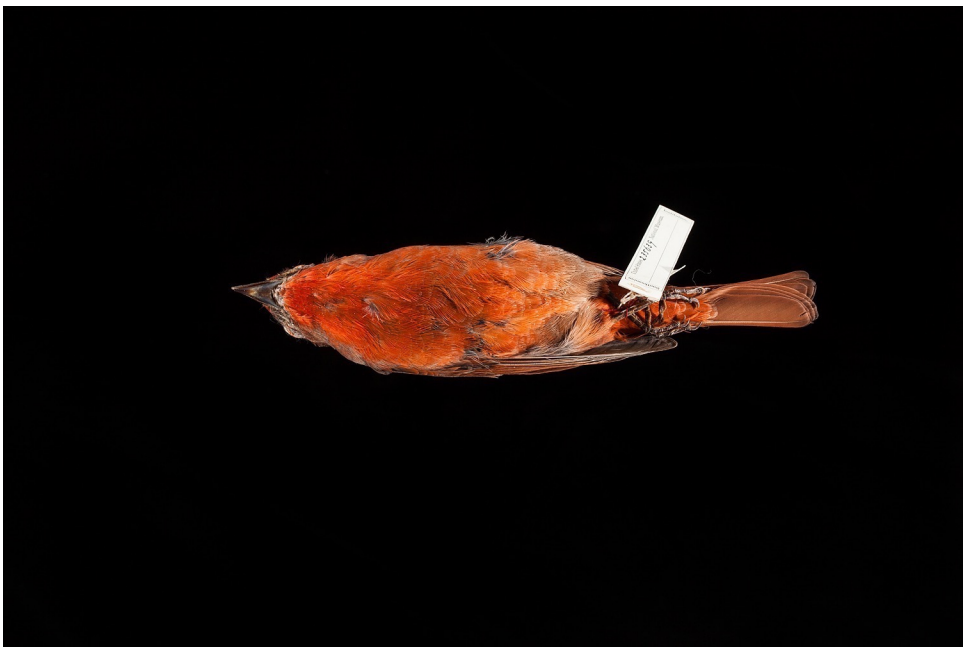

Figure 9. A tanager collected and prepared by Dr. Mearns while stationed at Fort Verde. Courtesy of Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of Natural History, Division of Birds. Photo by Don Hurlbert.

I realize that the details are gory, but without them, it is hard to grasp the complexity of this work. It took me almost eight hours to skin and stuff my first (and only) bird.

I'd been conducting research at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, in the Division of Birds. That's where most of Edgar Mearns's papers are housed. It turns out it's also where many of his birds are. It didn't take long —only a couple of afternoons on my very first trip to the Divison—for me to ask if I might be able to see a bird or two.[70] After all, they were what seemed to structure Mearns's notes and field books. I didn't know what to ask to see; just something pretty, maybe? Something that he'd prepared?

[70] I have written elsewhere about locating an eagle that Mearns prepared as a young man in the collection at the Division of Birds. See Amy Kohout, "From the Aviary: *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*," *The Appendix* 1:2 (April 2013), 64-66. http://theappendix.net/issues/2013/4/from-the-aviary-haliaeetus-leucocephalus. See also Kirsten Greer's description of her own experiences looking at birds collected by her historical sources, "Untangling the Avian Imperial Archive," *Antennae: The Journal of Nature in Visual Culture*, special issue on Alternative Ornithologies (Spring 2012), 20: 59-71.

With birds on an examination table in front of me, my questions became clearer: how does anyone—and how did Mearns—do this? Christina, the bird specialist kind enough to explain scientific preparation to me, pointed out the incision, the pose, and talked me through bird skinning and stuffing. And I told her what I'd been reading in Mearns's field books — the challenges of collecting while marching, the wandering off in search of new specimens. We both had questions: what specific materials did Mearns use, and who paid for them? Did he use arsenic to ward off bugs (common practice at the time)? How much time did it take him to prepare a bird skin, and did he do a good job?

Between October 2nd and 26th, 1884, Edgar Mearns prepared more than one hundred bird specimens.[71] And according to specialists at the Division of Birds, he did an excellent job. Even as a very young man, Mearns's work was on par with that of naturalists much more experienced than he was. In fact, though it might seem obvious that men trained as surgeons would be skilled at the precise work of specimen preparation, Mearns's early birds (specimens prepared before he began medical school) suggest that perhaps it was his naturalist work that prepared him for his military medical responsibilities. The quality of this work becomes even more impressive when considered in context. Mearns's field books acknowledge the challenges of collection and the conditions that often resulted in specimen loss. But they don't cover in any great detail the particular context of his preparation work while in the field. For that, it helps to look at the letters he sent to Ella and Lillian. From a camp outside Deming, New Mexico in 1885, Mearns wrote, "My dearest wife…We have pleasant times in camp - all the officers come around to my tent and

[71] Seventeen of the prepared scientific skins from the October 1884 expedition are currently listed in the Division of Birds database, though there may be more of them in the collection itself. (As of May 2014, the database contained records for 458,235 of the Division's over 640,000 specimens.)

tell stories, cuss the K.O. and make merry; but I skin birds all the same…"[72] Mearns's extracurricular interests were no secret; it seems he filled his leisure time with observing, collecting, and preparing. This meant that whenever the opportunity presented itself, Mearns was working on his birds.

Though it is easy to imagine Mearns's work as solitary, his letters reveal community interest, and sometimes expertise. Mearns often took day trips from the post with Lieutenant Vogdes. And in the evenings, he routinely walked up the Verde River. Sometimes Ella and Lillian walked with him, and every so often, Mrs. Mearns contributed to the specimen pile. (Mearns was careful to indicate which birds were shot by others in his notebooks.) While on an expedition with General Crook and Captain Bourke to a Havasupai village, Mearns described an afternoon spent learning a different skinning technique from Crook. He wrote, "I found a good place under a large cedar and skinned up my birds, while Captain Bourke, within earshot, was pumping Cowarrow the Haulpa dry on the subject of the religion of his tribe, using Charley Spencer for interpreter." Mearns continued, "The General at length returned and seated himself upon my proffered medical pannier, while I sat upon my bedding roll and skinned birds, using my other pannier for a table…The General then showed me how he liked to skin birds by opening them under the wing as most of my Danish specimens are skinned. I tried the operation on my first Arizona specimen of Junco luimalis and made a success of it."[73]

Though perhaps more of a hunter than a scientist, Crook valued what even Mearns's superiors in the army medical command structure understood to be his "favorite studies," and did

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[72] Edgar Alexander Mearns to Ella Wittich Mearns, April 18, 1885, Box 1, folder labeled Correspondence—Family 1885, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[73] Edgar Alexander Mearns, "Notes and Journal taken on trip from Fort Verde, Arizona, to the Havasupai Indian village, to Peach Springs, and return to Fort Verde, November 4-November 26, 1884," Box 12, folder 4, p. 20, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

his best to support Mearns's efforts by providing him with specimens.[74] And Crook's support extended to collecting specimens for Mearns from his home post at Whipple Barracks, specimens which Mearns seems to have been training Crook to document using something like a template for field notes. To Mearns, Crook wrote, "The difficulty in filling up the blank you sent me is that I don't know the technical names of the birds + in many instances would be unable to make myself understood." From here, Crook moves to hunting: "Would you like to have skeletons of Wilcats (sic) - Foxes, Coyotes + if so just what parts of them + how do you want them sent, I may be able to get some of these specimens."[75] This correspondence, though clearly between men who appreciate each other, is also between an officer and the general he reports to, suggesting that it would be too simple to think about the collecting done by men like Mearns and Bourke (and others before them) as hobbies conducted only during personal free time (which, for a surgeon, at least, seemed to exist in more variable amounts). But Mearns also received support for his collecting activities from further afield. After all, his access to the Southwest, and later, the Plains and even the Philippines, offered significant opportunities for museum-bound medical and scientific personnel to expand their collections, and subsequently, their expertise in their respective fields.

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[74] Mearns's specimen register for the Havasupai village trip indicates that several of his prepared specimens were shot by General Crook. Letter from Surgeon General's Office to Edgar Mearns, April 3, 1888, Box 10, folder labeled "Military Correspondence, 1888," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. While Crook's support seems grounded in his personal interests and values (and not necessarily the army's overall goals), Kirsten Greer suggests that in the British imperial context (during the Crimean War), the British army stressed the importance of natural science, and encouraged the development of what she calls the "military scientific hero" (72). See Greer, "Red Coats and Wild Birds."

[75] George Crook to Edgar Alexander Mearns, January 28, 1885, Box 4, folder labeled "Correspondence—January 1885," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Working with Museums

In March of 1885, Mearns received a letter from Spencer Baird, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, in response to a letter he'd written a few weeks before requesting Smithsonian publications. Baird's letter explained that Smithsonian materials were limited, only for "formal correspondents," and that he could not "give them out simply on call, even though the applicant be known as a student of science." Baird acknowledged Mearns's "zeal as a student of natural history, especially for ornithology" and invited him to become a contributor. "There are a great many ways in which you can assist us in our work," he wrote, "especially in making collections of reptiles, of fishes, and of Indian remains. Of course, anything in the way of birds or their eggs would be gladly received."[76]

Baird's correspondence network was substantial: while Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian (and with support), Baird had been writing more than five thousand letters a year.[77] Baird became the second Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution in 1878, and continued this correspondence, though not at the same rate. In writing to Baird, Mearns was participating in a broad, decentralized network of collectors and nature-enthusiasts.[78] Army men were certainly a

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[76] Spencer F. Baird to Edgar Alexander Mearns, March 25, 1885, Box 4, folder labeled "Correspondence—March 1885," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[77] Daniel Goldstein, "'Yours for Science': The Smithsonian Institution's Correspondence and the Shape of Scientific Community in Nineteenth-Century America." *Isis* 85 (4): 573-599, 576.

[78] Historian Daniel Goldstein explores the scale and range of this community, and illustrates the shortcomings of framing these correspondents as either professionals or amateurs. Although the scientific community became increasingly professionalized in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some, like Mearns, maintained complex identities and occupations in which naturalist's work played a part. Goldstein advocates for a more complex investigation into individual actors in this network. Building on the work of Elizabeth Keeney, who explores the broader context of these categories and investigates motivation as a way to separate professionals and amateurs, Goldstein suggests that we look at motivation alongside quality of research, participation in the community (whether through collecting, teaching, or mentoring), and

feature of this network; the museum relied on officers (especially doctors) collecting specimens alongside their military responsibilities. Though Mearns had worked as a temporary curator at the American Museum of Natural History in New York and had corresponded more extensively with department-level curators like Robert Ridgway, he hadn't yet begun collecting for the National Museum. And although many of Mearns's southwestern specimens would eventually find permanent homes at the Smithsonian, neither Mearns nor any of his specimens are listed in the Division of Birds's annual reports for the 1880s, where museum staff would identify key collectors and outline their most significant acquisitions for each year.[79] The letters Mearns sent from and received at Fort Verde suggest a range of possible pathways for the products of his scientific fieldwork.

Mearns received inquiries about specimens from the Army Medical Museum, for instance. Established in 1862 amidst increased attention to documenting and dealing with bodies of the dead, the Army Medical Museum solicited specimens from army surgeons spread out across the continent. These requests could sometimes be quite specific. In 1885, new curator Dr. John Billings wrote to Mearns "to request that if a specimen was preserved in the case of Private Wm. H. Taylor, Troop M 10th Cavalry, who died in the post hospital at Fort Verde from the effects of a shot wound of chest, it be forwarded to the Army Medical Museum."[80] It is unclear if

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geographical scope to understand professional and amateur natural science. Goldstein suggests that involvement in this correspondence network with the Smithsonian signified at least some engagement with national science, but beyond this, he proposes looking at the ways these nineteenth-century naturalists participated in local, regional, national, and international science. See Goldstein, "Yours for Science" and Elizabeth Keeney, *The Botanizers*: *Amateur Scientists In Nineteenth-Century America,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

[79] See United States National Museum Annual Curators' Reports, 1881-1964, especially Boxes 6, 7, and 8, Record Unit 158, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

[80] John S. Billings to Edgar Alexander Mearns, September 17, 1885, Box 10, folder labeled, "Military Correspondence-1885," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Billings was after the bullet, or the tissue the bullet was lodged in, but his attention to individual casualties and their possibilities for the Army Medical Museum's holdings hint at the museum's role in Indian-War-era military practice.

In 1888, Mearns received a request from Billings for embryos of any kind, but "especially for very young human embryos, special care being taken not to put them in water or even wash them."[81] Billings asked Mearns to spread the word about this particular need to other medical personnel in the Southwest, perhaps because human embryo collection was no simple process. It is unclear from the request which humans these embryos were to come from. The challenge, of course, was compounded by the fact that Mearns oversaw the health of far more men than women, though his notes indicate that he did also provide care to soldiers' wives, settlers, and Indian people under the Army's supervision.[82]

Mearns seems to have been interested in expanding the Army Medical Museum's collections; quite early in his medical career — after his appointment, but before reporting to Fort Verde—he wrote to ask about whether the museum had an herbarium, and if they'd be interested in the medicinal plant specimens he'd gathered from the area around West Point. Accompanying that letter was a human(?) appendix and a few specimens of what Mearns called

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[81] Letter from Army Medical Museum to Edgar Alexander Mearns, August 2, 1888. Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Box 10, folder 5, "Military Correspondence - 1888," Library of Congress, Manuscripts and Archives Division.

[82] Ann Fabian describes the appeal of an exhibit focused on "the development of the human embryo" in her treatment of the Army Medical Museum. See Chapter 5, "The Unburied Dead," In *The Skull Collectors*, especially p.176. For more on the history of embryology, see the Embryo Project Encyclopedia (http://embryo.asu.edu/home), especially Wellner, Karen, and Jiang, Lijing, "Essay: Review of Icons of Life: A Cultural History of Human Embryos". *Embryo Project Encyclopedia* (2012-06-22). ISSN: 1940-5030 http://embryo.asu.edu/handle/10776/6277.

"avian pathology" preserved in alcohol.[83] Once stationed in the Southwest, Mearns communicated with museum professionals at multiple institutions, as well as with colleagues who were also collectors, inside and outside the military.

Though the outgoing curator, Dr. D. L. Huntington, articulated to Mearns that the Army Medical Museum did not intend to "enter into any rivalry with the National Museum," the Army Medical Museum did extend its interests to include not only specimens useful for the study of military medicine (its stated purpose in the first circular sent to military medical personnel), but also ethnological and biological specimens. Billings wrote to Mearns to say that "it is hoped that medical officers of the army in making collections will give this Museum the first choice of specimens which they may collect." Billings had heard that Mearns had committed a set of specimens to the American Museum of Natural History, where he'd worked before taking up his commission in Arizona Territory, and Billings wanted to remind him that the army would be happy to have those materials — or anything Mearns might want to send. Even if the museum wasn't going to use the specimens directly, they could still be useful in trade to aid in obtaining what was necessary "to make in this Museum a complete collection of specimens in comparative Anatomy to illustrate the development and morphology of man."[84]

An 1880 listing of all of the anatomical specimens at the Army Medical Museum demonstrates that one of the key trading partners of the Army Medical Museum was the Smithsonian Institution. The specimens on the list are arranged by purpose: anatomical or

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[83] Edgar Alexander Mearns to Army Medical Museum, undated, 1883, Box 10, folder labeled "Military Correspondence—1883," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[84] John S. Billings to Edgar Alexander Mearns, July 17, 1885, Box 12, folder 6, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

ethnological, and then by type and place.[85] The "Aztec Indians" section has eight listings, several of which come from the area surrounding Fort Verde. And there are several skulls and incomplete skeletons collected by the Army Medical Museum from the battlefields of the Wilderness, Antietam, and Bull-Run.[86] Some specimen listings indicate that, when alive, these bones had belonged to "a Confederate" or "a prostitute," or "a celebrated chief." Only a few have names, and aside from the soldiers' skulls gathered directly from battlefields, only a few of the listings contain any information about how these people might have died. Of course, there are clues. Maybe some of the bones presented by hospital stewards came from people who were sick and died at post hospitals? But mostly, the listing indicates looting: bodies exhumed, graves dug up, mounds and shell heaps turned over in search of specimens for the museum—for study, but also for show.

"By the 1880s," writes Ann Fabian, "the Army Medical Museum combined attributes of a war museum, an anatomical cabinet, and an ethnographic laboratory. Each year the museum attracted some forty thousand visitors, who had a chance to see a collection that merged anatomy and ethnography."[87] With a new kind of war—and a different set of enemies—the Army Medical Museum's collections continued to expand. Many of their ethnographic specimens were gathered

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[85] See George A. Otis, *List of the Specimens in the Anatomical Section of the United States Army Medical Museum* (Washington, D.C.: Army Medical Museum, 1880).
[86] On "specimen-soldiers," and on the collection of corpses and limbs for the Army Medical Museum, see Lindsay Tuggle, "The Afterlives of Specimens: Walt Whitman and the Army Medical Museum," *Walt Whitman Quarterly Review* 32 (2014) 1-35.
[87] Fabian, *The Skull Collectors*, 176. For more on dealing with death, dying, and the dead during and after the Civil War, see Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage, 2008).

by medical officers stationed at posts in the West, with regiments engaged in fighting Indian Wars.[88]

Edgar Mearns participated in this process of "imperial body collecting"—though for him, and for others, the category covered more than human bodies.[89] Mearns collected the bodies of birds and mammals alongside examples of military medical pathology and puebloan artifacts and human remains from the Verde Valley. Alongside this work uncovering the dead, Mearns attempted to gather information from the living; his papers also include native vocabulary lists of the words for natural history specimens. The range of Mearns's activities highlights the expansiveness of the natural history category in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Bird specimens, bone fragments, mammal skins, mutates—Mearns collected all of these from the area surrounding Fort Verde while he was posted there in the 1880s. But in addition to demonstrating his varied interests, this range reflects the interests of nineteenth-century institutions. Recall Spencer Baird's letter to Mearns, in which he requested reptiles, fishes, and Indian remains alongside anything ornithological or oological he might send to the Smithsonian. And even Billings made a plea for giving the Army Medical Museum "the first choice of specimens" that Mearns and other members of the military medical community might collect, whether anatomical, ethnographical, or scientific.[90]

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[88] See Fabian, 182-183. The late nineteenth century was certainly the peak of the AMM's collection in terms of size and range. Between 1900 and 1904, the Army Medical Museum refocused its emphasis on pathological specimens. The institution transferred over 3,000 sets of skeletal remains to the Smithsonian, keeping primarily materials useful for studying pathology or traumatic injury. See the website for the National Museum of Health and Medicine, http://www.medicalmuseum.mil/index.cfm?p=collections.anatomical.repatriation.index, accessed 24 May 2014.
[89] See Fabian, *The Skull Collectors*, 171.
[90] John S. Billings to Edgar Alexander Mearns, July 17, 1885, Box 12, folder 6, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

Ethnography, especially the ethnography conducted under the aegis of the federal government, shared many characteristics with mid-nineteenth-century natural science — most notably, its practitioners. John Wesley Powell drew on his background in geology in his role as the first head of the Bureau of American Ethnology. Powell applied natural science methods to the work of mapping and measuring native communities; he systematized the bureau's approach, and attempted to conduct Indian surveys in the same manner as the geologic surveys he'd supervised previously. While Powell's leadership strengthened and standardized the field work of the bureau, it also helped to solidify the placement of native people in a hierarchy alongside animals, vegetables, and minerals that lacked the dynamism and individual agency afforded to non-Native people and the myriad possibilities for how their choices, ideas, and politics might play out. Which isn't to say that Powell himself understood Indians as static elements of newly American landscapes; his interactions with Indian peoples were far more complicated, part of a wide-reaching career that both opened up the West and signaled some ambivalence about the outcomes of American expansion. The Bureau of American Ethnology under Powell's leadership, as Jacob Gruber has noted, "preserved so much that would otherwise have been irretrievable."[91] Still, the systematic surveying of native communities and cultures could be read as a precursor for their removal; after all, we map minerals in order to extract them.[92]

Natural science and ethnography (especially as organized under Powell) shared more than methods; these practices also shared products. The material outcomes of the great surveys of the West—in the form of stuffed animal skins, pressed plants, rocks and geodes—trumpeted the wealth and the strangeness of the frontier. The surveys collected these specimens for study

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[91] Jacob Gruber, "Ethnographic Salvage," 1295. For more on Powell, see Worster, *A River Running West.*
[92] See Conn, *History's Shadow,* especially pp. 176-180, 193-194.

and for display at the United States National Museum and at the expositions (both at home and abroad) that the museum participated in. And more broadly, museums were part of a larger system of collection and display. Steven Conn calls nineteenth-century natural science a "museum-based enterprise"; as the number of museums grew, so did the demand for material to display. Public and private institutions were deeply interested in what federal and private expeditions across the West produced, and museum interests helped to shape collecting practices. Anthropological artifacts, both historic and contemporary, followed these same pathways from the field to museums for study and display.

Most of the scholarly attention to these pathways has focused on the history of federal surveys and expeditions like the U.S. Exploring Expedition, the Wheeler, King, Hayden, and Powell surveys, even the paleontology projects carried out by museums and universities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries). Edgar Mearns and his military colleagues remind us that these large-scale efforts aren't the only way that museums acquired artifacts.[93] Though not primarily detailed to an exploring or surveying expedition, Mearns performed valuable collecting work in a range of subfields, and the correspondence that remains indicates that the museum professionals of his day were interested in what he could offer. Military collectors like Mearns had access to sites and specimens not easily reached or acquired by museum expeditions, both in the American West and further afield. Crook's encouragement had expanded that access to the West. But Crook wasn't Mearns's only military mentor.

In May of 1886, Captain Charles Bendire wrote to Mearns from the Smithsonian. He'd been retired from military service the previous year, and he had relocated to Washington, D.C.,

[93] See the work of Robert Kohler and Jeremy Vetter, for a sense of existing scholarship in the history of American scientific practice that theorizes "the field," particularly in relationship to the museum, and later, the lab. Robert E. Kohler, *Landscapes & Labscapes*; Jeremy Vetter, "Cowboys, Scientists, and Fossils."

to spend time working in the oological collections of the museum. (Bendire had been granted a year's leave to serve as an honorary curator of this collection of eggs and nests, which contained more than 8,000 specimens he'd gathered during his military career.)[94] To "My dear Doctor," Bendire wrote, "I presume…that you are as hard at work as ever and judging from your former letter you must by this time have a grand collection of about everything that is to be found in that portion of Arizona." Bendire's kind words to Mearns affirm my sense of the scale of his collecting pursuits, and their warmth is still palpable all these years later. Bendire references conversations with Dr. C. Hart Merriam, who was collecting mammals, and encourages Mearns to send Merriam "as much as you possibly can." Bendire tells Mearns that he'll do his best to get whatever Mearns needs—after all, he understood the particular challenges of pairing naturalist work with military service—and then turns toward nests and eggs: "Have you taken anything new + especially interesting in the Nest + egg line about Verde. I have not seen anything published from you anywhere that I remember."[95] Even this small question reveals much about Mearns's participation in ornithological networks and professional practices. It hints at the expectation that findings would be published, perhaps especially in a journal such as *The Auk*, and it more generally gestures at the significance of not simply collection, but study.

Like Bendire, Mearns was more than simply a source of hard-to-get specimens for museum specialists; he was both interested in and capable of scholarship. Bendire had been well-positioned to retire to the museum; he'd been named an honorary curator a few years prior, and he committed himself to oological study, especially writing, after his military retirement. In

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[94] J. C. Merrill, "In Memoriam: Charles E. Bendire," *The Auk*, Vol. XV, No. 1, January 1898, pp. 1-6.

[95] All quotations from start of the paragraph to this point are from Charles E. Bendire to Edgar A. Mearns, May 28, 1886, Box 4, folder labeled "Correspondence Jan-June 1886," Edgar Aleander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Bendire, Mearns had an excellent model for combining scientific and military work. Of course, Mearns wasn't there yet. In the mid-1880s, he was barely on Spencer Baird's radar, but that would change. He collected both widely and steadily, and studied extensively. And he began to publish, perhaps using Bendire—and Coues, of course—as models.

Though reviewers highlighted Coues's rhetorical style, in particular (Donald Culross Peattie labeled Coues's bird entries "rugged narratives"), Bendire also wrote about birds and their habits in an engaging, entertaining way, at least from the perspective of this reader.[96] Here's Bendire on the Blue Jay: "While one cannot help admiring him on account of his amusing and interesting traits, still even his best friends cannot say much in his favor, and though I have never caught one actually in mischief, so many close observers have done so that one cannot very well, even if so inclined, disprove the principal charge brought against this handsome freebooter." And Coues, on the Plumbeous Bush-Tit: "I used to call them my merry little philosophers—for they took the weather as it came, and evidently know how much better it is to laugh at the world than cry with it. When fretted with the friction of garrison-life, I have often sought their society, and amused myself like another Gulliver among the Lilliputians."[97]

Bendire's prose in *Life Histories of North American Birds* was described as "simple and direct, with no attempt at embellishment or literary effect, but this is more than compensated by the care and thoroughness with which every aspect of the subject is presented."[98] The first volume of *Life Histories* wasn't published until 1892, but Mearns might have encountered Bendire's writing about birds, nests, and eggs in other places: publications produced by the

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[96] Hume, *Ornithologists of the United States Army Medical Corps, 68.*
[97] Bendire and Coues's writing is excerpted in Hume, *Ornithologists of the United States Army Medical Corps,* 31, 69.
[98] Merrill, as quoted in the entry for "Charles Emil Bendire" in Hume, *Ornithologists of the United States Army Medical Corps*, 29.

Boston Society of Natural History, the *Proceedings of the United States National Museum*, and *The Auk*, where he and his work were mentioned frequently. In fact, Bendire's early work grew out of notes and observations from the letters he wrote to other naturalists and ornithologists, Baird and Coues among them.

Coues was interested in "mak[ing] natural history entertaining and attractive as well as instructive, with no loss in scientific precision." He took the writing of natural history quite seriously: "nor is it a matter of little moment so to shape the knowledge which results from the naturalist's labors that its increase may be susceptible of the widest possible diffusion."[99] It does not seem a stretch to see the influence of both Bendire and Coues in Mearns's writing. In the January and July 1886 issues of *The Auk*, Mearns published pieces on "Some Birds of Arizona." His prose adheres to the conventions of detailed specimen and species description, but the sections on the habits of the Zone-Tailed Hawk and the Mexican Black Hawk are lively and engaging. Mearns does not limit himself to the bird's behavior, but instead narrates his first view of the Verde Valley and the fort that would become his home: "It was a dismal and desolate outlook truly, but possessed of the beauty of wild loneliness. A few days' residence at the Post more than reconciled us to our surroundings, and we soon discovered that Nature had here scattered her treasures with lavish prodigality, though veiling them from the vulgar gaze never so cleverly."[100] Mearns goes on to describe the hawks he encountered while out observing the work of beavers, as well as a trip with a fellow officer and an escort of two enlisted men. The army context is a backdrop for Mearns's storytelling, and he says nothing about the particular military work occurring all around him. It simply sets the scene. Mearns introduced the Verde Valley

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[99] Coues, as quoted in the entry for "Elliott Coues" in Hume, *Ornithologists of the United States Army Medical Corps*, 68.
[100] Edgar A. Mearns, "Some Birds of Arizona," *The Auk* Vol. 3, No. 1 (January 1886), pp.60-73, 65.

similarly in an 1890 article he wrote for *Popular Science Monthly* about the archaeological investigating he did in the area surrounding Fort Verde, and in particular, at "Montezuma's Castle."

Figure 10. "Montezuma's Castle," Beaver Creek, Arizona, 3 miles from Fort Verde, A.T., showing the creek in the foreground, instantaneous / E.A.M. 1887.[101]

This piece, though focused on archaeological findings, embraces Coues's charge to "shape the knowledge" for the "widest possible diffusion," and demonstrates Mearns's range as a collector

[101] E.A.M. is Edgar Alexander Mearns. Edgar A. Mearns, photographer. "Montezuma's Castle," Beaver Creek, Arizona, 3 miles from Fort Verde, A.T., showing the creek in the foreground, instantaneous / E.A.M. Photographic print. No. 12, 1887, Edgar A. Mearns Collection, Photographs and Prints Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/95506007/ Accessed 30 March 2013.

interested in natural and human history. He cited "numerous tours of field-service and authorized hunting expeditions" as having provided him with the opportunity to explore ruins like those at Montezuma's Castle, and in particular, acknowledges that the quartermaster at Fort Verde provided him with the (four) ladders he needed to get up and into these puebloan cliff dwellings.[102] In this piece intended for a broad audience, Mearns uses his military service to strengthen his credibility; though he was not an archaeologist or anthropologist, his familiarity with the region and his army medical work both help Mearns distance himself from "unscientific relic-seekers."[103] In these pieces in *The Auk* and in *Popular Science Monthly*, the army affords Mearns key opportunities for exploration, collection, and study.

But these opportunities were never guaranteed. In 1888, after four years at Fort Verde, Mearns requested six months leave time, ostensibly to pursue his scientific work. This kind of leave was not unheard of; the military records of Dr. Coues and Captain Bendire certainly suggest that details to Washington or leave for naturalist's work had occurred before. Mearns's request, though approved, was never granted. The letter he received from the Surgeon General's Office in the War Department acknowledged Mearns's service, but cited the "great dearth of medical officers" as the reason that it was "impossible to grant indulgencies to those who have won the right to them by hard work on the Frontier."[104] A letter sent a few weeks later notifies

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[102] Edgar Alexander Mearns, "Ancient Dwellings of the Rio Verde Valley," *Popular Science Monthly*, October 1890, pp.745-653, 747, 751. This particular issue of *PSM* opens with a piece written by A. D. White, in which he argues for the progress of man: "For the one great legitimate, scientific conclusion of Anthropology is that more and more a better civilization of the world, despite all its survivals of savagery and barbarism, is developing…" See A. D. White, "New Chapters in the Warfare of Science. X. The Fall of Man and Anthropology, " *Popular Science Monthly*, October 1890, pp.721-736, 736.
[103] Mearns, "Ancient Dwellings of the Rio Verde Valley," 763.
[104] Letter from Surgeon General's Office to Edgar Mearns, March 15, 1888, Box 10, folder labeled "Military Correspondence, 1888," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Mearns that he is to be transferred to Fort Snelling, an arrangement that the author hoped might enable Mearns to get some leave time sooner than if he were to remain in Arizona. He apologizes again that Mearns's leave request had not been granted: "I knew that the interest you have taken in scientific pursuits must have been the main reason for seeking it." He highlights that "there may be many little opportunities for you to carry on your work among your confreres in the East" from Snelling, as the medical director there was "a warm supporter in the pursuit of your favorite studies."[105] Mearns received some small institutional encouragement for his scientific work while stationed at Fort Verde, but not very much in the way of concrete support. The larger politics of the frontier army's hierarchy and needs shaped the contours of Mearns's service, but it seems that the most significant factor enabling (or not) Mearns's naturalist work was his immediate command structure.

Bendire acknowledged this indirectly in his May 1886 letter to Mearns. After asking Mearns about his collecting and publishing, Bendire's letter turned toward army politics. He wrote, "How do you like the new change of administration, I hope that Genrl Miles will give you as many facilities as Genrl Crook did. The latter was one of the very best men in this respect, that I ever served under, although I have had no reason whatever to complain of Genrl Miles treatment to me."[106] The "change of administration" as Bendire called it, was no small switch. General Crook and General Sheridan fundamentally disagreed about the way that the campaign against Geronimo and the renegade Chiricahuas was to be handled. Crook stood by his use of

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[105] Letter from Surgeon General's Office to Edgar Mearns, April 3, 1888, Box 10, folder labeled "Military Correspondence, 1888," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[106] Charles E. Bendire to Edgar A. Mearns, May 28, 1886, Box 4, folder labeled "Correspondence Jan-June 1886," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Apache scouts to both locate and negotiate with Geronimo, while Sheridan, back in the East and unfamiliar with Southwestern terrain and campaigns, insinuated that Crook wasn't doing all that he could to secure Geronimo's surrender. This disagreement occurred against a backdrop of disputes over civilian versus military supervision of Indian reservations, and as part of a deeper rift in ideas about military strategy. Ultimately, Crook wrote these words to Sheridan, asking to be replaced:

> That the operations of the scouts in Mexico have not proved as successful as was hoped is due to the enormous difficulties they have been compelled to encounter from the nature of the Indians they have been hunting, and the character of the country in which they have operated, and of which persons not thoroughly conversant with both can have no conception. I believe that the plan upon which I have conducted operations is the one most likely to prove successful in the end. It may be, however, that I am too much wedded to my own views in the matter, and as I have spent nearly eight years of the hardest work of my life in this department, I respectfully request that I may now be relieved from its command.[107]

General Nelson Miles, an officer with very different ideas about the role of scouts in Indian campaigns, was assigned to replace Crook. Mearns's papers contain no commentary on the change in leadership, but given Mearns's repeated acknowledgement of Crook's kindness toward him, I, like Bendire, wonder how Mearns felt about the transition. Of Miles, Bendire wrote that he "gave me all the chances I could, while I served under him," perhaps intending these words as encouragement.[108] "I suppose he has every available man out in the field after Geronimo + guarding the reservation Indians so that you are left comparatively alone at the post."[109] It is unclear whether being "left comparatively alone" was good or bad for collecting specimens, but

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[107] Crook and Schmitt, ed., *General George Crook: His Autobiography*, 264-265.
[108] Charles E. Bendire to Edgar A. Mearns, May 28, 1886, Box 4, folder labeled "Correspondence Jan-June 1886," Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[109] Ibid.

Bendire is right that it seems unlikely that Mearns would accompany the officers and soldiers sent out after Geronimo.[110]

Collecting Geronimo

The relative peace of Mearns's first two years at Verde was fragile. Increasing greed on the part of white settlers, corruption from Indian agents, disagreements about the terms of reservation life; all of this suggested, at least in hindsight, that the orders issued and accommodations granted by Crook were not sustainable.

During his first tour of duty in Arizona Territory, Crook had instituted a "tagging" policy on reservation lands, both "for the better protection of the Indians" and "to enable the commanding officers to tell at a moment's notice just where each and every one of the males capable of bearing arms was to be found."[111] Newcomers to San Carlos, such as those from the now defunct Rio Verde Reservation, would have been issued metal tags with identifying information on them. Henry Irving, a Dilzhe'e man who had made the trip to San Carlos with others from Rio Verde, was issued a tag with the designation "S.E. 8." S for San Carlos, E for "E band" and 8 to designate Henry as a individual. "For purposes of dealing with whites, the tag-band designations often served in lieu of names."[112] Bourke described the tags as being "of

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[110] Mearns's papers, by their omission of any reference to the campaigns against Geronimo, seem to concur with Bendire's assumptions about Mearns's role — or lack thereof—in these highly publicized missions to capture or gain the surrender of Geronimo and the remaining "renegade" Apaches. This is not to say that medical officers weren't involved in the pursuit of Geronimo; in fact, Assistant Surgeon Leonard Wood, assigned to Henry Lawton and part of the group detailed to hunt Geronimo in Mexico, played an important, non-medical role in the military actions that comprised this final campaign. See Utley, *Geronimo*, especially chapters 22, 23, 24; and Leonard Wood and Jack C. Lane (ed.), C*hasing Geronimo: The Journal of Leonard Wood, May-September, 1886* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1970).
[111] Bourke, *On The Border With Crook*, 219.
[112] Herman, *Rim Country Exodus*, 163.

various shapes, but all small and convenient in size."[113] Different shapes signaled different tribal affiliations. Bourke wrote that there were "crosses, crescents, circles, diamonds, squares, triangles."[114] These tags were to be worn at all times. Some of the Apache men hid up in the mountains, preferring not to be tagged by the army, not to be marked as belonging to an agency or as under the power of the American government. Others fled, and over and over scouts and troops were sent out to hunt them down. Wesley Merritt wrote that Apache men received the tagging order with "sullen dissatisfaction because, if carried out, it checkmated their roving." While Bourke's earlier account framed the tags as passes to track movement, Merritt described what he called "the daily verification of the Indians." The "counting officer" walked among the tagged men arranged in concentric circles and "checked off the numbers on the tags."[115] Crook and his men continued to utilize the practice of "tagging" Apache men to monitor their travel and their obedience throughout his second tour at the helm of the Department of Arizona.

On May 15, 1885, several Apache headmen gathered outside the tent of Lieutenant Britton Davis, the army officer in charge of the Chiricahuas at Turkey Creek. They told Davis that they'd been drinking *tiswin* the night before (tiswin being a corn-based alcoholic beverage brewed by Apache women and officially banned under army rules for the reservations). Davis sent a telegram to Crook asking for instructions on how to proceed, but for several reasons (issues related to the chain of command, and later, cut telegraph wires), the message didn't arrive. Two days later, a large group of Chiricahuas left their camp on reservation land and made

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[113] Bourke, *On the Border With Crook,* 219.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Merritt likened these Apache men to "snakes ready to strike…" Wesley Merritt, "Incidents of Indian Campaigning in Arizona," *Harpers New Monthly Magazine* Vol. 80 No.459 (April 1890) in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars 1865-1890*, 156-157. Cozzens notes that the practice of tagging was instituted by Crook in the spring of 1873. (Also, I must acknowledge how valuable Cozzens's primary source reader has been for this chapter. This volume alone contains 600+ pages of articles from military journals, the popular press, diaries, and memoirs.)

for Mexico. The group of "renegades"—forty-two men and ninety-two women and children in all—included Geronimo, Naiche, and Chihuahua.[116] Thus began the final Apache campaign, the one that ended in Geronimo's capture.

An interested reader could spend a lifetime reading both popular and scholarly accounts of the campaign against Geronimo.[117] It is not my intention to add another volume to the already deep pool of incredibly detailed re-tellings of this story. But I am interested in why this story seems to have captured the attention of so many people, in its day and in ours.[118]

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[116] The historiography of the Apache campaigns is extensive and filled with minute details. For a clear overview, see the introduction to Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars, 1865-1890*, pp. xvi to xxxiv. For a still clear, but more detailed narrative account, see Edwin Sweeney's magisterial *From Cochise to Geronimo*.

[117] I am grateful for the wealth of texts available to me—I understand far more about those fifteen months between May 1885 and August 1886, and about the day-to-day work of the frontier army—than I ever would without the scholars, enthusiasts, and firsthand participants who sought to set the record straight.

[118] President Obama is visiting Standing Rock as I write—today, June 13, 2014. He's honoring veterans, talking with reservation young people, and stressing the importance of the "government-to-government relationship." This is the first presidential visit to Indian County since President Clinton made the trip to Pine Ridge. President and Mrs. Obama visited the Cannon Ball Flag Day Powwow. After dances and songs, President Obama quoted Chief Sitting Bull, "Standing Rock's most famous resident," who said, "let's put our minds together to see what we can build for our children." President Obama's speech at Standing Rock moved me: "Young people should be able to live and work and raise a family right here in the land of your fathers and mothers." These are only words, of course, and as someone who studies the Indian Wars, I know too well how terribly the federal government has treated Native people. But this powwow that President Obama attended is in honor of Flag Day. And what I see when I look at the arena he's speaking in, what I see in the dancers young and old, calls up memories for me of my own time in a different corner of Indian country — in Apache and Hopi and Navajo country. And I think of Marie, a Navajo woman who taught me how to make fry bread and how to butcher a sheep. She gave me a pair of earrings she'd beaded: hoops with American flags suspended in them, the flag waving in the wind. The workmanship (workwomanship?) is beautiful and intricate. They are so heavy my ears bleed after an afternoon of wearing them, but I wear them anyway. I wore them to her funeral, the only Navajo funeral I've ever attended, which began in the morning and lasted until mid-afternoon, when everyone rode out to the family land and the men in her life, her sons, and grandsons, hefted shovels and began digging her grave. Marie's patriotism was unflagging. I could never understand it. Even then, I knew how the United States had let her down. A decade later, that truth is even clearer to me. And so, when I hear President Obama call up the words of Sitting Bull, and acknowledge how uneven the

On the surface, of course, the answer is obvious. The Geronimo campaign had all the makings of a Hollywood script: dramatic scenery, an enemy raiding and on the run, military leaders who didn't like each other and had very different ideas about how things should be done. There are even compelling mini-plots—brave soldiers, captives, run-ins with the Mexican army—to complicate the main narrative arc. The story is exciting; it seems clear why people would gravitate towards it, want to hear it, read it, study it. But the story of Geronimo's capture was also the story of how the West was won—at last. Not since Custer's death had so much attention been focused on the frontier. Geronimo's name was known everywhere, and the campaign to find him received almost continuous national press coverage.[119]

"Apaches on Warpath" dominated headlines in Arizona Territory when Geronimo and the other "renegades" fled the reservation and made for Mexico. (The newspaper coverage ignored, as Odie Faulk has pointed out, the over four hundred Apache people who stayed at San Carlos when Geronimo fled.)[120] Crook and the army mobilized immediately, and within a few weeks, soldiers and scouts numbering two thousand had been sent to the field in pursuit.[121] The army had chased Geronimo before, and even though the military had succeeded in getting him back to the reservation twice already, it had never been easy. This time, the army was chasing renegades who left and immediately rode one hundred and twenty miles without rest.[122]

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playing field is, how challenging it can be to be "both Native and American," I think of Marie and her family, of people who matter to me, who are part of what the West means for me, even if I was only there for a little while. I hesitate to write about these experiences because I want to honor them, and to keep them, rather than accidentally wield them in some privileged way, as if they give me sort of claim on this history, or on a more authentic understanding of this place. They don't. But I'm thinking about this all the same, as the past I'm writing about and the present I'm living in talk to each other.

[119] Utley, Geronimo, 220.

[120] Odie Faulk, *The Geronimo Campaign* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 56-67.

[121] Ibid., 62.

[122] Ibid., 58.

Frontier soldiers regularly likened Indians—and Apache Indians in particular—to animals. Sometimes this language expressed awe, even admiration. Bourke described the challenging terrain, but also how the scouts handled it: "up and down these ridges our Apache scouts, when the idea seized them, ran like deer." And then, moments later, he wrote, "Before I had finished making this note they had skinned off their trappings and darted like wolves along the ridge…"[123] And Crook described the Apache as "very independent and as fierce as so many tigers" in a telegram to General Sheridan, his superior in Washington.[124] Deer, wolf, tiger: these comparisons seem favorable — for who wouldn't want the strength and agility of these creatures? Wesley Merritt wrote that the scouts were "like a pack of greyhounds," and that "light and active as a cat, the Apache on the rocky hillside is unapproachable."[125] Other observers saw Apache "animal nature" in a less positive light. For example, Assistant Surgeon Loring acknowledged the courage of Apache people, and then attributed that courage to "ignorance and an animal nature," rather than to their humanity.[126]

Others pointed to Apache "animal nature" to explain Apache choices. For example, James S. Pettit concluded that because "neither Geronimo nor Chihuahua could give any

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[123] Bourke, excerpts from his diary in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 361. Not everyone resorted to animal imagery to describe Apache skills. William Shipp used the language of maturity: "Small and unable to compete with white men in any athletic sports, yet they made us feel like babies when it came to mountain work." His prose is full of appreciation of Chiricahua ability: "Their knowledge of country; their powers of observation and deduction; their watchfulness, endurance, and ability to take care of themselves under all circumstances made them seem at times like superior beings from another world." See William E. Shipp, "Captain Crawford's Last Expedition," *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* 5, no. 19 (December 1892): 343-61, in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 519.

[124] Animal labels went both ways; it seems that Crook's nickname among the Apaches was "Grey Fox" because of his graying beard. See Faulk, *The Geronimo Campaign*, 32.

[125] Wesley Merritt, "Incidents of Indian Campaigning in Arizona," *Harpers New Monthly Magazine,* 80 no. 459 (April 1890): 724-31 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars,* 160, 156.

[126] L. Y. Loring, "Report on [the] Coyotero Apaches," Hubert H. Bancroft Collection, Bancroft Library, in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 195.

reasonable excuses for taking to the warpath" during a meeting in March 1886 with General Crook, "that such a course must have been due to their bestial savage natures…"[127] (Never mind that Pettit made himself the authority on what counts as reasonable.) These animal comparisons were also part of how military leaders articulated their offensive strategies. When asked about his campaign against the Apaches, Crook replied, "Of course, my plan of fighting Indians is first to locate them."[128] And Miles later explained that in fighting the Apache, he "adopted the same methods used to capture bands of wild horses."[129] Crook did not reserve animal imagery for the Apaches; he also used it to explain why traditional methods couldn't possibly work against Apache tactics: "Under such conditions Regular troops are as helpless as a whale attacked by a school of swordfish."[130]

Army men didn't simply describe Apache people using animal imagery and rhetoric; they also sometimes treated them like animals—literally like the specimens Mearns carefully measured, described, and labeled. In fact, Crook's "tagging" policy, used throughout the Apache campaigns, echoed contemporary natural history practices of specimen collection. Murat Masterson, of the *Arizona Democrat,* interviewed Crook about how it worked:

> The Indians in each band were all numbered and each given a brass tag or check, the different bands having different-shaped tags, so that the tag shows not only the band its owner belongs to but his number in the band. A record of these together with a full and complete description of the owner is kept in a book. They were

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[127] James S. Pettit, "Apache Campaign Notes—1886," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 7 (September 1886): 331-38, in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 532.
[128] "Apache Affairs: An Interview with General Crook," New York *Herald*, July 9, 1883 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 401.
[129] Nelson A. Miles, "On the Trail of Geronimo," *Cosmpolitan* 51 (June 1911) 249-62 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars,* 538.
[130] George Crook, "The Apache Problem," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 7 (September 1886): 257-69 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars,* 598.

> then instructed that anyone found outside the reservation or without his tag would be considered as hostile and treated accordingly.[131]

An officer in the Fourth Cavalry explained why this system was so useful. He wrote, "Any American who would attempt to burden himself or his memory with a number of Indian names would soon be hopelessly lost, but tag numbers and the records made it very simple to locate a special individual."[132] While this system no doubt aided efficiency, the practice of "tagging" didn't just organize; it standardized and surveilled. The shapes, numbers, and letters on the tags didn't simply correspond to tribe and band. Instead, they led to a descriptive entry of the tag wearer. Bourke called this description "a full recital of all his physical particularities," rather like a naturalist's field book with entries for each specimen containing measurements and distinguishing characteristics.[133]

Indian scouts were not excluded from tagging. "When mustered into service they were furnished with a brass tag like a baggage check with a tribal number…and a personal number for themselves."[134] While these tags sound a lot like the "dog tags" we're familiar with today—small pieces of metal embossed with key information like social security numbers, religious beliefs, and for some branches of the military, gas mask size—it did not become standard practice to issue identification tags to soldiers until World War I. Of course, soldiers in the Civil War and the Indian Wars often labeled themselves with identifying information so that they could be

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[131] Murat Masterson, "General Crook's Return," Prescott *Arizona Democrat*, November 25, 1882 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 316.
[132] Charles P. Elliott, "An Indian Reservation under General George Crook," *Military Affairs* (Summer 1948): 91-102 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 408.
[133] Bourke, *An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre*, 41. Here Bourke is describing tagging at San Carlos.
[134] Charles King, "On Campaign in Arizona," Milwaukee *Sentinel*, March 28, 1880, in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 165.

identified if killed in battle, but this was not the purpose behind Crook's "tagging."[135] His practice was limited to Indians, whether serving as scouts or residing on designated reservations.

Figure 11. Tagging Apache men. The tag hangs from the necklace Nalte' wears. Image from Jason Hook, *The Apaches*.[136]

[135] For a brief overview of the history of dog tags, including their use and evolution, see Richard W. Wooley, "History of the Dog Tag" at http://www.173rdairborne.com/dogtag.htm. Wooley says that the first formal encouragement for soldiers to wear identification tags came from Charles Pierce in 1899 during the Philippine-American War. For more on Civil War soldiers' experiences, see Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*, especially the chapters titled, "Naming," "Accounting," and "Counting,"

[136] Jason Hook, *The Apaches* (London: Osprey, 1987), 3.

Despite regular mentions of this practice in sources from the Apache campaigns, it is hard to find photographic evidence. The tags are hard to see in the pictures we have from this period. But I've located one image, a studio portrait of a San Carlos Apache man named Nalte' taken in the 1880s. Archaeological surveys of battle sites from the Apache Wars have turned up some of these tags, and histories and ethnographies of Apache communities will sometimes mention an individual's "tag-band ID" in parentheses.[137]

On its own, this practice sounds like the work of empire; an expansion of colonial power, and increased surveillance and management of colonial subjects.[138] It is ugly, and dehumanizing, and clearly an outgrowth of nineteenth-century ideas about progress, and the difference between "savagery" and "civilization," but for the most part, these practices are legible (if awful) as part of a military operation—and occupation. Examined in the context of natural history practice, though, the similarities between specimen labels and field notes and the tags given to Apache men and the descriptions documented in army ledgers seem too great to be a coincidence. Birds were shot, skinned, stuffed, described, and labeled. Native people were collected too—contained on newly designated reservations, tagged with labels, their identifying characteristics documented to assist with future identification.

Historian Edwin Sweeney constructed a table based on the tagging of Chiricahua and Warm Springs Apache men done by Lieutenant Britton Davis, the officer in charge at Fort Apache when the "outbreak" occurred in May 1885. Sweeney's table helps us to understand who

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[137] See, for example, John R. Welch, Chip Colwell-Chathaphonh, and Mark Altaha, "Retracing the Battle of Cibecue: Western Apache, Documentary, and Archaeological Interpretations," *Kiva* Vol. 71, No. 2 (Winter, 2005), pp. 133-163.

[138] Karl Jacoby mentions the tags Crook made Apache men wear, and links the practice to James C Scott's descriptions of "state simplification" in *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). See Jacoby, *Shadows and Dawn*, 229 and note 21 on p.315.

was under Davis's management at Fort Apache. Sweeney listed each band by leader and assigned number, along with the number of men who left and the number who stayed on the reservation, some of whom later served as scouts in the ensuing campaign.[139] Geronimo would have had a tag. In Sweeney's table, he is listed as the chief of Chiricahua Band B. What did his entry in the army ledger say? How might he have been described?

[139] See Sweeney, *From Cochise to Geronimo*, table on p.406. Sweeney says that he "pieced together, from several sources of information, a compilation by band of those men who left the reservation and those who remained, most of whom served as scouts for Crook in the upcoming campaigns" (406). As best as I can tell from Sweeney's notes and sources, this material might come from Record Group 391 at NARA. The finding aid for this group indicates that the holdings contain "muster rolls, descriptive books and lists, and morning reports, of companies and detachments of Indian Scouts, 1872-99." It's possible that one or more of these "descriptive books and lists" are the tagging lists that Crook, Bourke, and others described. I hope to locate a tagging list and the descriptive entries that accompany it for the book project.

Figure 12. Portrait of Geronimo by A. Frank Randall, 1884. National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution.[140]

Short and stocky, weathered, maybe. But still strong. Describing Geronimo and his band in 1883, Bourke wrote, "In muscular development, lung and heart power, they were, without exception, the finest body of human beings I had ever looked upon."[141]

Soldiers who knew Geronimo had mixed opinions.[142] Lieutenant James Parker remembered him as "friendly and good natured" while at Fort Apache.[143] Another officer wrote that Geronimo had "the most arresting" countenance, and "a look of unspeakable savagery, or fierceness." And "when he was mad he simply looked like the devil, and an intelligent devil at that."[144] Another officer said Geronimo had "a diabolical appearance and with a character to correspond."[145] Lieutenant Britton Davis later wrote that Geronimo "was a thoroughly vicious, intractable, and treacherous man. His only redeeming traits were courage and determination."[146]

But other sources described a man capable of kindness. Marietta Wetherill remembered encountering Geronimo near Willow Springs in 1885, after what may have been his last raid en route to Mexico. Her father was excavating (looting?) native ruins, and she'd been left behind at

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[140] The National Portrait Gallery record dates their print to c.1887, but this image is on the cover of Utley's biography of Geronimo, courtesy of the Arizona Historical Society, which states that Randall took this portrait at San Carlos in 1884. http://npgportraits.si.edu/eMuseumNPG/code/emuseum.asp?rawsearch=ObjectID/,/is/,/93202/,/false/,/false&newprofile=CAP&newstyle=single Accessed 10 June 2014.
[141] Bourke, *An Apache Campaign in the Sierra Madre,* 102.
[142] In *The View From Officer's Row*, Sherry Smith demonstrates the complexity of frontier officers' ideas about and relationships with native people in the nineteenth century.
[143] James Parker, *The Old Army; Memories, 1872-1918. (*Philadelphia: Dorrance & Co, 1929), 152.
[144] Henry W. Daly, "The Capture of Geronimo," *Winners of the West* 11, no. 1 (December 1933): 1, 3 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 448.
[145] William E. Shipp, "Captain Crawford's Last Expedition," *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association* 5, no. 19 (December 1892): 343-61 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars,* 516.
[146] Davis, *The Truth About Geronimo*, 142.

her family's camp because she hadn't finished her lessons. A group of Apaches rode up and asked for water; they seemed impressed that eight-year-old Marietta responded in Navajo. Geronimo called her an "Apache girl," and said he'd bring her with him, and give her a pony. Quite the precocious child, she responded that her mother would cry; besides, she already had a pony. The men watered their horses, and gave Marietta a quarter of beef from their supply. She didn't realize she was talking to Geronimo, the famed and feared Apache warrior — and her father didn't believe her when she told him that Indians had visited the camp while he was away. And then the army arrived, asking questions. Geronimo had been kind to her, she remembered in a 1953 oral history interview, and so she didn't quite tell the soldiers the whole truth about which direction Geronimo and the other Apaches had gone.[147]

The newspapers, of course, made him out to be evil incarnate, a ruthless troublemaker who should be caught and punished. The residents of Cochise County, Arizona, went so far as to pass a resolution demanding that the Apache Indians be removed from what the residents described as "the middle of our territory." They acknowledged that pioneers take risks, and also that some Indians could be peaceable, but ultimately, they made their case for the removal of the Indians at San Carlos by claiming that "one or two Geronimos can at any time apply the torch that sets the flame ablaze."[148] This was the context for the last campaign against Geronimo.

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[147] Mrs. Wetherill told the soldiers that the Indians had gone up the road, which was partially true. But after about 200 yards, they'd turned off the road and up a steep hill. She failed to mention this final change in direction to the soldiers who visited her family's camp. Mrs. Marietta Wetherill, interview by, 1953, tape #424, transcript, Pioneers Foundation (New Mexico) Collection (MSS 123 BC), Center for Southwest Research, University Libraries, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque.

[148] G. Gordon Adam, "Resolution Adopted at Meeting of Residents of Cochise County, Arizona, Regarding Outbreak of Indians from San Carlos Reservation," in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars,* 420-421.

A few years earlier, Crook had been interviewed about Indian affairs by the New York *Herald.* He commented that "if this Indian question were put in its true light, it would be entirely different from anything now in print. The eastern and western ideas are too far apart. Take the Fenimore Cooper idea and the western impression—that the only good Indian is a dead Indian—and see how widely they differ."[149] He called the Apaches "the shrewdest and best fighters in the world" in that interview, and so when the Fort Apache outbreak began the final Apache campaign in May of 1885, Crook sprang into action.[150] He moved his base of operations to Fort Huachaca, in southern Arizona Territory, and organized expeditions comprising cavalrymen and Apache scouts to pursue Geronimo, Naiche, Chihuahua, Mangus, and Nana (all men listed as the leaders of their bands according to Sweeney's chart of Davis's census and tagging efforts). The pursuit led American troops into Mexico after the Apaches, and they clashed with the "hostiles" and with Mexican troops, despite an international agreement allowing them to follow the renegades into Mexican territory. Crook's efforts throughout 1885 resulted in a March 1886 conference with Geronimo in Sonora. C. S. Fly, a photographer from Tombstone, Arizona, was present, and he captured the meeting and its participants on film.

Crook and the Chiricahuas talked about ways to resolve their impasse, possible terms for surrender, and at the end of the meeting, it seemed that they had come to an agreement, one that included plans for Geronimo and his people to return to the reservation in Arizona after two years in the East. (These terms were not approved by Sheridan or President Cleveland.) But a night of mescal-drinking and worry (perhaps induced by the stories a bootlegger told to them about what would happen when they returned to the reservation) prompted a change of heart.

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[149] George Crook, "Apache Affairs: An Interview with George Crook," New York *Herald*, July 9, 1883 in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*, 397-398.
[150] Ibid., 402.

Leaving Chihuahua and almost sixty others behind at Cañon de los Embudos, Geronimo, Naiche, and a small party of men, women, and children fled into the mountains. Geronimo's departure raised questions for General Sheridan about the value of the scouts and Crook's leadership. "It seems strange that Geronimo's party could have escaped without the knowledge of the Scouts," Sheridan wrote.[151] The flurry of telegrams revealed an impasse. *I have spent nearly eight years of the hardest work of my life in this department.*

With these words, Crook asked to be relieved of his post, and General Nelson A. Miles was dispatched to take over the assignment: to bring in Geronimo and the remaining Chiricahua renegades. One of Crook's disputes with Sheridan was over the proper place of scouts in frontier service. Crook argued that they were necessary; Sheridan and Miles thought Crook relied too heavily on them. It didn't take long, though, for Miles to see their import in the context of southern Arizona Territory and northern Mexico. Miles sent Captain Henry Lawton into Mexico after Geronimo, into what Lawton called in letters to his wife Mame a "godforsaken country."[152] He wrote letters to her almost daily during the summer of 1886, and they are filled with accounts of the challenges of the field. Reading them now, in rapid succession, from the comfort of my home, they sound whiny, but I know that's not fair to Lawton and his men. "It's hard for you to realize the hard work we have to do," he wrote; no sign of "the hostiles," as he called them, and on some days, no sign of their or any trail. The bugs are bad, and water is either hard to find or the rivers are too high and rough to ford. And on top of that, "our poor Government can't supply shoes, it seems, or very little of anything, for a handfull[sic] of soldiers who are laboring their very best, very hard and patiently in these wild and awfully rugged mountains." "This is an

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[151] Charles M. Robinson, *General Crook and the Western Frontier* (Norman, OK; University of Oklahoma Press, 2001), 279-282. For Chiricahua numbers, see Utley, *Geronimo*, 186.
[152] Jack Lane, the editor of Leonard Wood's journal of this campaign, calls Lawton's letters to Mary "lugubrious." See Lane, *Chasing Geronimo*, 11.

awful country," Henry writes, though he later acknowledges his dour tone: "Well, I have given you another growl today." There are also moments when Lawton's letters to Mame lift a little bit. "I forgot to tell you we are in the land of parrots - not the small ones, but the great big green and red fellows." Henry clearly appreciates the strangeness of parrots in a place he describes as otherwise hellish. "They are very wild and fly very high, but it seems funny to have parrots flying about wild." Ultimately, Henry knew what needed to happen. His letters regularly worried over the task he'd been assigned. He articulated the stakes this way: "I shall try very hard to catch Geronimo because I know I cannot get home until I do."[153] Luckily for Lawton, even though he didn't accomplish the victory all by himself, all of the hard work he described in letter after letter eventually paid off.

At the end of August, Apache scouts accompanying Lieutenant Charles Gatewood found Geronimo's camp. In her biography of Geronimo, Angie Debo highlights "the strength and stability of Apache institutions," the "democratic manner of reaching decisions" even (or perhaps especially) in the context of war.[154] The Chiricahuas outlined a plan for surrendering to Miles. To Mame, Lawton wrote, "This morning Geronimo with 12 or 13 of his men came in to my camp and I have been talking with him all the morning. We had a very affectionate hug when we met and a lively, good, natural talk. He says he and all his people are anxious to make peace but he wants to see and make peace with General Miles."[155] Miles agreed to join Lawton, Gatewood,

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[153] Henry Ware Lawton to Mary "Mame" Craig Lawton, quotations from letters dated June 30, July 7, July 22, July 16, June 26, all 1886, Box 1, folders 6 and 7, Henry Ware Lawton Papers, Library of Congress.
[154] Angie Debo, *Geronimo: The Man, His Time, His Place* (Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 287.
[155] Correspondence, Henry Ware Lawton to Mary "Mame" Craig Lawton, August 26, 1886. Box 1, folder 9, Henry Ware Lawton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

and the Chiricahuas at the place they named: Skeleton Canyon.[156] There Geronimo and Miles met. General Miles explained, using an illustration of stones, that Geronimo and his people would be reunited with Chihuahua and his band, who had already been sent east to Florida. It is unclear what Geronimo understood about what he was agreeing to; he never learned that the terms of his earlier agreement with Crook were not acceptable to the government. And certainly Miles made promises he could not keep — promises of a reservation for all the Chiricahuas, promises of a slate "wiped clean."[157] Geronimo's surrender was certainly not unconditional—hence my use of "capture" as a more accurate descriptor—though it would be treated as such by those who kept him and his people under military control for decades to come. He would later say to Stephen Barrett, while recounting his life story through a translator, "I do not believe that I have ever violated that treaty; but General Miles never fulfilled his promises."[158] Geronimo, Naiche, and the remaining Chiricahuas, including scouts who had served as part of the United States Army, were collected and ordered onto trains headed east. The Chiricahuas were now prisoners of war, and the journey reflected this: windows and doors closed shut, even in the desert heat, as the train hurtled eastward, first to San Antonio, and then onward to Florida.[159]

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[156] Miles sent the message "by heliograph," a system he set up for relaying messages using mirrors on mountaintops. See Henry Ware Lawton to Mary "Mame" Craig Lawton, August 26, 1886, Box 1, folder 9, Henry Ware Lawton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. See also Bruno J. Rolak,"General Miles' Mirrors: The Heliograph in the Geronimo Campaign of 1886" *The Journal of Arizona History* (1975) 16, no. 2: 145-160.
[157] See Utley, *Geronimo,* 217-225; Debo, *Geronimo*, 293-308; In S. M. Barrett's account of Geronimo's story (as narrated by Geronimo,translated by Asa Daklugie in 1904, and first published in 1906), Geronimo described Miles as offering this deal: "'There is plenty of timber, water, and grass in the land to which I will send you. You will live with your tribe and with your family. If you agree to this treaty you shall see your family within five days.'" See Barrett, *Geronimo: His Own Story* (New York: Penguin, 1996), 146.
[158] Barrett, *Geronimo*, 147.
[159] Chihuahua's band, who had surrendered to Crook in March, 1886, had already made the trip to Fort Marion in St. Augustine, Florida. For the conditions of the journey, see Debo, *Geronimo*, 300 and Sweeney, *From Cochise to Geronimo,* 575.

Figure 13. "Geronimo and fellow Apache Indian prisoners on their way to Florida by train," September 10, 1886, State Archives of Florida.[160]

It must have been strange to move through what had been their country so quickly, to see the changes they'd been witnessing (and battling) for so long appear in such rapid succession. A piece published in *The Century* in 1887 summarizing the history and practices of Apache people used the railroad to paint a picture of the transformation of the West—and the waning place of the Apache in it: "Railroads run the double bands of iron through their deserts, mines pour their ores from the sheltering sides of their mountain homes, an inexorable decree has cramped them

[160] "Geronimo and fellow Apache Indian prisoners on their way to Florida by train," September 10, 1886, Image RC02773, State Archives of Florida, *Florida Memory*, http://floridamemory.com/items/show/26504 Accessed 10 June 2014.

to a corner of their country, where they now wrest a living from the soil they once toiled as masters, and it may well be said that the Apache sun is near the horizon of their national destiny."[161] Though other Apache tribes remained in the Southwest on established reservations, there was no land set aside for the Chiricahuas. Described by Crook as people who could be "perfectly at home anywhere in the immense country over which [they] roam[s]," the Chiricahua Apache would now have to navigate new territory, to try to make homes while under strict military management.[162] Their departure from Apacheria eastward, out of the country that they'd made "uninhabitable" to settlers for so long, seemed to herald the beginning of a new age on the western frontier: its end.[163]

Writing in *The Century* in 1891, G. W. Baird claimed that "General Sherman has called the twenty years of constant Indian warfare following the war of the Rebellion, 'The Battle of Civilization,'" and with the surrender of Geronimo and the Chiricahuas, "civilization" had emerged victorious. But that did not stop Americans from flocking to world's fairs (and other venues) to see performances affirming that the West had indeed been won. William Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, and the group of performers in his show, reenacted key pieces of the disappearing frontier experience, including an act called "Attack on a Settler's Cabin by Hostile Indians. Repulse by Cowboys, under the leadership of Buffalo Bill." Sometimes, particularly earlier in the show's thirty-three-year run, Cody's troupe performed a variation: According to historian Louis Warren, "In the early years, the rescue was carried out by Buffalo Bill and his

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[161] Frederick Schwatka, "Among the Apaches" *The Century* Vol. 34 Issue 1 May 1887, pp. 41-53, American Periodicals, 52.
[162] George Crook, "The Apache Problem," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 7 (September 1886): 257-69, in Cozzens, *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*,
[163] William H. C. Bowen described how Geronimo "rendered portions of Arizona uninhabitable" in his personal papers reflecting on his military career. Box 2, folder 5 (labeled Mount Vernon Barracks Alabama), William H. C. Bowen Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

'Scouts, Cowboys, and Mexicans.'"[164] This twist on Cody's classic cabin attack scene—a twist offering both "Scouts" and "Mexicans" a role—seems a nod to the experiences of settlers in the Southwest. In the earliest years of Cody's show, it would have echoed events occurring in real time: the 1883 pursuit of the Chiricahuas deep into the Sierra Madre Mountains and the 1885-1886 hunt for Geronimo. Even after his capture, Geronimo's reputation did not wane.

Almost as soon as they arrived in Florida, many Americans made the trip to see the famous Geronimo and the warriors imprisoned alongside him at Fort Pickens. They bought crafts and autographs, and paid money to see an Apache dance.[165] Perhaps going to see Geronimo allowed Americans to indulge in a kind of persistent frontier nostalgia. Or maybe they understood him as the ultimate curiosity, a living, breathing part of the natural and human history of the "wild" West. He had evaded American troops for so long, though he'd been tagged and hunted steadily. Upon his surrender, he and the rest of the Chiricahuas were collected and sent east, another example of the kind of emptying of the West that was central to the imperial work of the frontier army.

This work was also waning. The fighting was mostly over; the work of ordering Indians on reservations—work often accompanied by observing, hunting, tagging and collecting specimens and artifacts of natural and human history—accomplished.

Dr. Mearns wrote nothing about Geronimo or his collection; his field books for 1885 and 1886 are filled with detailed descriptions of bird specimens, which give way to more four-legged

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[164] Louis S. Warren, "Cody's Last Stand: Masculine Anxiety, the Custer Myth, and the Frontier of Domesticity in Buffalo Bill's Wild West", *The Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 34 No. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 49–69, 54.
[165] Utley, *Geronimo*, 228.

creatures in the winter months.[166] But the end of the Apache campaigns and the collection and transport of Geronimo and the Chiricahuas meant that the nature of the work of the frontier army changed.

In 1888, Mearns received his orders to report to Fort Snelling in Minnesota. His field books suggest a quieter professional context: still walks around the post and specimens from the yard, but no General Crook to invite him on expeditions, no ruins to excavate. (In fact, the timeline of major events maintained by Historic Fort Snelling, a National Historic Landmark, lists zero entries for the period of Mearns's service there.)[167] But perhaps because of the quiet, an opportunity for an assignment that overlapped with Mearns's scientific skills and interests presented itself.

While at Fort Snelling, Mearns received a telegram inviting him to serve as the medical officer for the United States-Mexico International Boundary Survey. It wasn't the leave he'd requested a few years prior, but it was an opportunity to combine his medical and scientific work in a more official capacity. It was also a chance to return to the Southwest. Between January 1892 and September 1894, the survey team traversed the border, located and rebuilt the monuments marking it, and collected specimens. Mearns and the members of the expedition collected 30,000 bugs, birds, plants, and mammals.

Meanwhile, tourists (among them many newspaper editors who described their experiences in print) visited Pensacola in order to see the nation's most famous prisoners of war.[168] But only a fraction of the now captive Chiricahuas were at Fort Pickens. The women and

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[166] See Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Box 13, folders 1 and 2, and Box 12 folder 6, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[167] See Historic Fort Snelling Timeline, http://www.historicfortsnelling.org/history/timeline Accessed June 18, 2014.
[168] Utley, *Geronimo*, 229-230.

children of Geronimo's band had been sent to Fort Marion, on Florida's eastern coast. In April 1887, Geronimo's family members were transferred to Fort Pickens, and the rest of the Chiricahuas at Fort Marion were moved to Mount Vernon Barracks in Alabama. In May of 1888, Geronimo's band was transferred to Alabama.[169] This was where William H. C. Bowen encountered Geronimo.

Bowen, a member of the Fifth Infantry who had served under Miles on the Plains, was stationed at Mount Vernon Barracks in the 1890s. Long after the post had been "abandoned by the army," Bowen wrote that the site was "chiefly interesting to the general public as having been the home for so many years of Geronimo, the celebrated Apache Chief and his band of hostile Indians…who caused the army men…more hardships of all descriptions, than 10,000 regular troops would have caused."[170] Bowen appreciated the time he had to talk with Geronimo about his childhood and early adult life; he wrote that he "learned to like and respect the old warrior" while he was posted at Mount Vernon Barracks. Bowen probably would have enjoyed hearing Geronimo's side of his decades of raiding and fighting even more, but Geronimo said to him, "I will not talk about the war-path."[171]

Florida had not been kind to the Chiricahuas. The unfamiliar damp and humid climate had been hard to adjust to — and many of the Chiricahuas battled consumption during their

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[169] Utley, *Geronimo,* 226-235. Of the move, Utley notes that "Pensacolans were dismayed by the loss of their prime tourist attraction" (234).
[170] Bowen, Box 2, folder 5 (labeled Mount Vernon Barracks Alabama), William H.C. Bowen Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[171] William H. C. Bowen, Undated MS notes about Geronimo, Box 3, folder 12, labeled "Correspondence of William Bowen 1908-1931," William H. C. Bowen Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

seven-year stay in the East.[172] Finally, as a result of War Department reports and advocacy by philanthropic associations and by army men like Crook and Bourke, Congress authorized a move for the Chiricahua prisoners to Fort Sill, Oklahoma.[173] Bowen described how "Geronimo, Naiche, Loco, Nana, Chihuahua, and other principal men, together with their families and belongings, were loaded on to 11 cars, and started for Fort Sill." There, with the opportunity to farm, Bowen wrote that "it is expected that they will become self sustaining and partly, if not wholly civilized."[174] The move to Oklahoma meant fewer visitors, fewer tourists, at least day-to-day. But in the years that followed, Geronimo became a much-desired display at world's fairs and expositions, even Theodore Roosevelt's inaugural parade. Geronimo and the Chiricahuas had been collected, and permanently removed from their homes.

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[172] Angie Debo acknowledges the possibility that their health problems (particularly consumption) originated during their train travel East under brutal conditions — closed windows and doors, intense heat. See Debo, *Geronimo*, 300.

[173] See Debo, *Geronimo*, Chapters 17 and 18, 313-357, for a discussion of the multiple transfers of the imprisoned Apache people. Several different people, from their supervisors at various forts, associations interested the treatment of American Indians, Crook and Bourke, and even army surgeon Walter Reed, weighed in on what constituted proper treatment for these prisoners of war. Crook and Bourke, in particular, advocated on behalf of former scouts who had been sent to Florida along with Geronimo.

[174] Box 2, folder 5 (labeled Mount Vernon Barracks Alabama), William H. C. Bowen Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

Chapter 3: "A Wondrously Beautiful Land" and "A Howling Wilderness": The Nature of the Philippine Frontier

On the Bluffs in front of Mariquina, at Water Works, P.I. March 20–1899

> Dear Mother and Sister:
> I managed to borrow some paper this afternoon, so will endeavor to write you another letter. We moved out here a few days ago and our regiment is now protecting the waterworks. Company "K" is camped here on the edge of a bluff in about the most beautiful location as far as view is concerned that I ever saw.[1]

Edwin Segerstrom continued, "I wish I could describe the view as I can see it from my bed in this end of the tent. Spread at our feet away below is the beautiful valley which is 6 or 7 miles wide as far as I can judge and on the other side the mountains & foothills rise above which the sun rises & in clear weather makes a beautiful sight."[2] Segerstrom also described the town of Mariquina: "around it on all sides spreads the rich valley with fertile fields of sugar cane, corn, water melons radishes, rice fields, bananas etc. and it really makes about the finest picture I ever had the fortune to witness." If that weren't enough, he mentions that some of the Montana soldiers were finding "color" when they panned for gold in Philippine streams.[3] Selman Watson, stationed at a different camp along a road past Mariquina, echoed Segerstrom's account of the beauty of the countryside outside of Manila. He wrote to his family that "this place is by far the prettiest we ever were in camp…on the other side of the valley rises the first chain of a Range of Mountains tall, blue, and grand, dotted to the tops with tropical verdure."[4] These men were in the Philippines as volunteers serving at the very beginning of the Philippine-American War.

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[1] Frank Harper, ed., *Just Outside of Manila: Letters of Members of the First Colorado Regiment in the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1991), 71.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid., 71-72.
[4] Ibid., 75.

Segerstrom reported that in late March of 1899, his regiment was in a "good sized scrap" with Philippine insurgent forces. "We cleared out a good part of the Valley ahead of us & got Mariquina."[5] In April, he wrote that he wasn't sure how much longer he would be in the Philippines. "They are sending regulars to take our place, but I doubt whether the regulars can do better work than the volunteers have been doing here, as they are not so familiar with conditions here."[6] Despite describing the work as "getting a little tiresome," Segerstrom did not tire of the landscape. Still camped near Mariquina in May, he wrote home that "the sight of the valley and hills bordering it is a beautiful one now and if I were a poet, I think I could create some great verses about the scenery here."[7]

Like soldiers who served in the American West during the late nineteenth century, soldiers deployed to the Philippines wrote extensively about the landscapes of their service. They described the work, the challenges presented by difficult—and entirely new—terrain, and they played a part in shaping broader American ideas about the nature of the Philippines, half a world away. But American soldiers in the Philippines were drawing from a rich tradition of writing about American frontiers, and whether or not they'd experienced the Indian Wars firsthand, many soldiers made explicit links between the American West and the Philippine Islands. Historian Brian Linn has suggested that "available data do not sustain the proposition that forces in the Philippines were consciously or subconsciously refighting the Indian Wars."[8] But perhaps the resonances between the Indian Wars and the Philippine-American War could be explored differently by examining the echoes between soldiers' writings about both frontiers. What stories did soldiers tell about the landscapes of their labor? And what tools, language, and narratives

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[5] Ibid., 85.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid., 93-94.
[8] Brian Linn, "The Long Twilight of the Frontier Army," 64.

were available to soldiers attempting to describe their experiences in new environments? American soldiers might not have been "refighting the Indian Wars," but they were deploying similar metaphors. And this work of making sense of the nature they encountered began even before they reached the Pacific.

Matthew Steele, captain and adjutant of the Sixth Cavalry, was himself one of the regulars Segerstrom described. He was leading a new group of volunteers (new enlistments, rather than men already part of the regular army) to the Philippines. But before they began the trip across the Pacific, they first had to cross the American West.

"Union Pacific Railway/On top of the Rocky Mts./Friday, Sept 8 1899" reads the heading on a letter Steele wrote to his wife. "Whew! but it's cold up here 8000 feet in the sky," wrote Steele. "We have just passed Sherman a miserable lonely little station with one or two little shanties, but a large black board stood there with the words 'The Summit of the Rockies' painted upon it + the card shows that its altitude is 8247 ft." He was "gliding along a thinly grassed plateau as flat as a dinner table" high in the Rocky Mountains, traveling by rail to San Francisco, where he and his men would board a Navy transport vessel bound for the Philippine Islands.[9] Though no stranger to the rhythms—and hardships—of military service in the West, Steele reserved a special epithet for the desert expanse between the Rockies and the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It was "the Godforsakenest country I ever saw."[10] Was it the emptiness of this terrain? The aridity? Did the uncertainty of the task ahead of Steele help to shape the "godforsaken-ness" of this landscape?

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[9] Matthew Steele to Stella Folsom Steele, September 8, 1899, 6:30 am, Box 8, folder 3, Matthew F. Steele Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[10] Matthew Steele to Stella Folsom Steele, September 8, 1899, 8 pm, Box 8, folder 3, Matthew F. Steele Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

By 1899, Steele had already performed fifteen years of service all over the Western frontier. He'd been stationed in other landscapes often considered hard, sparse, even desolate. He served in Texas, Montana, and Dakota, where he had participated in the arrest of Sitting Bull.[11] He fought in the battle of El Caney-San Juan Hill in Cuba in the Spanish-American War. And now, as a result of (newly promoted) Admiral Dewey's destruction of the Spanish fleet at Manila Bay, the Philippines had become an additional theater of the war with Spain, and Steele was on his way to help secure the Philippines for the United States.

Crossing the Pacific

A few months earlier, Beverly Daly traveled across the West to San Francisco, where he boarded a navy transport vessel bound for the Philippine Islands. In a letter to his mother, written "at sea," Daly described his relief at "actually moving at last" after "so many disappointments and delays during the past three months." The final overland leg of his journey had begun in San Antonio. From there, Daly and his fellow soldiers crossed New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Daly described traveling "through a practically desert country—although we passed some very interesting groups of rocks—like those in Kirk Munroe's story—'The Painted Desert'" (1897). Other sites of interest to Daly were "Eagle Pass" and "Starvation Mountain," both "famous for having been the scenes of some particularly fiendish massacres by the Apaches," according to Daly's sources.[12] Though it seems likely that he wasn't the only soldier looking at these landmarks and seeing stories of the Old West as his train cut through the desert, Daly did have a particularly personal connection to the Apache campaigns. His father, a miner in the Southwest,

[11] See Box 1, folder 1, Matthew Steele Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[12] Beverly Daly to his mother, June 5, 1899, Box 1, folder 3, Beverly Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

"was killed by the Apache Indians on his 38th birthday, August 18, 1881."[13] After that, he and his mother had moved east, to Philadelphia. This trip across the desert en route to San Francisco might have been his first return to the country he had lived in as a small boy. His decision to point out these sites of Apache violence to his mother takes on additional weight when we know that she has a connection to the desert, too.

Daly took his time describing his encounter with Indians when the train stopped in Yuma: "We had much sport, feeding some very seedy specimans [sic] of the 'noble red man' who as soon as they discovered that we were peaceably inclined, flocked around our train and were very friendly in a taciturn way. A couple of young braves ran over to their tepees and put on their 'war' paint for our benefit."[14] These Indians are a far cry from those who committed the "fiendish massacres" at the sites Daly observed from the train. Daly is describing a different West than the one his mother had known when he was a boy.

Like Steele, Daly, and a host of other soldiers ordered to the Philippine Islands, Acting Assistant Surgeon Paul Fletcher also commented on the landscapes he traveled through on his way to ship out from San Francisco.[15] Fletcher left St. Louis on August 20, 1900. His letter of August 23, written from Ogden, Utah, described riding the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad through Royal Gorge: "It is in the heart of the Rocky Mts. and is a magnificent structure of

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[13] Beverly Daly to Fannie, November 15, 1903, Box 1, folder 8, Beverly Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[14] Beverly Daly to his mother, June 5, 1899, Box 1, folder 3, Beverly Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[15] Fletcher's wife Hughine carefully transcribed portions of these letters into a single volume. She pasted a picture of Paul with their infant son, Robert inside the front cover. Below this picture, she included one of herself with Robert, though the section of the photo containing her image has been ripped out. Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

Nature reaching towards the clouds."[16] Today, visitors to Cañon City, Colorado, can take a tourist train that follows this same route, which includes a hanging bridge where the canyon narrows and its rock walls steepen.[17] These experiences of the American West—brand-new visions for volunteers and contract surgeons like Fletcher, familiar sights to career army men like Steele and Westerners like Daly—were journeys filled with anticipation of the places, people, and work ahead of them. George Telfer wrote to his wife Lottie, "If there is to be a fight I want to see it."[18] As an officer with the Oregon Volunteers, Telfer was among the first to be deployed. His journey across the ocean began in May of 1898. Telfer's experience of the sea voyage reads as rough: cramped quarters, sea-sickness, filth, lice, hunger. But stopping in Honolulu raised his spirits—he had access to food, drink, more kinds of fruit than he could keep track of.[19] And then it was back to the ship, and onward across the Pacific. In the open stretches of ocean, Telfer seemed almost forlorn: "We see no ships. We are out of the world and we all wonder what you will think when we are not reported from any place."[20] Telfer's placelessness seems to echo Steele's sense of the desert as "the Godforsakenest country" he'd seen.

Paul Fletcher found the sea sublime. He reserved his most vivid language for the Pacific itself. To his wife Hughine he wrote, "I never fully realized the expansiveness of the great

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[16] Paul Fletcher, Letter dated August 23, 1900, in Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[17] See https://www.royalgorgeroute.com/ for contemporary opportunities to experience the Royal Gorge route and the railroad's hanging bridge. (Accessed 6 September 2014.)
[18] George Telfer, May 28, 1898, in Telfer and Sara Bunnett, *Manila Envelopes: Oregon Volunteer Lt. George F. Telfer's Spanish-American War Letters* (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1987), 9.
[19] George Telfer, letters from June 3-June 9, 1898, in Bunnett, *Manila Envelopes*, 13-17.
[20] George Telfer, June 16, 1898, in Bunnett, *Manila Envelopes,* 19. It certainly seems that more than simply the isolation was getting to Telfer. About two weeks later, on June 25, 1898, Telfer wrote, "But oh! the long dreary trip!…My stomach turns against one-month-old meat and I find little in the eating line that I can enjoy. I have no close friends on board and don't talk…It is impossible for me to sleep over 6 hours out of 24 and I feel *mean*" (21).

Pacific Ocean before. Morning after morning as I cast my eyes out of the narrow window of my state-room and see the vast and seemingly endless waste of rolling water, I feel how utterly insignificant we mortals really are and how great the universe is."[21] Though framed differently than Telfer's sense of being "out of the world," Fletcher's "seemingly endless waste" also evokes the desert, and even calls up John Gregory Bourke's initial impressions of the Black Hills, whose "immense fields" were like the "gentle roll of the sea in a time of calm."[22] During these crossings, these men seem to be at the limits of language. The huge, open spaces before them could be oceans or deserts; what seemed to matter was their emptiness. Fletcher later said that his "trip across the Pacific…exhausts all expression."[23] And from near Japan, reflecting on the distance he'd traveled, Fletcher wrote home, "I find myself writing to you from the other side of mother earth."[24]

Esther Voorhees Hasson, a contract nurse with the Army, traveled in the other direction. On board the *Relief*, a hospital ship, she sailed east from New York City and across the Suez Canal to the Philippines in the spring of 1899. In her journal, Hasson's tone is carefree and unworried—though other members aboard the *Relief* expressed concern. (Hasson describes one doctor who was "frightened to death and everytime the ship rolls he thinks we are going down for sure." She wrote, "he has a particularly gloomy way of shaking his head and remarking, 'you know this ship is only an experiment anyway.'")[25] Hasson's account of the *Relief*'s voyage is buoyed by her enthusiasm for all of the new places she encountered, and it displays well her

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[21] Paul Fletcher, Letter dated September 21, 1900 in Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[22] Bourke and Robinson, *The Diaries of John Gregory Bourke*, 171.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Esther Voorhees Hasson, Esther Voorhees Hasson Journal, entry for March 10, 1899, Box 2, folder 12, Henry Ware Lawton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

knack for storytelling. (I'm partial to her narrative of the Suez Canal — when the *Relief* passed a signal station, "a small boy ran out and followed the ship for a mile or more, [and] the men threw him oranges which he stuffed into the front of his gown.")[26]

Beverly Daly's letters reveal a young man eager for adventure—"My life has been so hum drum, and thought less, that now I am up against the stern realities, I have to pinch myself once in a while, to convince myself that I am not dreaming."[27] But it wasn't just that Daly was going to get to do something important, something exciting. There was also a sense of destiny: "One thing is sure Mamma—this experience will make a man of me unless it is ordained that I am to die, as my father died. However, I don't fear the future, and haven't been losing any sleep by wondering whether a Filipino bullet will find in me, its billet—or not."[28] But underneath this bravado there also lay worry and wondering about what might happen—he was, after all, going off to war. Daly finished the long letter that began with his departure from San Antonio with these words: "Oh Mamma— if I am taken, please don't think of my foolish and wasted boyhood, but remember that in the end, I tried to be my father's son—I have broken down completely and must close."[29] Invoking his father—killed far too young—links the dangerousness of the western frontier with the certain danger Daly would face as a soldier in the Philippines. Despite having volunteered, and despite his declaration that he did not "fear the future," writing about the possibility of his death on the battlefield has him "broken down completely." And all these years later, this letter from a son to his mother makes me tear up, too. There is something familiar in this combination of courage and fear, of the desire to be brave in the face of uncertainty. Paul

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[26] Hasson, Esther Voorhees Hasson Journal, entry for March 23, 1899, Box 2, folder 12, Henry Ware Lawton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[27] Clearly, Beverly Daly loved commas. Beverly Daly to his mother, June 5, 1899, Box 1, folder 3, Beverly C. Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.

Fletcher too, hinted at his own worries. He told Hughine of a "fearfully scarred" doctor he'd met in San Francisco. The man had been "boloed"—"slashed…with lightening-like [sic] rapidity over neck and shoulders and left…for dead."[30] A few decades earlier, the practice of scalping was described similarly; this new frontier activated older fears. The things that might happen to Fletcher once he arrived in the Philippine Islands were left unsaid.

Though the journey left plenty of time for writing—and for anticipating what was to come—the work had already begun. Fletcher wrote of vaccinating the men on board, and Daly described morning and evening inspections. (Granted, Daly also described the concert given by the band each night—he made special mention when they played Schubert.)[31] There would be much more work when they reached the shore. Even so, the trans-Pacific voyage was not without its own dangers — Daly told his mother about a fire below deck that spoiled all the meat on board and came close to suffocating several crew members. And Fletcher wrote about two vessels (one Japanese, one Norwegian) colliding outside the harbor, drowning almost everyone on board.[32] And one of Daly's fellow soldiers died of typhoid fever just before the voyage ended.[33]

As the Philippines—and thus, the war—grew nearer, Paul Fletcher's letters home turned to politics. He was traveling in the autumn of 1900. The presidential election approached, and Fletcher repeated an idea that had taken hold for many soldiers—if William Jennings Bryan, rather than William McKinley, won the election, the whole army would be home very soon.

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[30] Paul Fletcher, Letter dated September 21, 1900 in Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[31] Beverly Daly to his mother, June 5, 1899, Box 1, folder 3, Beverly C. Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[32] Ibid. and Paul Fletcher, Letter dated September 29, 1900 in Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[33] Beverly Daly to his mother, June 18, 1899, Box 1, folder 3, Beverly C. Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

From talking to other soldiers in port at Nagasaki, Fletcher told Hughine that the consensus seemed to be that the United States should either leave the Philippines or send in a larger force of "two or three hundred thousand men and wipe them off the earth."[34] As things stood when Fletcher was writing, the shape of the task at hand, and the number of hands it would take to complete it, seemed uncertain.

These concerns—about what it would take to pacify the Philippines, and about what that would mean—weren't only held by those on their way to the Philippine Islands. These questions were also being asked by their families at home, and debated vigorously by newspaper editors and politicians. This is well-trodden terrain for historians who have long debated McKinley's decision-making. Military historians, too, have detailed the state of the American army and navy at the end of the nineteenth century, the transport system, and the process of calling up volunteers to supplement the nation's too-small supply of experienced officers.[35] The Philippine-American War has received a smaller share of scholarly attention in the history of modern warfare; renewed interest in the war can be traced back to the 1960s and American involvement in Vietnam.[36] And today, questions about insurgency and torture—questions that are important for understanding the Philippine-American War—have renewed relevance. More recently,

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[34] Paul Fletcher, Letter dated October 1, 1900 in Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

[35] See Brian Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U,S. Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: The UNC Press, 1997).; Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army For Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1971, 2nd ed. 1994); Brian Linn, "The Long Twilight of the Frontier Army."

[36] The same might be said of some scholarship in the history of the American frontier—in particular, the work of Richard Drinnon and Richard Slotkin. See Richard Drinnon, *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating & Empire-Building* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997; 1st ed. 1980) and Richard Slotkin's trilogy, especially *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Age of Industrialization, 1800-1890* (New York: Athaneum, 1985) and *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Athaneum, 1992).

historians and American studies scholars have taken up nuanced examinations of the interplay of race, gender, and American empire.[37] How did ideas about Philippine landscapes and actual work in and with Philippine nature figure into the imperial work performed by American soldiers? How did soldiers experience and understand these new landscapes of their military service, this even further westward frontier? How did American soldiers—both those who had previously served in the American West and those brand new to military service—make sense of the Philippines? And how did this new environment—and this new enemy—shape their work?

War Begins

After weeks of travel, the coastline of the Philippine Islands was a welcome sight. "June 19th. Woke up this morning in Manila Bay!" wrote Daly.[38] "We passed the forts last night, and weighed anchor at 11:30. As we came in at night, we were unable to see any of the sunken Spanish ships. This morning, however, the 'Baltimore,' the war ship that silenced the Cavite

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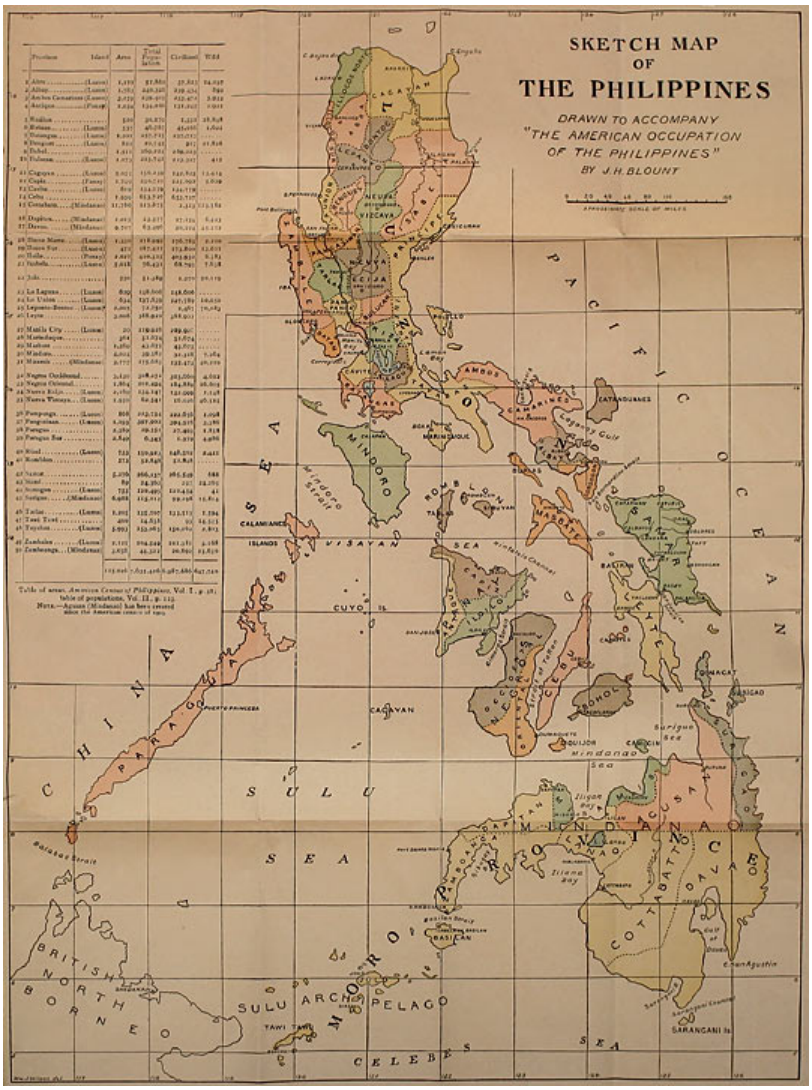
[37] See, for example: David Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire: The Philippine-American War, 1899-1902* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2007); Brian Linn, *The Philippine-American War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 2000); Kristin L. Hoganson*, Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Susan K. Harris, *God's Arbiters: Americans and the Philippines, 1898-1902* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Richard Welch, *Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill: The UNC Press, 1979); Eric T. L. Love, *Race Over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: The UNC Press, 2004); Paul A. Kramer, T*he Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill, NC: The UNC Press, 2006); Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence*; Alfred McCoy and Francisco Scarano, eds, *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009); Jim Zwick, ed. *Mark Twain's Weapons of Satire: Anti-Imperialist Writings on the Philippine-American War* (Syracuse University Press: Syracuse, 1992); Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989); Stuart Creighton Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation": The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1903* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); Peter W. Stanley, ed., *Reappraising an Empire: New Perspectives on Philippine-American History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

[38] Beverly Daly to his mother, June 19, 1899, Box 1, folder 3, Beverly C. Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

batteries and completed Dewey's victory, is off our starboard bow."[39] Esther Voorhees Hasson's trip on the *Relief* took just under six weeks —which she thought might break the record for speediest journey. She arrived in Manila Bay a few months before Daly, and also noted that she had been asleep when they sailed past Corregidor, the island at the entrance to the bay, and a key landmark for Dewey's sea battle with the Spanish fleet. Admiral Dewey's decisive victory expanded the theater of the Spanish-American War halfway around the world; his decimation of the Spanish fleet also expanded visions of American empire in the Pacific.



[39] Ibid.

Figure 14. "Sketch Map of Philippines drawn to accompany *The American Occupation of the Philippines* by J. H. Blount."[40]

And John McCutcheon, a young reporter for the *Chicago Record*, just happened to be in the right place at the right time to cover the story. He had been on a round-the-world voyage in 1898 when the Treasury Department ship he was on was reassigned to the United States Navy. McCutcheon stayed with the ship as it traveled to Hong Kong. On April 17, 1898, the *McCulloch* joined Commodore Dewey's fleet. Ten days later, all of the ships under Dewey's command sailed for the Philippine Islands, in pursuit of the Spanish navy. McCutcheon remained with the *McCulloch* as a war correspondent. He made detailed descriptions—and drawings—of the battle of Manila Bay in small reporter's notebooks, some of them no larger than my palm. While positioned off the coast of Luzon, McCutcheon wrote down his first glimpses of the shore: "The land…is stretched out only about four or five miles to the east and looks very pretty in the bright sunlight this morning. It suggests the outline of Cuba approaching Havana from the north. There are faint blue lines of hills and mountains with little patches of dark colored features on the coast."[41] These words show me—and anyone else who reads his handwriting (some of it tiny enough to warrant a magnifying glass)—the horizon: "A bluish haze hangs over the land and the hills and mountains grade off in tints until the farthermost range is a mere flat line."[42] It sounds

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[40] See J. H. Blount, *The American Occupation of the Philippines 1898-1912* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1912).

[41] John McCutcheon, 1898 January-May, volume labeled number 14, p. 69, Box 33, folder 869, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago. A note on numbering: this volume is a reporter's notebook, and the numbering scheme for the pages suggests that the user should write only on the facing side of each page and then flip the book over and work backwards. (Facing pages have vastly different numbers. McCutcheon doesn't date many of his entries, so I have included the page numbers, but a word of caution: these will only be useful for someone looking directly at the notebook.)

[42] John McCutcheon, 1898 January-May, volume labeled number 14, p. 69, Box 33, folder 869, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago. Revised versions of the entries McCutcheon drafted in his tiny notebooks made it into the *Chicago Record* the following week.

quite lovely, though in that hanging haze, there is a hint of the battle to come. The *McCulloch* moved steadily onward, at the end of a line of ships led by the *Boston* and the *Concord*—"now so far ahead of the fleet that only the smoke from their furnaces mark where they are…"[43]

On May 1, 1898, very early in the morning, Commodore George Dewey led American ships past Corregidor and toward the Spanish fleet near Cavite. The night before the battle, the American ships turned off all of their lights, invisible, but for the lightning—"it is only when one of these flashes illuminates the sky that the black bodies of the ships are seen."[44] When the battle began, McCutcheon could see it all from the deck of the *McCulloch*: the shells hitting their targets, the Spanish ships burning. He sketched the scene, the destruction clear even though the ships and seascape are only outlines drawn in pencil.

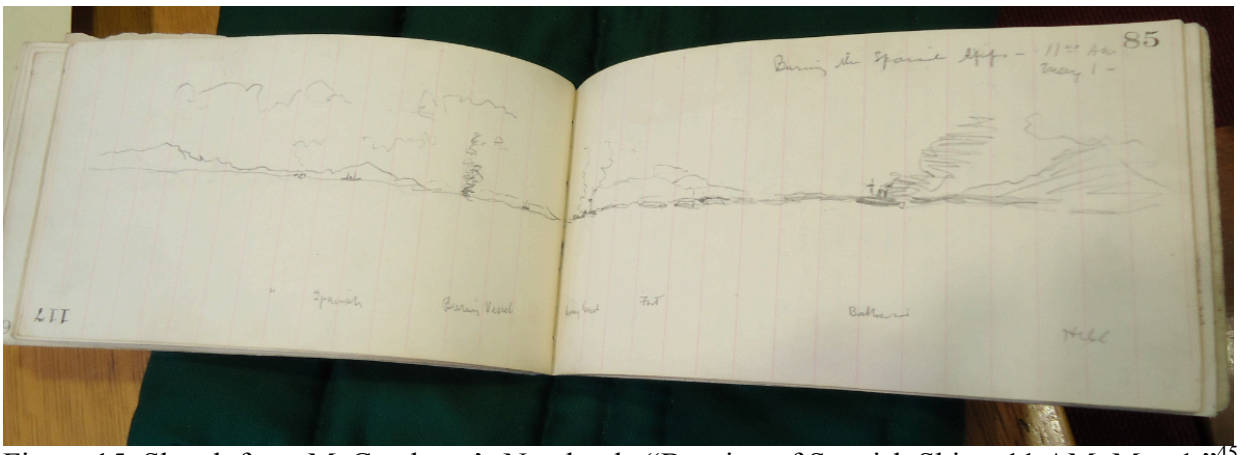

Figure 15. Sketch from McCutcheon's Notebook, "Burning of Spanish Ships, 11 AM, May 1."[45] John McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.

The *Record* printed them in diary format, the first-hand observations of their man in Manila Bay. Interested readers will find excerpts of these newspaper pieces, as well as edited selections from McCutcheon's diary, in A. B. Feuer, ed., *America at War: The Philippines, 1898-1913* (Westport, Conn.; Praeger, 2002).

[43] John McCutcheon, 1898 January-May, volume labeled number 14, p. 69, Box 33, folder 869, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.

[44] Ibid., 124.

[45] Ibid.

The battle was a definitive American victory.[46] The following day, McCutcheon rowed out to the remains of the Spanish fleet and "went around among the wrecks, making photographs and collecting souvenirs of the fight." He described the *Castilla* as showing "only one upright funnel and two burnt and charred masts…The insides are burned completely out, only the blackened iron work being visible."[47] McCutcheon doesn't say what he might have recovered from the wreckage, but he wasn't the only one after a memento: "Boatloads of officers and seamen have been to her [the *Castilla*] all afternoon, pillaging her of souvenirs of the battle. Scraps of signal and boat flags, charts, books, small anchors and dozens of little relics have been eagerly seized. Sailors have been diving down and bringing forth all sorts of trophies, from clocks and compasses to chains and pieces of Spanish guitars."[48] This souvenir collecting was not a new practice. Civil War soldiers did it, too—gathered bits and pieces from bloody battlefields, items to save, or to send enclosed with a letter home. In *Ruin Nation: Destruction and the American Civil War*, Megan Kate Nelson wrote that these sometimes macabre mementos "seemed to conflate time: they embodied both present and past, allowing veterans and their relatives to narrate their autobiographies by recalling where they were and what they were doing on a certain day." Civil War soldiers collected bullets, picked flowers and cotton, and took items from the dead and the wounded. In doing so, "soldiers anticipated their futures," futures that involved making it home, where they might look at these relics and remember.[49] Some Army men serving during the Indian Wars had done something similar — collected pieces of the West

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[46] Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image*, 102-105. See also Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 93.
[47] John McCutcheon, 1898 January-May, volume labeled number 108, p. 124, Box 33, folder 869, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Megan Kate Nelson, *Ruin Nation: Destruction and the American Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012), 220.

even as their labor transformed it. And at Manila Bay, soldiers and spectators like John McCutcheon rummaged for relics amidst the still-smoking wreckage of the Spanish fleet. "In a day or two," McCutcheon noted, "The bodies will be coming to the surface."[50]

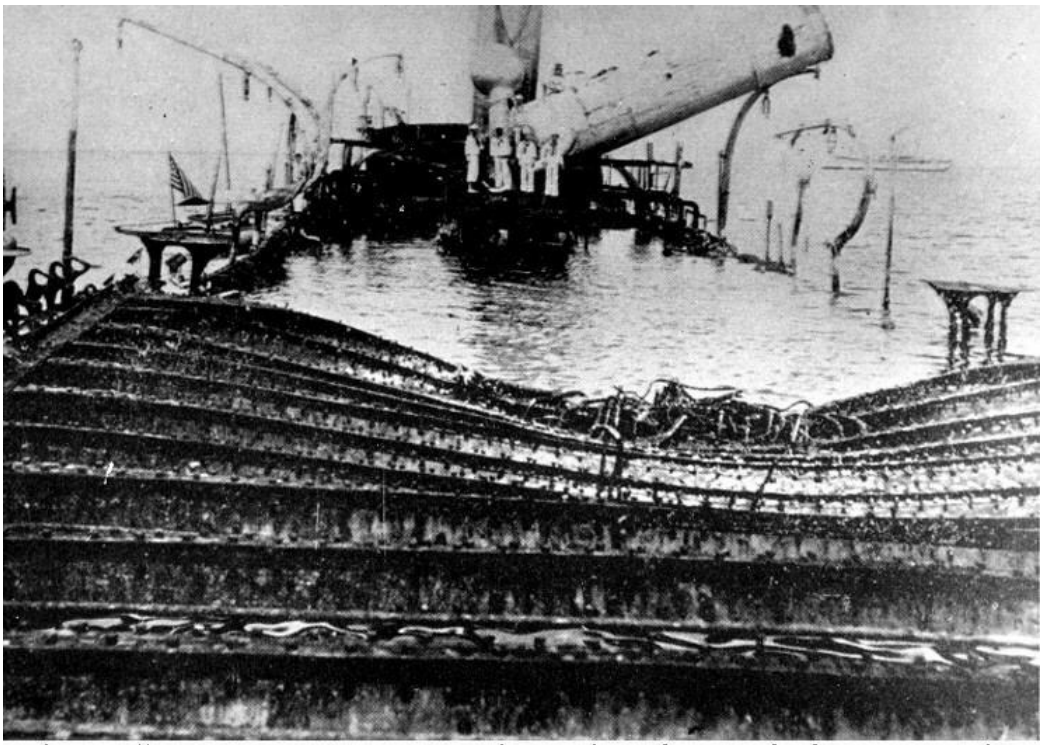

Figure 16. Battle of Manila Bay, 1 May 1898, U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph. Donation of Lt. C.J. Dutreaux, USNR(Ret), 1947.[51]

There is no date for this photograph from the U.S. Naval Historical Center other than "sometime after the battle." Perhaps these four sailors were among the group McCutcheon described, relic-hunting in the days following the American victory, or maybe they visited the wreckage at a much later date. (The U.S. Naval Historical Center notes that this image could be backwards—the lean of the smokestack, when compared with other photographs sailors took of the wreckage, supports this conclusion.)

[50] John McCutcheon, 1898 January-May, volume labeled number 107, p. 94, Box 33, folder 869, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.
[51] Battle of Manila Bay, 1 May 1898, U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph. Donation of Lt. C.J. Dutreaux, USNR(Ret), 1947. Accessed 23 August 2014. http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/events/spanam/events/man-bay3.htm

The souvenir-hunters no doubt recognized the significance of the battle; the little that remained of the Spanish ships was a testament to the strength of the United States Asiatic Squadron under Commodore Dewey. The things they collected reflected a great victory—but also, for many soldiers, an approaching opportunity. American forces had not yet landed in the Philippines. Despite soundly defeating the Spanish navy, the islands themselves remained a collection of faint blue lines to the east.

Dewey had cut the telegraph wires between Manila and Hong Kong, so it took several days for news of his victory to reach the United States. With the news came confusion—what next? The Spanish fleet had been defeated, but technically they still held Manila. (Dewey said that five thousand men was all he would need to take the city.) In the aftermath of the destruction of the *U.S.S. Maine* on February 15, 1898, President McKinley had already set in motion plans to send troops to Cuba and to the Philippines— regiments from both the Regular Army, comprised of career military men, some of whom had served in the Civil War and the Indian Wars, and from the newly formed Volunteer Army. In the week before Dewey sailed for Manila Bay, Congress declared war with Spain and McKinley called for 125,000 men to join the army as volunteers.[52] But what were they to do? Historians continue to debate what, exactly, McKinley wanted General Merritt (assigned to helm U.S. operations in the Philippines) and General Miles (the same Miles who had replaced Crook during the Apache campaigns—and now the commanding general of the United States Army) to accomplish. Historian Brian Linn illustrated this uncertainty by pointing to the range of language used by Miles in the days following the Battle of Manila Bay: everything from "occupy" and "possession" to more limited goals focused on holding the harbor—and not beginning "a war to conquer." Linn wrote that "even as the

[52] Linn, *The Philippine War*, 6-12.

United States stood on the threshold of a great leap toward Pacific empire, no one knew what the agents of empire were supposed to be doing."[53]

As these agents, both regulars and volunteers, made their way to San Francisco to board transport vessels for Manila, Emilio Aguinaldo, the leader of the Philippine effort against the Spanish, returned to Cavite, overlooking Manila Bay where the remains of the Spanish ships were slowly sinking. Cavite had been the site of another important Spanish defeat — but at the hands of Filipino forces led by Aguinaldo a few years earlier. Now that the Spanish had suffered a devastating loss, Aguinaldo sought to capitalize on the opportunity to renew the revolution. In June of 1898, Aguinaldo declared the independence of the Philippines from Spanish rule. Plans for self-government were set in motion. Filipino revolutionaries fought with the Spanish. Meanwhile, American troops continued to assemble at Cavite. Upon his arrival at the Cavite harbor, George Telfer wrote to his wife that "a campsite will be selected in the morning and it will be then decided how we are to be killed."[54] The letter lightens, though, when he describes what he and the other Oregon Volunteers see from their ship: "Of course we have not been on shore—but we are all entranced with what we see from shore. We all talk of locating here—if the U.S. holds it."[55]

In his letters, he also anticipated how his family would get news of him: "My daily life is the same as that of the balance of the 3,000," he wrote in early July, "and the only satisfaction we have in having the newspaper correspondents around is that they do our letter writing to a certain extent."[56] One of those, John Bass, a correspondent for *Harper's Weekly* (tagline: "A Journal of

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[53] Linn, *The Philippine War*, 6-7.
[54] George Telfer, June 30, 1898, in Bunnett, *Manila Envelopes*, 22.
[55] Ibid.
[56] George Telfer, July 8, 1898, in Bunnett, *Manila Envelopes,* 23.

Civilization"), described "delay, delay, delay; no one knew why. The days dragged."[57] One Nebraska private described soldiering during this period as "a good and lazy job."[58] Everyone was waiting for the Americans to advance on Manila.

Brigadier-General Francis Vinton Greene described what was at stake in a rousing Fourth-of-July speech delivered on the deck of the *China*, a Navy transport vessel carrying Greene and a ship-full of U.S. Volunteers across the Pacific. The Declaration of Independence was read aloud, and Greene began.[59] "Comrades, when Thomas Jefferson wrote the immortal words which you have just heard read, he little dreamed that one hundred and twenty-two years later they would be read in the middle of the Pacific Ocean to an expedition of American soldiers bound to the conquest of a group of islands off the coast of China." (In fact, Greene's typed copy of the speech provides specific coordinates: "Pacific Ocean, Longitude 166° East, Latitude 19° North.") And then Greene imagined how Jefferson might understand the possibilities the Philippines presented for the United States: "Yet the vigor with which Jefferson acted in acquiring Louisiana proves that were he alive to-day he would be the first to seize the

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[57] Quoted in *Harper's History of the War in the Philippines*, Marion Wilcox, ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1900), 50. The waiting that Telfer described in his letters sounds plenty challenging: sickness, heat, lots of rain, and "we cannot go into the sea water on account of poisonous fish." George Telfer, July 24, 1898, in Bunnett, *Manila Envelopes*, 33.

[58] Henry O. Thompson, in Thomas Solevad Nielsen, ed., *Inside the Fighting First: Papers of a Nebraska Private in the Philippine War* (Blair, NE: Lur Publications, 2001), 77.

[59] Greene had had a busy day. With a draft of the speech, he included a note dated March 27, 1918: "Earlier in the day I had discovered a coral islet marked on the chart "Wake Island, doubtful", had landed and planted the American flag, and placed a tin box with documents under a cairn." Apparently the Navy later "rediscovered" it and annexed Wake Island to the United States. Henry Hilton was part of the landing party on Wake Island, and he described so many birds that he could "reach out and grab one by the tail most any time." He also wrote that "we got busy at once picking up specimens of coral and sea shells and other souvenirs." See Francis Vinton Greene, "Address by Brigadier-General F.V. Greene, U.S. Volunteers, commanding 2nd Philippine Expedition on Steamship China, Pacific Ocean, Longitude 166 (Degree sign) East, Latitude 19 (degree sign) North. July 4, 1898," Box 4, folder 11, Francis Vinton Greene Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. For Henry Hilton's account, see Harper, *Just Outside of Manila*, 11.

opportunity which Admiral Dewey's glorious victory in Manila Bay has placed within our grasp." For Jefferson, Greene posited, "there would be no hesitation as to our duty"; the Philippines were American "destiny."[60]

Greene's speech was meant to encourage and inspire the mostly inexperienced men who had by that point spent several months in cramped quarters on the *China*, but Greene's words also reveal how he—and how many—understood the place of their actions in the larger narrative of American history.[61] Greene linked their (still unclear) mission in the Philippines to the vision of Thomas Jefferson, to the acquisition of the Louisiana Purchase (the doubling in size, or more, of American territory), and to the apparent inevitability of the task before them. For Greene, situating the "opportunity" the Philippines offered the United States as a natural extension of Jefferson's service to the nation was not problematic in the least.

But for others, the Declaration of Independence suggested a different path—not occupation of the Philippines, but independence *for* the Philippines from their Spanish colonizers. The first American Anti-Imperialist League was formed on June 15, 1898, and by the following year, it had grown into a mixture of local chapters that engaged in a coordinated critique of American actions in the Philippines over the next several years. Comprising reformers, scholars, writers, labor leaders, and politicians, the Anti-Imperialist League struggled to articulate a coherent message. Richard Welch argues that the range of actors and perspectives

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[60] Francis Vinton Greene, "Address by Brigadier-General F.V. Greene, U.S. Volunteers, commanding 2nd Philippine Expedition on Steamship China, Pacific Ocean, Longitude 166 (Degree sign) East, Latitude 19 (degree sign) North. July 4, 1898," Box 4, folder 11, Francis Vinton Greene papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

[61] Henry Hilton mentioned that the speeches by Greene and Colonel Hale included "advice to the men to obey orders," but he also described that "Altogether we had a good 4th particularly as we were the first Americans in the world to celebrate it" (owing to their place in the Pacific). See Harper, *Just Outside of Manila*, 12.

involved made it difficult for the League to fully utilize its "organizational effectiveness."[62] Matthew Frye Jacobson expands on these differences, arguing that many anti-imperialists were concerned about the implications of imperialism, not only because of the difficulty of reconciling this approach with American democratic ideals, but also because of what annexation might mean: an influx of Filipino people, people who might one day become citizens. Jacobson, while careful not to attribute this perspective to all anti-imperialists, grounds some of this opposition in the strong and pervasive nativism and racism of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.[63]

Pamphlets with anti-imperialist messages were printed and circulated, and newspapers around the country editorialized about the Philippines. Popular magazines took sides and printed essays advocating their positions. While Welch highlights the significance of the range of American responses to the Philippine-American war, he also suggests that those who opposed annexation had little impact on political decision-making.[64] He called anti-imperialist efforts "not a failure of will but of political strength," and eventually, many of those who opposed annexation got on board.[65] For example, Congressman John Spooner, "A respected jurist who with his disheveled hair and bulging eyes looked like an untidy owl…had not been an ardent expansionist." But once McKinley articulated a policy of annexation, Spooner told a story not unlike Greene's. He argued that legally, acquiring territory abroad was akin to territorial

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[62] Richard Welch, *Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902*, 43-46.
[63] Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York; Hill &Wang, 2001) 228-230.
[64] For a discussion of newspaper and magazine editorials, see Welch, *Response to Imperialism,* 105-109, 130.
[65] Ibid, 57.

acquisitions earlier in American history, and he drew on the legal justifications for the Louisiana Purchase to make this argument.[66]

Meanwhile, a few days after Greene's rallying speech on the decks of the *China*, the United States formally annexed Hawaii. Early July saw American victories in Cuba, resulting in Spanish surrender, and the attention of military leadership turned toward plans for taking Manila.[67] Samuel Ovenshine, now a colonel in the regular army, commanded troops from the 23rd United States Infantry under General MacArthur's Second Division. After the "delay, delay" described by Bass, instructions arrived. "Then," wrote Bass, "when we all thought that we should never see the inside of Manila, as a clap of thunder from a clear sky came the general order: the troops to move up into the trenches at 6:30 on the morrow…"[68] At 6:30 A.M. on the morning of August 13, 1898, Ovenshine marched his men to Pasaig. At mid-morning, they "heard the *Olympia* shelling the Spanish trenches." They received a telegram from MacArthur via a field telegraph station, and "hurried on for Manila." Ovenshine described empty Spanish trenches—soldiers had retreated as a result of the shelling. After a skirmish at a nearby church in which a few men were killed or wounded, they pressed on, entering the city. Ovenshine wrote that he had orders to "keep the Insurgents from going into the Walled City," which was the older city center of Manila. He and his men were "at this work for about 30 hours" before they were relieved.[69] Historian Brian Linn characterized the conquest of Manila on August 13 as having "more than

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[66] Karnow, *In Our Image,* 166.
[67] For a timeline of the events of the summer of 1898, see the digital exhibit, "The World of 1898," by the Library of Congress. http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/1898/chronology.html
[68] Quoted in *Harper's History of the War in the Philippines*, Marion Wilcox, ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1900), 50.
[69] All of the Ovenshine quotations in this paragraph come from a single account he wrote. It isn't clear if this narrative was part of a letter. It is dated August 15, 1898, but there is no addressee, and the text includes none of the kinds of conversational moments or interjections common to his earlier letters to his wife, Sallie. Samuel Ovenshine, August 15, 1898, Box 1, folder 11, Samuel Ovenshine Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

enough casualties to satisfy honor."[70] Merritt, Greene, and MacArthur each led brigades into the city. Linn noted that MacArthur's men—including those under Ovenshine's command—encountered "sharp resistance" on their way into the city, and they continued to fight even after the Spanish had officially surrendered Manila. Neither side had heard the news.[71]

The orders Ovenshine had received during the first battle of Manila—to keep Filipino forces from entering the old, walled city of Manila—were an indication of things to come. The United States might have held Manila, but it didn't hold much of anything else in the Philippine archipelago. Tensions between American and Filipino troops remained high, even as Aguinaldo agreed to move his men further outside of the capital city. Despite his incomplete conquest of the islands, McKinley could—and did—claim significant victories over the Spanish in both hemispheres, and as a result, Spanish and American representatives met to negotiate an end to the Spanish-American War. They reached an agreement in Paris in the final weeks of 1898. After much back and forth over matters of territory, it was decided that Spain would transfer the Philippines into the possession of the United States (alongside Guam and Puerto Rico) for a sum of twenty million dollars.[72] Meanwhile, with the Spanish defeated, Filipino leaders held a convention to decide on a governmental system and to write a constitution. While deliberations over imperial boundaries occurred in Paris, Filipino leaders had been busy drafting governing documents and articulating their autonomy. The Philippine Republic was established in early 1899, with Aguinaldo installed as the new nation's first president.[73] This part of the story is often overlooked; when we focus on the American place in the story, from defeating the Spanish navy

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[70] Linn, *The Philippine War*, 24.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Karnow, *In Our Image,* 130.
[73] Norman G. Owen, David Chandler, and William R. Roff, *The Emergence Of Modern Southeast Asia: A New History*, illustrated edition. (University of Hawaii Press, 2004) 284-285.

to putting down an insurgency, we lose the fact that the Filipinos were fighting their own revolution to get out from under the Spanish. Before the Philippine-American War, before the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Army of Liberation had already been doing the work of fighting the Spanish.The revolution of 1896-1897 was an uprising against the Spanish with participants from varying parts of Philippine society; it was not initially successful, and was temporarily ended through negotiations that sent Aguinaldo to Hong Kong in exile. But once a new opponent arrived (in the form of American troops), revolutionary forces reorganized their efforts, and the Malolos government, or Philippine Republic, was established.[74] This history helps to further explain the mounting tensions between American and Filipino troops in the weeks following both the Paris negotiations and the founding of the Philippine Republic.

An attempt by American forces to occupy Iloilo City offered additional evidence that the Philippines were not yet won. After Spain lost Manila, a Spanish general, Diego de los Rios, took over Spanish leadership of the Philippines, and established himself at Iloilo City, where he set about shoring up his military resources by asking local leaders to form militias; only later did he learn that he did not have their loyalty. Instead, they sought their own independence. So, Rios asked for approval to turn Iloilo City over to the Americans, and in late December, the *Baltimore* was dispatched. The *Baltimore* had been sent to establish a military government there with the expectation that this process would be peaceful. But it wasn't—or rather, it was clear that it could not be if the Americans expected to land and take the city. In the meantime, Rios had left, and local forces had declared their independence as the Federal State of the Visayas, ostensibly allegient to the government being formed at Malalos (the Philippine Republic). With orders to

[74] See Glenn May, *Battle for Batangas: A Philippine Province at War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), especially Part 1, "Before the Battle" for a clear overview of the complexities of the 1896 revolution and the relationships between the Spanish, Filipino, and American forces and interests.

convince the Filipinos of the kindness of American intentions, the commander of the *Baltimore* attempted to negotiate. A conversation that occurred in early January illuminated the degree to which the Americans were not welcome, at least in Iloilo City: when presented with the opportunities the United States could offer the Philippines, Raymundo Melliza explained that the Philippines did not require American help; they were ready to self-govern, and were already doing it. But, responded the Americans, the Philippines were technically American territory, as decided by a treaty recognized by other nations. Besides, American troops could just destroy the city. Melliza's response? Basically, go ahead—the city was filled with foreigners' property. But if they did that, Melliza said, "We will withdraw to the mountains and repeat the North American Indian warfare."[75]

The *Baltimore* returned to Manila.

A few weeks later, the Philippine-American War officially began. The details remain hazy, and historians' accounts offer a range of interpretations: was the fighting at Manila on this night an accident, a misunderstanding—in the form of an American soldier shooting at Filipino soldiers who supposedly failed to stop at a checkpoint—that sparked the release of tensions between forces on both sides, perhaps further aided by the terms of the treaty between Spain and the United States? Or, was the accident instead an intentional provocation, cleverly timed to encourage the United States Senate to ratify the Treaty of Paris and formally agree to American ownership of the Philippine archipelago? Or, in another variation, was it Aguinaldo's plan to draw the United States into a battle, a strategy that could result in a more active and unified Philippines? David Silbey outlines all of these possibilities, and concludes that the most likely

[75] This section on the mission to occupy Iloilo City is drawn from Brian Linn, *The Philippine War,* 38-41. The Melliza quotation comes from military correspondence housed at the National Archives, and is quoted in Linn, 40.

answer is that the fighting on February 4, 1899, was a "spontaneous and unorganized attack" that, nonetheless, began the war.[76] In a letter home to his parents, Henry O. Thompson described the fight: "Our guns were so hot that we burned our fingers on them."[77] After describing how the battle began—Thompson said insurgent soldiers didn't stop at the checkpoint—he told his mother and father, "Well, I got a chance to shoot at a Filipino, if I didn't get a shot at a Spaniard. One thing I don't know, that is how many I shot and killed."[78] The Senate ratified the Treaty of Paris on February 6, 1899—the same day Thompson wrote in his diary, "You ought to have heard the bullets whistle"—and thus the United States formally assumed control (however provisional) of the Philippine Islands. And American military leadership drew up plans to subdue what they understood to be an insurrection against their legal authority to occupy America's newest territorial possession.[79]

A few weeks prior to Matthew Steele's transcontinental trip to San Francisco, President McKinley delivered a version of his stump speech to an audience in Pittsburgh. He painted those fighting for Philippine independence as "insurgents," and described their engagement with

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[76] David Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 66. See also Silbey's discussion of the debates surrounding February 4 on pp.64-66, including his summary of how historians have interpreted the evening's events: "The insurgents and later Filipino historians claimed that the American soldiers fired without provocation. The American soldiers and historians believed that the Americans fired after the armed and advancing Filipinos refused an order to halt." Linn's account contains a more detailed narration of individual troop movements, but is mostly in line with Silbey's. Stuart Creighton Miller, in "*Benevolent Assimilation*," suggested that the events of February 4 did not have to turn into the full-fledged battle that followed on February 5; it was possible, according to Miller, to let the skirmishes die out. But that's not what Otis did. See Miller, "*Benevolent Assimilation,"* 57-66. And Susan Harris, in *God's Arbiters: Americans and the Philippines, 1898-1902*, also notes what news traveled to Washington—namely, that initial reports suggested that the first bullets had come from insurgent guns, rather than from the weapons of American soldiers. See Harris, *God's Arbiters*, 33.
[77] Henry O. Thompson, in Nielsen, *Inside the Fighting First*, 98.
[78] Ibid., 99.
[79] Ibid., 98.

American troops outside Manila as "a foul blow." "Our kindness was reciprocated with cruelty, our mercy with a Mauser," he said.[80] McKinley continued:

> Peace brought us the Philippines, by treaty cession from Spain. The Senate of the United States ratified the treaty. Every step taken was in obedience to the requirements of the Constitution. There was no flaw in the title, and no doubtful methods were employed to obtain it. (Great applause.) It became our territory and is ours as much as the Louisiana Purchase, or Texas, or Alaska.[81]

McKinley's campaign speech narrated a seamless story. Just as the United States had purchased much of the American West, it had negotiated a treaty and purchased the Philippines. Gone from this story are the conflicts between American settlers and indigenous communities who did not recognize the "purchase" of their land. Gone are the individual treaties negotiated and broken, the role of western territory in the Civil War, and the Indian Wars. Gone is any sense of the place of Filipinos fighting for independence. McKinley's story was of purchase and expansion, not violence and occupation. But soldiers who had served in the West knew otherwise. They understood that expansion did not necessarily mean peaceful capitulation. Henry Thompson, a Nebraska private getting his first taste of actual battle, told his parents, "I don't care to come home now while there is war, as I like it all right, to hear those bullets whistle past our ears—only my shoulder is black and blue from shooting so much."[82] After the initial battles for Manila and the surrounding area, American military leaders mapped out strategies for fully pacifying the nation's newest purchase. And many soldiers found time to write home about the work they had been doing and all that they'd seen.

Describing the Philippines

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[80] President McKinley, August 28, 1899, Pittsburgh, Box No. 1, Entry 33, RG 350 Bureau of Insular Affairs: Special Records Relating to the Philippine Islands, National Archives, College Park, MD.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Henry O. Thompson, in Nielson, *Inside the Fighting First*, 101.

When Matthew Steele reached Manila, he wrote to his wife Stella the first free moment he had. Steele was completely enamored of the barracks they were assigned, and described the bamboo frame work and palm tree roof-coverings in great detail. "I should[n't] mind staying in such a place as this for six months if only my little girl were with me," Steele wrote.[83] Steele outlined the orders he'd received—to take over some trenches, and soon, to join General Henry Lawton further inland (the same Lawton who had won accolades for his role in Geronimo's capture). But these words wishing Stella were with him weren't simply an articulation of Steele's love and longing; later in the letter, Steele wrote, "And, my darling, you might as well come now as at any future time. This is the best time to make the trip, + this war is no nearer its end than it was a year ago."[84]

Steele devoted a significant portion of his first letter to Stella from the Philippines to instructions for how she should communicate by telegram the details of her own arrival in Manila. This was not especially unusual; many officers' wives moved to Manila for the duration of their husbands' service, even if their husbands were stationed quite far from the capital city. In fact, Mary "Mame" Lawton, wife of now General Lawton (recall his letters to her from Arizona and Sonora more than a decade earlier), under whose command Steele's regiment had been placed, was already established in Manila. In addition to corresponding with family and friends, Mary Lawton also wrote letters describing her new surroundings for her hometown newspaper in Redlands, California. On August 10, 1899, from "HOME" as she typed it, all caps above her address, Calle Conception, Manila, P. I., Mary Lawton began, "Notwithstanding the accurate descriptions given in the many books and magazine articles on the Philippines, I do not think one

[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.

realizes at all the actual facts. One must see it to understand the prettiness of the place, and wants to be brought in contact with these people, to appreciate their attractiveness."[85] Mary continued, "I am wondering what impression my pen pictures give you, and if I can present to you, even in a small way, a correct idea of the many things that interest me so much."[86] The letter goes on to describe the different clothing she saw on Filipinos around Manila, as well as the laundry practices she had observed. Mary Lawton had an eye for detail, and though I cannot judge the accuracy of her pen pictures, their vibrance is clear—especially so when her letter turns to the territory outside Manila.

"Occasionally, after an expedition, I am permitted to visit the captured country," Mary Lawton wrote, referring to the army's work outside the city. They moved steadily through the Philippine Islands, establishing outposts, confiscating *insurrecto* (or insurrectionist) weapons and ammunition, and receiving notice of surrender from village after village. This was the "captured country" Mary Lawton was invited to visit alongside a group of press correspondents.[87] "We had a real soldier's luncheon at Pasig, of substantial stew, and coffee in tin cups, then, went on our way, close enough to see without glasses, a beautiful country, well cultivated and thickly settled."[88] Of course, Mary Lawton knew that the picturesque countryside contained far more than was on display for her benefit. Of her experience witnessing a ceremony of surrender she

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[85] It looks as though the letter has been lightly edited—a word underlined here, commas added there. Might this be a draft, or a duplicate saved? Mary Lawton to Mr. Craig, August 10, 1899, Box 2, folder 3, Henry Ware Lawton Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[86] A letter from Mr. Craig, written July 25 but likely received after Mary's letter of August 10, affirmed that "All Redlands feels a sort of personal interest in the welfare of the Lawtons…May we not hope to hear often…every word is of real interest." See Mr. Craig to Mary Lawton, July 25, 1899, and Mary Lawton to Mr. Craig, August 10, 1899, Box 2 folder 3, Henry Ware Lawton Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.

wrote, "Who, to look at them, would suspect they had guns hidden in the thicket—who could guess an insurrecto uniform was buried, ready at a moments notice, to cover those 'flags of truce' on their little persons?!"[89] This challenge—that it was often impossible to identify the enemy—runs through many accounts of marches in contested territory.

But even before heading out into the field, Matthew Steele described to Stella the challenges of leading rather green soldiers. During their first night guarding a trench, Steele's soldiers were shooting at banana leaves swaying in the wind, certain that they were Filipino soldiers.[90] (Some confusion over protocol resulted in one of Steele's men shooting another in the shoulder.)[91] Though he told this story, Steele recognized how little he was hearing about the rest of the war: "It isn't worth while for me to tell you anything about the fighting or about the poor fellows who get killed—the papers at home tell it even before we hear of it."[92] Despite the truth of this statement, papers and magazines at home were desperate for information about the Philippines, and several soldiers served as correspondents for local and national publications while they served overseas.

Walter Cutter, for example, and his colleague C. L. Clark, both wrote letters addressed to newspaper editors or even simply "Dear Folks at Home" with descriptions of their experiences. They took pictures, too—one newspaper published a photograph of bodies lying in a field

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[89] Ibid.
[90] Steele's assignment to hold part of the line, which stretched around and outward from Manila, is representative of the initial American strategy immediately following the beginning of the Philippine-American portion of the war. By the time Steele's battalion and several others arrived on transport vessels throughout 1899, American forces had begun the work of advancing on insurrecto territory and, as Mary Lawton noted, expanding "captured country." See *Harper's History of the War in the Philippines*, 142.
[91] Matthew Steele to Stella Steele, October 27,1899, 12:50 PM, Box 8, folder 4, Matthew F. Steele Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[92] Matthew Steele to Stella Steele, October 24, 1899, 2 PM, Box 8, folder 4, Matthew F. Steele Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

labeled "'JUST BEFORE THE BURIAL': Dead Filipinos Found on the Firing Line After an Engagement" under the heading, "Daily Sights with Clark and Cutter at Manila."[93] Both men were members of the 17th Infantry, and invested in documenting their experiences for readers in the United States. A letter from September 30, 1899, written by Clark, offered a description of the Philippine countryside: "More and more I am impressed with the lovliness [sic] of the place. The flowers are beautiful but are all strange to me. I do not know the name of any of them. I would send you some of them, but I know they would [b]e spoiled."[94] To the editor at *The Farmers' Cabinet*, Walter Cutter described the view from his new post at San Carlos, Luzon, P. I.: "These mountains are grand, especially in the sunset glow. In speaking of the country the other day one of the boys said, 'They can tell of God's country, but the angels must have slept here.'"[95]

Though the beauty of this far-away country is mentioned in Cutter's published letters over and over again, he doesn't shy away from describing (or depicting, as in the burial photograph) the less lovely parts of the job. In December, he described a hanging, but noted that the prisoner's "eyes roamed for a second over the beautiful hills and mountains and then he stepped quietly under the noose."[96]

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[93] The image is a loose clipping marked with this number: Acc 1898-W-160 (8); all of the clippings in Cutter's papers are either loose or carefully pasted into a scrapbook—without the header information that would reveal which newspaper(s) he wrote for. See Scrapbook, Box 1, Walter L. Cutter Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

[94] C. L. Clark, "From the Philippines: C. L. Clark Writes Another Interesting Letter," September 30, 1899 in Scrapbook, Box 1, Walter L. Cutter Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

[95] A reference to the people of Milford, combined with the address to "Editor FARMERS' CABINET" suggest that Cutter is serving as a correspondent for *The Farmers' Cabinet (now The Cabinet Press*) in Amherst, New Hampshire. Walter L. Cutter, " Soldiers in Luzon: Company H Nicely Situated at San Carlos," Feburary 6, 1900, Scrapbook, Box 1, Walter L. Cutter Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

[96] Walter L. Cutter, "In the Philippines: Walter L. Cutter Describes an Execution in Luzon," December 28, 1900, Scrapbook, Box 1, Walter L. Cutter Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA. I am

Other reports of the war also provided photographic evidence of victory—and violence. In *Campaigning in the Philippines Illustrated*, an 1899 volume by Karl Irving Faust, several maps and photographs accompany detailed accounts of the volunteer regiments of the United States Army in the Philippines. Alongside descriptions of fighting, there are several photographs of the bodies of Filipino soldiers in trenches or on battlefields. Captions for these images describe these bodies—these deaths—as the "work" of one regiment or another: "Work of the Kansas Boys" describes ten or so bodies laid in a line; "Trench Showing Work of Washington Regiment" labels an image of bodies crumpled in a seemingly endless trench; "At the Battle of Tondo.—Work of Minnesota Men" reads the caption underneath a much messier image of bodies in what looks to be a blockhouse.[97] These photos aren't on every page. There are photographs of soldiers preparing for and engaging in battle. Also, photographs of soldiers burying their dead. Faust, the volume's author, ended the book by acknowledging the difficulty of capturing its images: "Many of the pictures were taken in the open battlefield, under the fire of the enemy, and several men were wounded while thus engaged." He continued, "It requires as much nerve to take a photograph of a company of soldiers charging the enemy's trenches, as to be one of those engaged in the movement—possibly more, when the enemy is firing wild, or when they happen to select the camera for a target." Faust did not shy away from acknowledging

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focused on the ways soldiers described these landscapes and their labor in them to people at home, but some soldiers produced newspapers about the soldiers' experience for each other. James Berkey describes how soldiers' writings in these soldier-produced newspapers or newsletters made "empire into just another ordinary experience" and even describes how for some soldiers, "the promised romance of empire had not materialized." See James Berkey, "Empire's Mastheads: Rewriting the 'Correspondents' War' from the Edge of Empire," *Journal of Transnational America Studies*, Vol. 3, Issue 2 (2011), 22 pp.

[97] These volumes were customized with supplements describing the specific work of individual states' volunteer regiments. The version I looked at contained a supplement on the First Nebraska Infantry, complete with officer biographies and lists of soldiers by company. Karl Irving Faust, *Campaigning in the Philippines Illustrated* (San Francisco: The Hicks-Judd Company, 1899), 133, 139, 144, 311.

his own bravery ("the writer's own personal experience with a kodak could be made, with a little embellishment, into a very exciting tale"), but also provided contact information for the other photographers whose pictures were included, "for the benefit of those who may be collecting war views."[98]

In 1901, both Cutter and Clark were reassigned. Cutter traveled south to Jolo, "the garden spot of the Philippines." "It is an island paradise," he wrote, describing parks and parrots, flowers and fruit. "Benches are scattered through these parks and along the shady streets and we patronize them whenever we find time for a little leisure." Cutter noted a coffee plantation, a local hemp industry, and a reservoir from a "cool, clear mountain stream." The paradise he describes is pastoral; park benches and possibilities for future development add to Jolo's charm, and pearl fisheries and forests filled with valuable timber complete the picture. Beverly Daly offered a similar portrait of the island of Negros: "This is certainly a fine island and its resources, which are as yet almost totally undeveloped, are very great. As soon as the Americans begin to colonize, and the engineers get to work remedying the results of Spanish carelessness, Negros is bound to boom."[99] When Needom Freeman of the 23rd Infantry's Company A looked at the Philippines, he saw "a rich country. Almost anything can be raised that is desired in the line of field and garden crops; fine timber is plentiful and saw mills are yet unknown."[100] Paul Fletcher detailed the abundance of many things, from "cocoanuts" to chocolate, and wrote to his wife, "To be short, anything in the world can be raised here."[101] Describing his experience of the

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[98] Ibid., 314.
[99] Beverly Daly to his brother Arthur, September 18, 1899, Box 1, folder 3, Beverly C. Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[100] Needom Freeman, *A Soldier in the Philippines, 1901* (D. L. Freeman, in the United States and Great Britain), 65.
[101] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated April 17, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

Cagayan Valley, William H. C. Bowen wrote in response to a query from a potential entrepreneur, "You can raise there anything that can be grown in the tropics. The land is very fertile and vegetation grows luxuriantly. Americans who would go there with capital and machinery, pluck and patience, can do anything that can be done in any virgin country."[102] And Matthew Batson wrote in a field notebook, "Altogether I think the islands are well worth holding and that it would be a great mistake to let them go."[103]

The possibilities the islands could offer seemed endless. So the Philippines would be, could be paradise—with the proper (read: white) management. In addition to describing mineral riches ("there are some very good veins of gold ore in the mountains of Luzon") and predicting a mining boom that "will attract more people than the Klondike ever did," Freeman also used that familiar metaphor of the desert in bloom to describe the archipelago's potential: "Luzon and some other large islands are very fertile, and under proper agricultural management would yield millions and blossom as the rose, but as yet they are blighted by the uncivilized natives."[104] Freeman described the potential of the Philippines' natural resources and the dangerousness of some of its native residents in the same breath. He continued:

> A man would be taking his life in his hands to go out in to the country and try to engage in anything. As conditions existed when I was there, bands of hostile Filipinos were scouring the whole interior, and frequently were bold enough to raid near the American posts, leaving devastation wherever they went. The soil is very fertile, a warm temperature and plenty of water to irrigate with if desired for that purpose.[105]

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[102] William H.C. Bowen to Mr. T.H. Goodman, September 26, 1905. describing his 1902 service in the Cagayan Valley. See Box 4, Folder 7 labeled "Governor Philippines Newspaper Correspondence 1899-1908," William H. C. Bowen Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[103] Matthew Batson, small volume from the field, April 1899, Box 3, Matthew A. Batson Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA. Although this is a field account of Batson's service, it sounds as though he is talking to someone — perhaps Florence, his wife?
[104] Freeman, *A Soldier in the Philippines*, 63-65.
[105] Ibid.

Walter Cutter, too, contrasted Jolo's beauty (and its park benches) with the Moro settlements outside the city's walls. According to Cutter, "A Moro is a savage, pure and simple. Filthy, ignorant, and happy to be so."[106] Though he described no conflicts with these Moros (indeed, Cutter and his colleagues were sent home not long after arriving in Jolo), Cutter noted both their religion (Islam) and their weapons (the *barong*, a knife that "cuts a man's head from his body at one blow").[107] So they were different and dangerous.

But as Americans deployed to the Philippines quickly learned, almost anyone could be dangerous. Paul Fletcher described how "the farmer of to-day turns into a fighting man to-morrow."[108] The *insurrectos*, as they were called (this was one of the more official—or less offensive—names given to soldiers fighting for the Philippine side)[109] were not wearing name tags; they might be among the villagers who welcomed American soldiers when they arrived to "capture" more of the archipelago's territory, their weapons and ammunition hidden until they were required. Soldiers' letters and diaries often note the discovery of caches of insurgent weapons and supplies. One soldier even described finding weapons buried in a local cemetery.[110]

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[106] Walter L. Cutter, "In the Philippines: Correspondent Cutter Writes from Jolo City," December 14, 1901, Scrapbook, Box 1, Walter L. Cutter Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[107] Ibid. The Moro-controlled areas would prove the hardest for American forces to subdue—and their strength as warriors along with their cultural differences earned them a featured place in the letters of the soldiers they encountered, as well is in media coverage of the war.
[108] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated February 27, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[109] A note on language: readers who are familiar with the literature on race and empire in the Spanish-American War and Philippine-American War may be surprised at the absence of certain slurs in the language of these soldiers. While "insurrecto" seems to be used most consistently by my actors, in my research I have encountered plenty of other words used to describe Filipino people. I have not intentionally excluded these slurs from this chapter; however, my focus on the ways that soldiers write about Philippine nature seems to have produced a chapter without these words, and I do not want to give the impression that I am hiding this particular form of ugliness in my examination of the historical record.
[110] See Charles D. Rhodes, 1901-1903 Diary of the Philippines Insurrection, Entry for February 11, 1901, Box 1, Charles D. Rhodes Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

Hiking and Fighting

It was the pursuit of insurgent forces that drew American soldiers further into the country. While regiments stationed in Manila and its immediate surroundings were certainly learning to cope with a new (tropical) climate, the men who were sent beyond Manila into other parts of Luzon (or to other islands altogether) learned firsthand—or feet first, perhaps—how to navigate new and challenging terrain. Still, they seemed to find much of it breathtaking—at least when they weren't "hiking."

Several soldiers described the work of patrolling in search of insurgent forces and supplies not as "marching," but as "hiking." Not only do they use this word, but many of them put it in quotations, as if to indicate a bit of sarcasm, a bit of wry humor about the ways in which "hiking" was not an adequate descriptor. To a modern reader—or perhaps I should say, to this modern reader—"hiking" evokes a particular kind of scenery alongside the suggestion of a certain degree of effort. Hiking is harder than walking; still, many of us pursue it for pleasure, for the experience of using our muscles to move through the woods, and sometimes, for the reward—a summit, a scene, or a swimming-hole, perhaps. In their own time, naturalist John Muir had been writing in national publications about the importance of preserving California's wild places. Articles he wrote for *Century* about Yosemite reached 200,000 readers, and his words contributed to support for—and swift passage—of a bill creating Yosemite National Park in 1890.[111] A few years later, he founded the Sierra Club, an organization for "exploring, enjoying, and rendering accessible the mountain regions of the Pacific Coast."[112] Over the following decade, the Sierra Club's membership grew, and alongside enjoying the California

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[111] See Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 131-133.
[112] *Articles of Association, Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, and a List of Charter Members of the Sierra Club* as quoted in Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 132.

mountains, the group embraced wilderness advocacy. And in 1901, as American soldiers hiked through rice fields and mountain ranges on the other side of the globe, Sierra Club members also embarked on a hike, the organization's first High Trip.[113] Rebecca Solnit writes about wandering in the mountains as a political act, linked to the preservation at the heart of the Sierra Club's mission. "Walking—or hiking and mountaineering, as the club tended to call it—became its ideal way of being in the world: out of doors, relying on one's own feet, neither producing nor destroying."[114]

From reading their letters, it certainly seems that American soldiers in the Philippines were hiking much of the time. Like California Sierra Club members, American soldiers in the Philippines relied on their feet. But soldiers' work produced plenty of destruction.

Charles D. Rhodes proudly described his service on patrol in the foreword he wrote to his "Diary of the Philippine Insurrection": "unceasing vigilance and indefatigable troop movement" to the tune of 2200 miles covered over a period of 8 months in 1901.[115] Edwin Segerstrom, who wrote so frequently of the beauty and verdure of his camp outside Manila, used different language to explain more recent experiences: "A person ought to have an iron constitution in order to go through this kind of a life all right."[116] Segerstrom described being selected for a duty that hadn't yet been described to him. All he knew was that they were looking for "men who could stand a march."[117] Peter Lewis, a member of the New York Volunteers, described several

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[113] Ninety-six hikers together for two weeks actually sounds a bit more like a march than a hike to this former backcountry trip leader…See Rebecca Solnit, "Of Walking Clubs and land Wars" in *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), pp. 148-155, for more on the first Sierra Club High Trip.
[114] Solnit, *Wanderlust*, 150.
[115] See Charles D. Rhodes, Foreword to 1901-1903 Diary of the Philippines Insurrection, Box 1, Charles D. Rhodes Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[116] Harper, *Just Outside of Manila*, 96.
[117] Ibid.

"hikes" in his letters to his brother, always placing that word in quotes to suggest that perhaps it signaled something other than a walk through rugged terrain. For example, "We had a pretty hard time of it on that 'hike' most of the time we were up to our waists in mud you see we had to go through Rice fields, the Rice fields are always soft the Rice grows in mud and water, and we had to plow through them, as it happened we did not come across any amount of Insurgents, but I held a Filipino up and took his Bolo away from him."[118]

And Major Matthew Batson, of the Fourth Cavalry, wrote to his wife Florence in November of 1899, "Such an expedition as this one cannot be comprehended by anyone who has not participated in one similar to it." Despite "Flossie's" inability to understand, Batson went on to describe his most recent march in vivid detail:

> For a few miles we wound our way along a narrow trail near the river through pampas grass fifteen feet high and then plunged into dense bamboo jungle where the sun could not penetrate its depths. The Sun was already dropping behind Mt. Arayat. At first the trail was fairly good but the farther we penetrated the jungle the worse it got and the less marked. Soon we were tramping in mud which the carabao had tramped into a slush which pervaded our boots and ground between our toes.[119]

Batson continued, "Denser and denser the jungle became and deeper and deeper the mud and water until we were wading in it up to our very chins and indeed some of the smaller chaps could only walk on their tip toes and had to be assisted along by the taller ones." After dark, Batson and his companions found what was left of enemy campfires. They got them going again, "building fires and boiling some bacon," while Batson "got in a banca and reconnoitered up the

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[118] Peter Lewis and H.R. Kells, ed., *Foot Soldier in an Occupation Force: The Letters of Peter Lewis,* 1899-1902, (Manila, P.I.; De La Salle University, 1999), 90.
[119] Matthew Batson to Florence Batson, November 10, 1899, Box 1, folder labeled Matthew A. Batson, 4th U.S. Cav, correspondence, Matthew A. Batson Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

river for some distance." Too far behind to catch up, the men used the campfires to dry their clothes "while waiting for the moon to rise so we could continue our march."[120]

Letters like Batson's were not unusual. Soldiers assigned to cover difficult and uncertain terrain so rapidly seemed to write home about it.[121] Earlier that fall, Beverly Daly wrote to his brother Arthur about a gunboat fight, an expedition to Calatrava, and a night march "over horribly muddy mountain trails, through jungles and along the beach." Nowhere near as detailed an account as Batson's, Daly's letter promised that more was to come: "you will get the full account when I send on my journal, which great work is as yet only projected."[122]

War correspondents also covered (figuratively, but sometimes literally) the challenging terrain American soldiers covered. John McCutcheon reported on the marching of the 30th Infantry. "Col. Cornelius Gardiner and his men of the 30th have been out walking," he wrote in a piece for the *Chicago Record*. "One day you hear of them at one end of Batangas province and the next day you learn they are in Laguna, while on the third day you're likely to hear that they crossed a mountain range or two and are fighting in Tayabas. A record of their wanderings would include nearly every place on land south of Manila." McCutcheon marveled at the speed and the duration of these marches. "Out walking," quipped McCutcheon, before relaying that the

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[120] Ibid.

[121] There could be several reasons for this. One possibility, drawn from my own experience, comes to mind. My cousin served in the Marines during the Iraq War. He was at Fallujah, and several other engagements, where I imagine he was in the thick of things. I spoke to him a few times while he was overseas, just briefly, when our families would get together and we'd pass the phone around. We talked about everything but the violence of his work, and plenty about the heat and the desert. This is not to say that soldiers in the Philippine-American War and in Iraq did not talk to their families about the violent work of war; the source material shows that some soldiers wrote quite detailed accounts of the fighting they did. I share this only to suggest that sometimes it is easier, when talking or writing to family, to talk about the landscape, the food, the weather—anything to not have to acknowledge some of the most awful aspects of war. (My cousin returned home safely, and is now retired from the Marine Corps.)

[122] Beverly Daly to his brother Arthur, September 18, 1899, Box 1, folder 3, Beverly C. Daly Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

2nd battalion had covered forty miles in twenty-seven hours. And the "walking" wasn't easy. While sometimes soldiers were traveling along existing (if rough) roads, often the paths they followed required plenty of scrambling and wading, and sometimes sliding and crawling. McCutcheon described one path that led "through a range of mountains, winding up and down, in some places almost impassable and in all places very hard, even on troops which had been hardened by fourteen days of constant hiking." But this particular path did lead over the summit of the Taal mountain, and McCutcheon reported that "the view to the southward was one of the most beautiful imaginable. Lake Taal lay at the foot of the mountain, and to those on top it seemed as if one could almost jump down into it."[123]

Matthew Batson also wrote of views from great heights, of being able to see the "many mouths" of the Rio Grande, "with all the towns along its banks" from the top of Arayat. The journey up there had required the constant removal of leeches, and the use of ropes as a precaution against the steep drop down from the ledges and boulders Batson and his men moved along, around, and over. Another mission on a particularly dark night required waiting for daylight to proceed—but instead, the soldiers "found that the rain had obliterated the trail of the band we were following so we retraced our steps." Batson wrote that he was so tired that he "went to sleep while I was undressing to take a bath in my wet clothes." To his wife Florence, he wrote, "This is the sort of work we are doing all the time now. Not very pleasant either. I think we earn our pay though."[124]

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[123] All quotations in this paragraph, John McCutcheon, *Chicago Record's Stories of Filipino Warfare* (Chicago, 1900), 40-41.
[124] All quotations this paragraph, Matthew Batson to Florence Batson, October 14, 1900 and following letter, undated (unclear if a continuation of Oct 14 letter), Box 2, Correspondence, Matthew A. Batson Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

Paul Fletcher described endless amounts of hiking in his letters home to his wife Hughine. In February, 1901, from his post in Cebu ("like a paradise") he wrote "to let you know I am O.K." He continued, "We had a terrible 'hike' through mountains, climbing incessantly. It is terrible work, and I am about exhausted."[125] He was also sore: "My feet are covered with blisters tonight and will not need to be rocked to sleep."[126] Fletcher's letters often referenced Santa Lucia, a hike and skirmish that was the worst he had witnessed during his Philippine service. Sometimes he points to the physical challenge: "my ankles and knees were dreadfully swollen—forty-four mile-march without food or sleep."[127] Other times, the trauma: "We have not engaged the enemy since Santa Lucia. I can never forget my feelings as I saw men killed all around me."[128] And a few weeks later, "Tomorrow is my birthday…I will be twenty-four—just a boy. I am aging very rapidly."[129] The letters slip into this kind of sadness regularly, but never for too long. Whenever Fletcher starts to get dark, he pulls back, and instead asks about his son. These thoughts of home seem to help. But so does the surrounding landscape. To Hughine, he wrote, "Here and at it again with the sound of the incoming tide to sooth my restlessness."[130] And the view, too, seemed to bring him comfort. "Away off in the distance looms up the dark

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[125] Paul R. Fletcher, Letters dated January 20 and February 18, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[126] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated February 18, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[127] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated February 16, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[128] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated March 12, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[129] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated March 27, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis. A month earlier, Fletcher was already reflecting on his age and life experience: "The world has as many sides and phases as the myriad stars above and I, who am yet a boy, have seen many of them. My life has not been of much length as yet, yet it has since my seventeenth year, been an active one." Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated February 16, 19091. Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[130] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated January 22, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

rugged shore of Negros, appearing as a jagged outline in a maze of midst. How I wish you were here!" he wrote. "As never in my life do I expect to again see such a wondrously beautiful land."[131] Fletcher was careful to highlight that it was the sight of the mountains—"all around us they rise in grand array"—that calmed him: "I assure you, however, that looking at them appeals far more to the 'bump' of sublimity than climbing them. I know from experience in both."[132]

Fletcher preferred his experiences "looking" at the mountains to the work of moving in them—and to the violence of the fighting he participated in. He returned from the field to gaze at the mountains and be soothed by the sound of the waves. Fletcher's beautiful nature was separate from the sites of his hard work. But sometimes the two, violence and natural beauty, were part of the same field of vision. John McCutcheon described a battle that occurred in the shadow of Mayon, a volcano that he found to be particularly impressive. On the morning of January 21, 1900, from aboard the *Helena*, McCutcheon described—and drew—his view of "Mayon, the Beautiful."

[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.

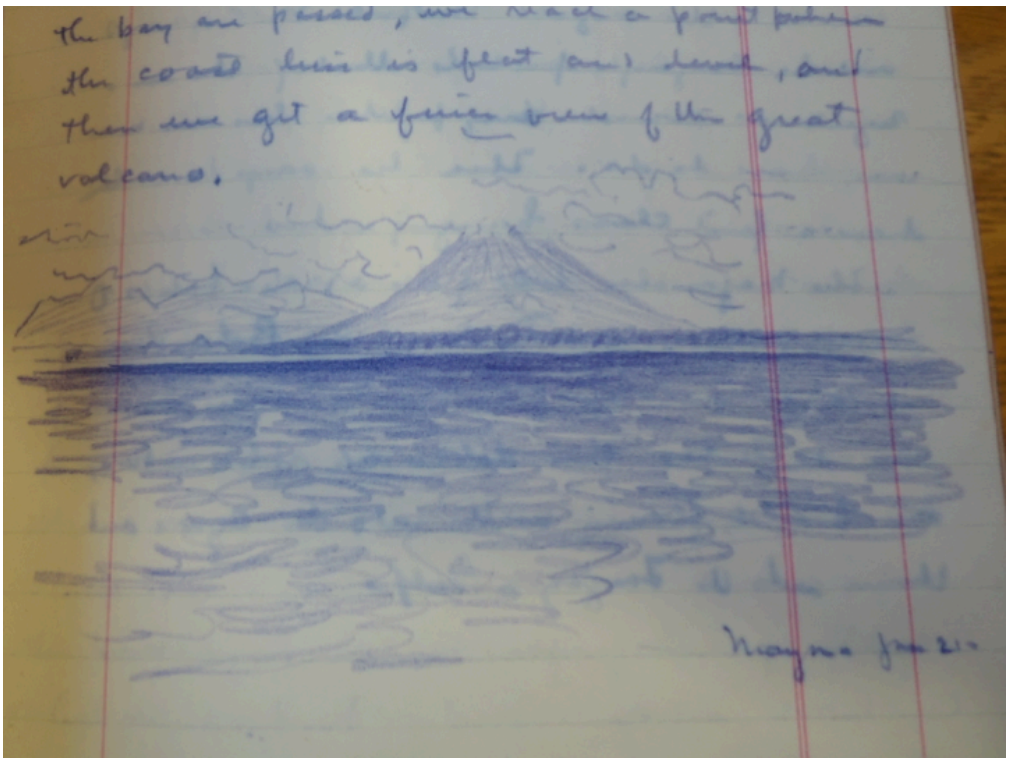

Figure 17. Sketch from John McCutcheon's notebook of "Mayon the Beautiful."
John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.[133]

McCutcheon was tagging along on an expedition to open the hemp ports of the Philippines, a process that involved confirming or asserting American control over several port cities and then installing customs and revenue agents at each port city they visited.[134] (Hemp was used to make rope, a material of central importance to American agriculture.)[135] McCutcheon accompanied Captain William Kobbe and the *Helena* to Donsol, where a small skirmish left

[133] John T. McCutcheon, Entry for January 21, 1900, Volume labeled "1900- Jan 17-31, Opening the Hemp Ports, sketches also, Detail(?) Journal, 24," Box 34, folder 872, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.
[134] For a military summary of this expedition, see "Report of Brig. Gen. W. A. Kobbe, U.S.V., of an expedition to occupy and open hemp ports in the Philippine Islands, January 18 to April 8, 1900" in *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1900.* https://archive.org/stream/annualreportswa50deptgoog/annualreportswa50deptgoog_djvu.txt. Accessed 20 October 2014.
[135] See Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 134.

soldiers who had been "aching for a chance to begin shooting" disappointed.[136] Kobbe's men handled the surrendering of men and weapons, and McCutcheon described Donsol—as he put it, "a rather unpromising place for a garrison."[137] He wrote of a neglected church and sandy streets." But the great charm of Donsol," he wrote, "is the sp[l]endid view of Mayon which can be gotten here. Across a few miles of low hills, she springs up in graceful slopes, her sides as clean as if chiselled out by an artist and her 8500 feet absolutely undetracted by surrounding mounts of lesser size."[138]

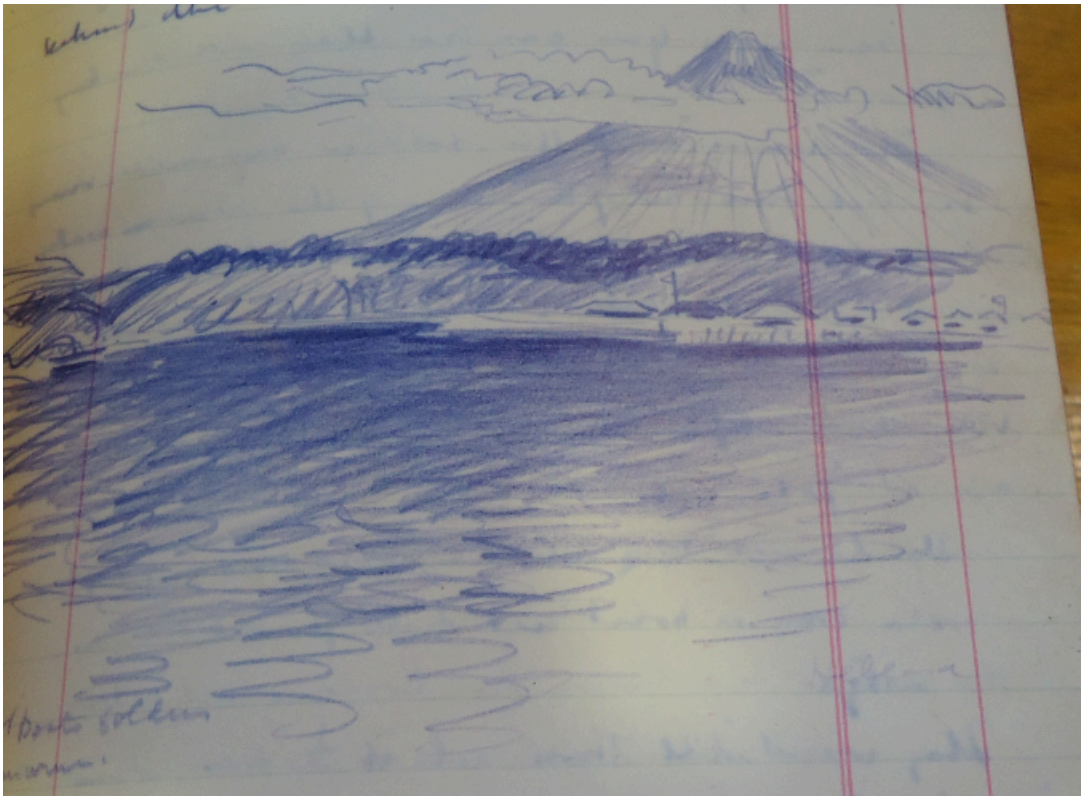

Figure 18. Sketch from John McCutcheon's notebook, also of Mayon.
John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.[139]

[136] John T. McCutcheon, Entry for January 21, 1900, Volume labeled "1900- Jan 17-31, Opening the Hemp Ports, sketches also, Detail(?) Journal, 24," Box 34, folder 872, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.

McCutcheon wrote, "One feels that he could gaze at the volcano for days without tiring."[140] Numerous sketches certainly affirm his own fascination with the volcano. It is a constant in the journal he kept with him on this expedition to open the hemp ports. He transferred to the *Venus* for the trip around the bottom of Luzon to the town of Legaspi. For the *Record*, he described his view of the volcano behind the port at Legaspi:

> The great Mayon volcano, its lofty top shrouded in a clinging bank of clouds, stood alone in its majesty behind the town and looked serenely down on the waving palm trees at the beach and the sparkling waters of the bay. This mountain is one of the most beautiful in its symmetry of any in the world. Fujiyama is taller, but it is not more symmetrical, for Mayon rises from the sea in one long gentle slope and then springs up to its enormous height in lines as geometrical as if human hands had shaped it. But other events soon drew our thoughts from the contemplation of scenery.[141]

Nice transition, Mr. McCutcheon. The Battle of Legaspi began with Mayon in view, and McCutcheon chose to juxtapose his view of the volcano with the violence that followed. This shift from the volcano standing watch over Legaspi to the clash between American ships and Filipino soldiers occurring in the port is an effective narrative device. McCutcheon has set the scene, and in his retelling, it is time for the action to begin: "On all sides the noise was deafening. The sharp reports of the Krags, which sounded hollow and metallic from the iron sides of the ship, the clatter of bullets on the stone godowns and walls, and the rattling echoes coming back to us; the steady shock of the *Nashville*'s big guns, so near that we on the *Venus* could feel the blast of air; and then the occasional trip-hammer clacking of the Colt's automatic combined, creating a din that was distracting."[142] Kobbe's forces encountered approximately eight hundred insurrectos with fortifications. As the ships fired in support, a small group of

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[140] Ibid.
[141] John McCutcheon, *Chicago Record's Stories of Filipino Warfare* (Chicago, 1900), 47.
[142] Ibid., 51.

soldiers landed and worked their way around the insurgents' positions, ultimately securing the city.[143] McCutcheon describes the sights and sounds of the battle, and the mountain is exchanged for the lagoon, accounts of combat on shore, and the bodies "stretched out in the edge of the stream" afterwards, "all bolo-men, armed with rough, heavy wooden knifelike clubs."[144] With the port opened, Kobbe and his men, McCutcheon with them, moved on to Catbalogan.

Figure 19. The coastline of Luzon. Google Maps.
Kobbe's mission to open the hemp ports took McCutcheon from Sorsogon City (and the bay) to Donsol (on the western coast of Luzon) and then around the bottom of the island past Bulan and up along the eastern coast to Legazpi City. Notice Mayon behind the town, just as McCutcheon described.

[143] Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 135.
[144] John McCutcheon, *Chicago Record's Stories of Filipino Warfare,* 52.

McCutcheon's approach to recounting the opening of the hemp ports, especially his juxtaposition of the volcano and the firefight, reminds the reader that McCutcheon isn't a soldier. He is a reporter. His work is in the observing, in the storytelling. McCutcheon paid special attention to landscape in both his written descriptions and his sketches. Some of the sketches feel like notes: a way to document the position of ships, or key details about a scene, for later retelling in prose or illustration.[145] Sometimes his reportage is drawn from interviews with soldiers, and other times, his stories come from his own experiences embedded alongside American soldiers as they shelled ports, shot insurgents, or "hiked" nonexistent trails in search of enemy soldiers and supplies. He wrote that he could "gaze at the volcano for days," and I find myself wondering if Mayon offered him some relief. He was covering the war, but found parts of the experience unsettling. In his notes on the Battle of Legaspi (though not necessarily in his reporting), McCutcheon wrote that the "pleasure the men exhibited afterwards was rather sickening."[146] Statements like these distance McCutcheon from the soldiers, and remind me that although at times he's right there with them, he wasn't doing the same work. He could step back and sketch the volcano.

Though Paul Fletcher often separated the beauty of the sea and his view of the mountains from his experiences performing military work in Philippine landscapes, he sometimes read the brutality of war in the land itself. In one letter he linked the uncertainty of the country with the uncertainty of his own survival: "In this wild and uncertain country, death may come swift and

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[145] McCutcheon's drawings of "Mayon the Beautiful" are surprisingly accurate, despite being ink drawings in a tiny notebook. Contemporary images of Mayon bear this out; photographs of the volcano were immediately recognizable to me after pouring over McCutcheon's Mayon sketches.

[146] John T. McCutcheon, Entry for January 23, 1900. Volume labeled "1900- Jan 17-31, Opening the Hemp Ports, sketches also, Detail(?) Journal, 24," Box 34, folder 872, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.

certain without one moment's warning."[147] And one day in April, three native Filipinos were brought to him in his role as a surgeon, their bodies "almost hacked to pieces by bolos and spears." He described them as "the most horrible looking objects that I ever seen alive" and in his next breath, "This is a bad part of the country."[148]

Sometimes it was American soldiers who materially transformed the landscape into bad country. After the insurrectos cut communication wires linking American forces at Balamban, Cebu Island, with other regiments in the area, Fletcher describes receiving orders to take a "hike" of destruction. "On Dec 4th at 11:30 P.M.," he wrote, "Capt. Malley, myself, and forty-two other men went on a 'hike' south of Balamban covering some seventy-five miles of country and mountain region, burning and destroying everything in our way."[149] This was very early in Fletcher's tour, and it stayed with him: "I can see them now, with the tears streaming down their cheeks begging—entreating the Capt. and then me to save their homes."[150] Still, to Hughine, he wrote, "It was terrible but we had our orders and it was necessary to burn and destroy everything on the west coast of Cebu."[151] Here, American soldiers transformed that landscape, but in ways quite different from the work of post and road-building that occupied much of their time a few decades earlier in the American West. (In fact, some of these "hikes"—and the destruction that

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[147] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated November 13, 1900, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[148] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated April 24, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[149] Paul R. Fletcher, Letters December 9, 1900, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid. See also Glenn May's *Battle for Batangas* for descriptions of similar practices under J. Franklin Bell, especially pp.254-256. May describes two expeditions, one of seven days and the other lasting eight, at the very beginning of 1902. In addition to several skirmishes resulting in enemy casualties, the soldiers on one of these expeditions destroyed "in excess of 500 tons of rice and palay, hundreds of bushels of corn, hundreds of hogs and chickens, and more than 6,000 houses, 200 crabaos, 800 head of cattle, and 680 horses." The second expedition "burned about 900 tons of palay and killed hundreds of animals" (255).

accompanied them—echo Sherman's march to the sea, though only the most senior officers in the Philippines might have served alongside Sherman at the end of the Civil War.) This was violence on the land itself, the burning of "everything" a strategy for victory against an enemy that was proving much more difficult to subdue than had been predicted.

Indians and Filipinos

Fletcher's letters repeatedly signaled that while surrender was happening on other islands, it was not happening on Cebu. These insurgents were digging in, continuing to fight. Their unwillingness to concede, for Fletcher, seemed to justify the brutality of his orders, even if the act of destroying homes and fields left him unsettled. Even though Fletcher had much to say about the work itself—his letters are filled with commentary on the strategy of the war, on what the United States could or should be doing in the Philippines—it can be hard to figure out exactly what Fletcher thought about the work he was doing. First, the letters we have were copied by his wife, Hughine, for safekeeping; it is quite possible that we do not have them all. Second, the letters reveal a man struggling with aspects of the work, and even with his sense of himself. That particularly challenging encounter at Santa Lucia shook him, drove him to pray, to commit to being a better man. He critiqued the violence he was part of, even quoted General Sherman's line that "war is hell," but he also wrote about teaching his son to be a soldier, even teaching him how to fight with a bolo.[152] Sympathy for Filipino people seems to exist alongside Fletcher's belief in their savage nature: "Kiss my boy and tell him that I will make a soldier out of him but want him to fight civilized people. These fellows are worse than Indians."[153]

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[152] Ibid.
[153] Paul R. Fletcher, Letters February 13, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

Fletcher made the connection between Indian-fighting and fighting Filipinos on multiple occasions. Though he wrote, "To paraphrase the adage applied to our own American Indian: 'A dead Filipino is a good Filipino,'" Fletcher had never participated in the Indian Wars; he was both too young and not a member of the regular army.[154] (Recall that Fletcher was a contract surgeon, rather than surgeon with an officer's commission.) Still, he heard and repeated this comparison.

Fletcher wasn't the only one to make this connection. William Oliver Trafton's memoir is riddled with descriptions of local Filipinos as "indians," their homes "wild indian villages," their weapons "tomahawks." In his retelling of a particular skirmish in northern Luzon, he describes hearing Tagalog scouts "yelling like a bunch of Comanches."[155] He wrote that one of his fellow soldiers "seemed to think it great fun to fight indians" and also also highlighted that his commanding officer had served with Custer in 1876.[156] And when describing the charge of American soldiers at Manila in February 1899, John Bowe wrote, "The Indians were stampeded, and this sort of hunting was too good sport for our men to stop…"[157] Historian David Silbey

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[154] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated October 1, 1900, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

[155] Trafton's narrative was written down in 1934, three decades after returning from the Philippines. While we can't treat his accounts in the same way we'd read letters and narratives written down during the Philippine-American War, the consistency of Trafton's description, combined with his mention of his commanding officer's service with Custer and the many ways his story squares with contemporary accounts leads me to think that Trafton's descriptive language was not added to his storytelling solely after the fact. William Henry Scott, the editor of Trafton's papers, notes Trafton's usage of language and comparisons to American Indian people throughout the text. See William Oliver Trafton, William Henry Scott, ed., *We Thought We Could Whip Them in Two Weeks* (Quezon City, PI: New Day, 1990), 64, 53, 67, 76.

[156] Ibid., 66, 52.

[157] Bowe quoted in Roth, *Muddy Glory: America's 'Indian Wars' in the Philippines 1899-1935* (W. Hanover, MA: The Christopher Publishing House, 1981), 46.

mentions the use of the word "squaw" to describe local women in romantic relationships with American soldiers, what he calls "another echo of the American West."[158]

Coverage of the Philippine-American War played up this connection, especially regarding Henry Lawton. Robert Carter, a friend of Henry and Mary Lawton, tracked Henry's career meticulously, and left behind a scrapbook of letters, reports, and newspaper clippings describing Lawton's successes and his legacy. The two had become friends in the early 1870s, and kept in touch while stationed separately. Carter's scrapbook contains a steady stream of letters from the 1870s and 1880s, tapering off as century's end approached. There are a few letters from Henry sent to Bob from Cuba, and more from Mary sent from the Philippines, carefully pasted into the scrapbook alongside articles from newspapers and national magazines about Lawton's role in these wars. Headlines include, "Sharpshooters Did Fine Work, and Our Men Fought in Regular Indian Style" and "Tireless Lawton/He Will Follow Aguinaldo as He Did Geronimo," while a sketch of Lawton is captioned, "General Lawton, Who Fights Filipinos in Indian Fashion."[159] Articles profiling Lawton often mentioned his role in Geronimo's capture as a way of signaling his experience and skill. (And still others made him larger than life. The Manila newspaper *The American* headlined a May 1899 article "Lawton, Fighting Machine" with subheadings ranging from "Otis Has Six Feet of Animated Steel as a Lieutenant" to "He is as Tireless as a Wolf and Can Go A Week Without Food or Sleep" and, of course, "His Famous Pursuit and Capture of Geronimo.")[160] In the space of two sentences, Karl Irving Faust, the

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[158] Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 184.
[159] See Robert Carter's Henry Ware Lawton Scrapbook, Newberry Library, Chicago.
[160] These headlines do not oversell the article's content. It begins, "At the head of the 5,000 regulars now in the Philippine islands is a modern fighting machine. Its name is Lawton—Henry W. Lawton—and for nearly forty years it has worn the uniform of the United States army. It has risen from the ranks, this fighting machine, leaving behind it other machines as strong, possibly, but less fortunate. It is because this machine has been steady, rapid and remorseless in its action

author of *Campaigning in the Philippines* (1899), called Lawton "the Indian Exterminator" and "the grizzly fighter."[161]

It wasn't just newspapers and magazines playing up this link between the old West and the Pacific front. Several histories of the Philippine-American War highlight that many of the men leading army efforts in the Philippines had begun their career as "Indian-fighters."[162] Some use the past experiences of these officers to illustrate the respect and admiration regulars and volunteers had for their leaders, while others present these details presumably to add weight to arguments about race and empire that are already quite compelling. In still other cases, this background is used to make inferences about American political and military strategy.[163]

These links between fighting Indians and fighting Filipinos weren't simple, however. Some soldiers made the connection in order to draw a sharp contrast. For example, in the spring

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that it has been chosen to lead the troops which are facing disease and death in Luzon." Later on, we learn that "Headaches are not known to him, except through hearsay." For the full article, see "Lawton, Fighting Machine," May 6, 1899, *The American*, pasted into Robert Carter's Henry Ware Lawton Scrapbook, Newberry Library, Chicago.

[161] Faust, *Campaigning in the Philippines,* 234.

[162] "Indian-fighters" or "Indian-fighting" is terminology used—even if in passing—in almost every history of the Philippine-American War I have encountered, whether scholarly or popular. (I would also include in this category lightly edited volumes containing the papers of a particular soldier or company.) Brian Linn cautions historians not to take this connection too literally; he critiques Stuart Creighton Miller's usage of the phrase, "descendants of old Indian fighters" to describe American forces during the Philippine-American War, arguing that "there is no documentary evidence to suggest that the U.S. Army in the Philippines contained a high proportion of soldiers whose fathers had fought in the army against Native Americans. See Brian Linn, "The Long Twilight of the Frontier Army," 159.

[163] See, for example, the arguments made in Anne Paulet, "The Only Good Indian Is a Dead Indian: The Use of United States Indian Policy as a Guide for the Conquest and Occupation of the Philippines, 1898-1905," Ph.D. diss. State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, 1995. In Proquest Dissertations and Theses, http://search.proquest.com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/docview/304239124?accountid=10267 [accessed 15 November 2014], as well as Thomas A. Bruno, "The Violent End of Insurgency on Samar, 1901-1902," *Army History* Spring 2011, and Joshua Gedacht, "'Mohammedan Religion Made it Necessary to Fire': Massacres on the American Imperial Frontier from South Dakota to the Southern Philippines" in McCoy and Scarano, *Colonial Crucible*.

of 1899, Major Matthew Batson wrote that "the people in the U.S. do not appreciate the seriousness of the problem out here." Batson recognized the link that many were making between fighting Indians and fighting Filipinos, but he disagreed with the comparison. Americans "seem to be under the impression that we are fighting a lot of ignorant natives dressed in breech cloats without organization and armed with bows and arrows," he wrote. Instead, Batson described "an army of patriots armed with Mausers and Remingtons and apparently an abundance of ammunition."[164] Edwin Segerstrom of the First Colorado Regiment also commented on this perception in a letter home in April of 1899: "We have been reading with combined amusement & indignation in papers from the states about some of the Insurgents being armed with bows and arrows. I have not run up against any of them so armed in a fight and don't know of any one who has."[165] Batson thought that people at home were underestimating the threat. Still, he thought the fighting would be over soon. In December, he wrote to Florence, "There will be no more fighting out here to amount to anything…so I am willing to go home. But I did enjoy the scraps I have been in, and I have been in a good many. In fact, I think I have had about my share."[166] His share included a foot injury that hobbled him for some time, and plenty of service under General Henry Lawton, a man Batson considered to be a friend. This letter about being "willing to go home" was written just a few days after Lawton was killed in battle at San Mateo, felled by a bullet while fighting forces commanded by General Licerio Geronimo. This echo from Lawton's Apache campaign days did not go unnoticed by those remembering him, or by the men who continued to serve in the Philippines.

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[164] Matthew Batson entry dated April 23, 1899, field journal in Box 3, Matthew A. Batson Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[165] Harper, *Just Outside of Manila*, 90.
[166] Matthew Batson, December 23, 1899 (typed copy of original letter), Box 3, Matthew A. Batson Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.

In fact, Batson did not go home in 1899, and instead went on to lead the Macabebe Scouts, a regiment of Filipinos willing to fight with the Americans against the insurrectos. (Filipino) native scouts led by a cavalry officer mirrored a strategy used by some of the frontier's most famous commanders, and newspapers reported that "there was much speculation among army officers as to whether the Macabebes would prove, like the American Indian scouts, unreliable."[167] The same article reported that the Macabebe scouts were "both loyal and brave."[168]

Batson wrote that he skirmished with Licerio Geronimo, a Filipino general, and his account of the man made ample use of the comparative possibilities available to him. He described how Geronimo "sprang on his horse" and "lit out for all he was worth." Batson's account reads like a western: "And away I went after him. A long chase, but he got away from me passing through a small bosque."[169] To his wife, he made explicit the link between this Geronimo and the Apache leader imprisoned at Fort Sill: "You have, no doubt, seen Geronimo's name mentioned a great many times. He is a man similar to the famous Indian Chief of the same name, and uses much the same tactics. He is a wiley old devil, and though I have been within an ace of getting him several times, he has always managed to elude me." Batson lost Geronimo's trail, but he did claim the soldier's sabre as his own. He described it for Florence and wrote, "I will get him yet though. He will not always escape me—and so it goes."[170]

Henry Lawton was the highest-ranking officer to die in the Spanish-American War. His death devastated many of the men who served alongside him, and the nation mourned. After a

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[167] Undated photocopy of clipping included in Matthew A. Baston Correspondence, Matthew A. Batson Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Matthew Batson, February 3, 1901 (typed copy of original letter), Box 3, Matthew A. Batson Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[170] Ibid.

military funeral in Manila, Lawton's body was placed on a transport bound for San Francisco. His remains were escorted to Washington, D.C., where he was given a state funeral and buried at Arlington.[171] His death prompted the nation to remember anew his record in the West, and his role in Geronimo's capture.

And his death in a battle with forces commanded by a man also named Geronimo created a powerful echo, a through-line for a story about an impressive military career. But this emphasis on "Indian-fighting" and "Indian-fighters" might obscure other important connections between the American West and the Philippines. (Furthermore, I find these descriptors troubling; "Indian-fighting" essentializes Indians, flattens them into a single kind of enemy, and eliminates the specific contexts of violence in the West.) A service record in the American West during the Indian Wars signals more than simply "Indian-fighting." In fact, service in the American West in the late nineteenth century did not necessarily mean a soldier had taken part in any "Indian-fighting." Frontier service is hard to generalize, and so it is worth asking what else this particular label, wielded by veterans, popular writers, and historians, can reveal about the soldiers it supposedly described. "Indian-fighter" seems intended to suggest bravery against a particular kind of savagery, masculinity, strength, and experience. But alongside the ways this label amplifies certain turn-of-the-century ideas about race and empire, savagery and civilization, it also indicates a certain set of experiences in the American West. While "Indian-fighting" directs attention to the identity of the enemy, focusing on the site of soldiers' previous service highlights the significance of frontier landscapes. And perhaps the ambivalence harbored by soldiers serving on both frontiers.

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[171] For coverage of Lawton's funeral in national magazines and photographs of both funerals and the process of transporting his body, see the website for the Culbertson Mansion, the home of Annie Fellows Johnson, who also happened to be Henry Ware Lawton's sister-in-law. http://culbertsonmansion.net/Lawton/photo/. Accessed 14 November 2014.

Paul Fletcher was conflicted about the American presence in the Philippines. He wrote to Hughine that he'd had "all the guerrilla warfare I care for."[172] He critiqued what he perceived to be the "hypocritical platitudes" of his government. Right or wrong, the United States needed to be in or out: "If we own them, we own them; if we do not own them, we should get out. Above all things, let us do what we do thoroughly; no half-way half-hearted policy, as though we were overstepping our ground."[173] In Fletcher's mind, the imperial project had potential. He wrote, "The virgin soil is good and wholesome and it remains to be seen whether we will so fertilize it that a strong, vigorous people will spring up to bless our nation and to revere our flag."[174]

This reference to virgin soil—both the material conditions of the Philippine Islands, as highlighted by so many soldiers writing home about all that could be grown and harvested in the Pacific, and the political potential for growing a Philippine democracy (or protectorate)—echoes earlier notions about an earlier American frontier and the possibilities it offered the nation. This is the language of improvement, wielded, in Fletcher's case, to spur the United States to do better, from his perspective. Though deeply unsettled by parts of his Philippine experience, Fletcher relied on familiar language to argue for a more honorable American project in the Philippines. The ways that American soldiers described the landscapes of the Philippines—language about making the desert bloom, language about abundance, language about sunsets and mountain summits—sound like earlier descriptions of the American West.

On July 4, 1901, the week after Fletcher wrote home to Hughine about the "virgin soil" of the Philippines, formal authority for the Philippines was transferred from the United States

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[172] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated April 1, 1901, Volume 1, Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[173] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated February 27, 1901, Volume 1. Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[174] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated June 30, 1901, Volume 1. Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

Army to the newly established American civilian government under the leadership of the Philippine Commission and a newly named Governor General, William Howard Taft.[175] Perhaps Fletcher found this encouraging, a step in the direction of fertilizing the land and cultivating "a strong, vigorous people." Or perhaps he thought it another hypocritical action, gesturing toward peace and progress when the military work was not yet done. Fletcher's letters don't say.

Hughine wrote to Fletcher that the *St. Louis Globe-Dispatch* was reporting that the war was over. Fletcher's response, dated July 12, 1901, disputes that news, and offers as evidence a story titled "A Cebu Adventure." It isn't clear if the story is a narrative Fletcher heard, witnessed, or made up, but the style is different. The story is written in third person, and contains plenty of dialogue and description. Fletcher narrates a detachment leaving on a night "hike" (again, "hike" is in quotation marks, even in Fletcher's story) amidst sublime natural scenery:

> They pushed silently on through the quiet streets of the pueblo, which they were garrisoning and in a few minutes the town was behind them and the tropical country, in all its wild, untrained beauty lay outspread, lit up by the moon whose rays cast fantastic figures, which, mingling with palms and heavy creeping vegetation of the forest, lent an unwordly look to the scene. To the eye of the young recruit who had just joined, the surroundings were very beautiful, but to the men who had been months in the miasmatic climate enduring rain and sun, the scene was old the poetry all gone. Even for Lt. Rondell, to whom all nature and her expressions were beautiful, was preoccupied and silent this night, filled with the thoughts of his project, the probabilities of success and ever and anon of a fair hopeful face away off yonder in Ohio, who was hoping with him.[176]

Fletcher doesn't claim these feelings as his own, but it is hard not to hear echoes of his own experiences in lines like "the scene was old the poetry all gone." The story ends abruptly with Rondell capturing two insurgents who agree to serve as guides to their destination. Fletcher doesn't tell us how the mission turns out, but the disillusionment in his letters, and the details

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[175] See Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 185.
[176] Paul R. Fletcher, Letter dated July 12, 1901, Volume 1. Paul R. Fletcher Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

about how other soldiers treated captives does not suggest a happy ending for the insurgents. He ends this letter by mentioning several other places where hard fighting was still taking place in the Philippines: Leyte, Bohol, Samar. And the fighting on Samar, in particular, received extensive attention in the American press, first because of the Balengiga Massacre, and then, because of the scale of American retaliation.

The Philippine-American War is remembered, if at all, for its brutality. And while historians disagree about how widespread, how normalized certain kinds of violence were, it is certainly true that some particularly violent moments became the focal points for the organizing and activism against the American military presence in the Philippines.[177] Some of the most brutal events of the war occurred on the island of Samar in the fall of 1901, and they, too, involved the Philippine landscape.

"A Howling Wilderness"

"Instructions of Major Waller/ Told to Make Samar a Howling Wilderness/ General Smith Directed Him to Kill and Burn and Said the More He Killed and Burned the Better He (Smith) Would Like It." This was front-page news on April 9, 1902. This particular headline comes from the *Los Angeles Herald*, but papers around the country ran variations of it: for example, "KILL ALL" was the *New York Journal*'s headline of choice.[178]

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[177] For a discussion of some of the historiographical disagreements about the degree of brutality exercised by American forces in Batangas, specifically, see Glenn May, *Battle for Batangas*, 242-244.

[178] *Los Angeles Herald,* April 9, 1902. Accessed 16 November 2014 through the California Digital Newspaper Collection. http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=LAH19020409; the "KILL ALL" *New York Journal* headline was described by Stuart Creighton Miller as taking up most of the front page. See Stuart Creighton Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation*," 230.

These headlines came from the court-martial of Major Littleton Waller Tazewell Waller. (That is not a typo; Stanley Karnow calls Waller "improbably named.")[179] Waller was being investigated for excessive brutality on Samar, specifically the summary execution of eleven native guides.[180] The proceedings were highly publicized, and as several historians have detailed, they seem to have become stand-ins for the war itself in popular memory.[181] Waller's actions were part of a much larger program to subdue Samar, a response to what became known as the "Balengiga Massacre": Insurgent forces surprised Company C of the Ninth U.S. Volunteers at breakfast and killed forty American soldiers. Twenty-four of the twenty-six remaining soldiers in the company were wounded in the fight. All those who were able fled to safety.[182]

As a result of the attack at Balengiga, General Adna Chaffee appointed Jacob Hurd Smith to lead the Sixth Separate Brigade, a special force assigned to respond to insurgents on Samar. Smith was a Civil War veteran whose background as an "Indian-fighter" was often mentioned as part of his military experience. Indeed, some of Smith's comments to reporters seem to have encouraged this connection. Smith said that fighting the insurrectos was "worse than fighting Indians."[183]

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[179] Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image*, 191.
[180] For a detailed narrative of the expedition that resulted in this order, see Linn, *The Philippine War*, Chapter 14.
[181] Brian Linn notes that Samar, "for generations, has been associated in the public mind as typifying the Philippine War." David Silbey also acknowledges the attention Samar receives, and characterizes it as an "aberration" while pointing out that even if the American campaign on Samar was not representative, that fact "does not excuse it." See Linn, *The Philippine War,* 321 and Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 196.
[182] David Silbey highlights the impact of calling this attack a "massacre." Massacre suggests "a sly, wanton, treacherous assault by ungrateful natives" instead of a planned attack by a military opponent—an attack that seemed to be a direct response to particularly harsh treatment of Samar residents by the post commander, Thomas Connell (193). See Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 189-195.
[183] Smith quoted in Thomas A. Bruno, "The Violent End of Insurgency on Samar, 1901-1902," *Army History* (Spring 2011), 36.

Smith instituted a particularly severe set of military policies. Under his direction, American forces "tightened a vise on Samar by land and sea."[184] Using a naval blockade and strict licensing rules, Smith sank or confiscated unauthorized boats—226 of them before the end of the year. Residents of Samar endured forced relocation to "zones of concentration," a policy that military historian Thomas Bruno has described as "reminiscent of the Indian reservation policy on the Great Plains."[185] Outside these zones, American troops wreaked havoc, destroying homes, crops, and livestock. They also tortured insurrectos and Filipino civilians, and carried out executions without judicial proceedings.[186] Waller was called to defend his actions, and the broader Samar campaign, in the spring of 1902.[187] Waller testified that Smith had instructed him to "make the interior of Samar a 'howling wilderness.'"[188] All of these actions—what Bruno described as "the triple press of concentration, devastation, and harassment"—were part of carrying out that order.[189]

There is scholarly debate about whether Smith said these words to Waller, and if he said these words, whether he meant them.[190] Some suggest that it may have been General Adna

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[184] Silbey, 195.
[185] Silbey, 195 and Thomas A. Bruno, "The Violent End of Insurgency on Samar, 1901-1902," 34.
[186] Silbey, 196.
[187] Waller occupies a curious place in the historical record. Some accounts seem to depict him as speaking truth to power (Karnow, Miller); others as a criminal, or at least a poor soldier (Linn, Silbey). For a detailed accounting of the courts-martial of the spring of 1902, see Miller, Chapter 12.
[188] He also testified that Smith told him "to 'kill and burn,' take no prisoners…and regard every male over ten as a combatant." Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902*, 319, 315.
[189] Bruno uses this phrase to describe both the American military strategy during the Indian Wars and Smith's work in Marinduque; he says these elements of this "triple press" "served as a guide for the later campaign on Samar. Bruno also points out that in the aftermath of Waller and Smith's testimonies, there is no evidence that the military disagreed with Smith's orders or approach. Bruno writes, "Not one of the opinions published in the *Army and Navy Journal* in 1902 was critical of Smith." Bruno, 32, 43.
[190] See Silbey, 195-196.

Chaffee who instructed Smith to make Samar into a "howling wilderness," and that this mission was then passed on to Waller and the Sixth Separate Brigade.[191] Everyone, though, seems to agree that no matter the wording, the instructions were to employ "the harshest methods."[192]

"Howling wilderness" stuck. It found its way into newspaper headlines, and one historian notes that Jacob Smith became known as "Howling Jake."[193] The exact wording of the instructions might not matter for our understanding of their material impact; we have a pretty good idea of what American forces did on Samar. But I am interested in the "howling wilderness" not for what it became on the ground, but for what it meant to soldiers and more broadly, to the American public—to those who read accounts of Waller and Smith's testimony. These words might not illuminate the actions of American soldiers, but they certainly give us a way into a very particular kind of frontier mentality.

For to create a "howling wilderness" where one had not existed, was essentially to destroy. This was not "regular" frontier work, the stuff soldiers did when they weren't fighting assigned opponents, work that might be considered "improvement," like route-finding, road-building, and post-construction. To make the interior of Samar into a howling wilderness was to engage in wholesale destruction—killing, burning, erasing evidence of cultivation and community.

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[191] To support the Chaffee theory, Thomas Bruno points to a letter Chaffee wrote in response to American efforts in Batangas using similar language: "can't say how long it will take us to make a wilderness of that country…" See Bruno, p.46, footnote 53. And Linn points to slightly different language — "orders to 'make a desert of Balangiga.'" Here Linn is quoting military correspondence from Robert P. Hughes to Issac DeRussy, 29 September 1901. Linn also notes that the written copy of Smith's order has never been found. See Linn, *The Philippine War*, 312, and 398, footnote 37.

[192] Linn, *The Philippine War,* 313.

[193] Stanley Karnow reports the nickname as "Howling Wilderness" Smith. See Miller, *"Benevolent Assimilation*," 236, and Karnow, *In Our Image*, 191.

In American environmental history, the wilderness is a central concept, foundational to the field. The idea of wilderness helps us to understand how Americans have made sense of the natural world and their place in it. The notion of the "howling wilderness" is Biblical; outside of Eden, antithetical to paradise. "Wilderness" calls up something dark and primordial, a kind of before-ness. It was what pioneering settlers encountered when they arrived in the New World, and what generations after those initial transplants supposedly met when they moved further inland. Pioneers struggled against the wilderness to make homes, and eventually, communities. One of the reasons we have given it such importance is precisely that it is not something we make; rather, it is something American settlers have consistently sought to unmake—to tame and civilize. Of course, it is important to understand that this wilderness was itself an idea, a culturally-rooted set of expectations and perceptions of the unknown portions of the North American continent. What settlers and frontierspeople understood to be untouched, unaltered, wild nature was something entirely different to the indigenous communities who relied on these resources, and cultivated the things they needed from these supposed wilderness landscapes. What looked like wilderness to some was not wilderness to all.[194]

At the turn of the twentieth century, soldiers serving under Smith and Waller would probably have heard some of these echoes in their instructions to turn Samar into not just a wilderness, but a "howling" one. And the "howling" part of the instructions mattered, because the idea of wilderness underwent significant transformation over the course of the nineteenth

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[194] For more on the American idea of wilderness, see Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, especially the prologue and chapters 1 and 2. For more on supposed wildernesses as gardens cultivated by indigenous communities, see Rebecca Solnit, *Savage Dreams*, especially "Fire in the Garden," pp. 294-308. For more on the relationship between native people and environmental change, see William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983); and Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999).

century.[195] What had been understood as evil, dark desolation became instead sublime, pristine paradise. The younger among them were a generation removed from the Civil War, which meant they were also only a generation, maybe two, removed from westward expansion. They had heard—and maybe read—stories of pioneers turning the wilderness into a garden, clearing trees and planting crops, even making the desert to bloom. But in addition to these associations with wilderness, soldiers serving in the Philippines might also have recognized more recent resonances.

For example, in the fall of 1901, John Muir published *Our National Parks*, a book based on a series of pieces (sketches, he called them) he'd written for *The Atlantic Monthly*. It opened this way: "The tendency nowadays to wander in wildernesses is delightful to see. Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life."[196] Wilderness wandering wasn't exactly what American soldiers were doing in the Philippines, but they certainly would have been aware of the growing popularity of the activity, as evidenced by their appropriation of "hike" to describe the long marches that constituted much of their work in the field. Muir was perhaps the best known advocate for American wilderness: he wrote extensively about his adventures in the mountains and forests of the Pacific coast, and he continued to escape into the Sierras, or the Alaskan backcountry, or the redwood forests of the Pacific coast whenever he could. In his writings, Muir lamented the destruction of "noble forests," and noted

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[195] On this transformation, see Cronon, "The Trouble With Wilderness."
[196] John Muir, *Our National Parks* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1901), first chapter. http://www.yosemite.ca.us/john_muir_writings/our_national_parks/chapter_1.html. Accessed18 November 2014.

that the destruction had been prevented in "the parks guarded by a few soldiers."[197] In fact, Muir pointed to national parks under the care of the cavalry as examples of forests that were "flourishing, protected from both axe and fire."[198] American soldiers had been detailed to guard and manage Yellowstone, the nation's first national park, since the 1870s. Those soldiers whose earlier service included tours of duty in the West—on the Plains and in the Southwest—would have been familiar with the military's relationship to American wilderness. Younger or newer soldiers, both regulars and volunteers, would likely have carried with them to the Philippines at the very least a peripheral awareness of the language of preservation. The establishment of Yellowstone in 1872, Yosemite in 1890, and the proliferation of paintings and prose depicting western wonderlands during this period suggests that the very word "wilderness" called up a set of images grounded in popular visions of American landscapes.

In some ways, these echoes make Smith's instructions to Waller (and perhaps Chaffee's to Smith), rather curious. Given these turn-of-the-century associations with "wilderness," what did it mean to "make" one? We know that the directive to turn Samar into a "howling wilderness" was understood; earlier meanings of wilderness (and the crucial inclusion of "howling") square with what the American military did on Samar. This particular directive also seemed to strike a chord at home—a chord that has persisted. The violence on Samar—and the reactions to it—resembled encounters on earlier American frontiers. And the language supposedly used to initiate it drew on a long history of struggling against and living with American nature.

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[197] Ibid.
[198] John Muir, *Our National Parks*, chapter 2. http://www.yosemite.ca.us/john_muir_writings/our_national_parks/chapter_2.html

Soldiers used "nature" language to narrate imperial work—in both orders given and letters written home. In the Philippines, as in the American West, American soldiers continued to transform the landscapes of war with their work and their words.[199] Soldiers shared impressions of the productive capabilities of America's newest possessions and descriptions of natural beauty alongside accounts of "hiking" through challenging terrain and destroying homes, crops, and communities. They remade the Philippines with their work, and the words they used to describe that labor reveal the centrality of notions of nature to American imperial practice in the Philippines.

[199] In her study of nineteenth-century British soldiers, Kirsten Greer points out the importance of looking at the "trans-imperial formulation of…environmental ideas" (183). See Greer, "Red Coats and Wild Birds."

Chapter 4: "Fighting + Field Work": Collecting the Philippines

Back in February of 1901, Gifford Pinchot received a letter in the mail from his old friend George Ahern. Ahern, a captain in the United States Army, had been assigned (with support from Pinchot) to lead the newly formed Philippine Bureau of Forestry, a position he hoped to retain after the formal transfer of power from the American military to the American colonial civilian government in the Philippines.[1] "Dear Pinchot," he wrote, "By this mail I send you a specimen of the leaf + flower of a new tree species, 'Cananga Aherneana,'[2] as named by our botanist Regino Garcia who was with me on a recent trip to Mindanao where this species was discovered." Clearly thrilled, Ahern exclaimed, "This is fame! When McKinley's statue is in dust 500 years hence my Cananga will flourish." And then, for reference, Ahern linked "his" Cananga to existing taxonomies, identifying its relation to the Ylang Ylang tree (scientific name *Cananga odorata*), "from the flowers of which a celebrated perfume is extracted."[3] The local name for the tree, Ylang Ylang, may be connected to the Tagalog word for "wilderness," *ilang*.[4]

That summer, William Howard Taft was appointed Governor General of the Philippines by President McKinley. On September 6, McKinley was shot by Leon Csolgosz at the Pan-

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[1] For more on Ahern's military career and his trajectory at the helm of the Philippine Department of Forestry, See Lawrence Rakestraw, "George Patrick Ahern and the Philippine Bureau of Forestry, 1900-1914," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 58: 3 (July 1967), 142-150

[2] Unfortunately for Ahern, it seem this species has probably been renamed. The only instance I located of this particular scientific name is in a document titled "Tree Species of the Philippine Islands," part of a collection gathered together by Elihu Root in 1903. See *Elihu Root collection of United States documents relating to the Philippine Islands: Volume 98*, Scanned and available through Google Books, https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=lHpQAAAAYAAJ&rdid=book-lHpQAAAAYAAJ&rdot=1. Accessed 10 December 2014.

[3] George Ahern to Gifford Pinchot, February 28, 1901, Box 640, folder labeled "1902 XII Philippines," Pinchot Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[4] At least according to some Tagalog-English dictionaries. Other possibilities include wild; isolated; desert. See http://www.tagalog-dictionary.com/cgi-bin/search.pl?s=ilang

American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. News of McKinley's injuries and eventual death from his wounds traveled slowly to the Philippines. It initially looked as though McKinley would make a full recovery, but after several days of strong reports of his temperature and respiration (these numbers were included in secure cablegrams to Manila), his condition worsened. The hope that McKinley would pull through, and the despair as he declined, remain palpable in these telegrams, all these years later. On September 13, the day before he died, Taft received the following message: "Acting Secretary of War directs that you be advised President extremely low. Sinking rapidly. Only kept alive by artificial respiration. All hope abandoned. End may come any moment."[5] Theodore Roosevelt was sworn in as President of the United States on September 14, 1901.

That fall brought the Balengiga Massacre and the violent response of "Howling Jake" Smith on the island of Samar. Early 1902 saw the court-martial proceedings that catapulted Samar to the top of the headlines, but even as the testimony revealed the details of brutal practices on both sides of the war, the tide had turned. Much of the Philippines was under American management. And even though areas of the south remained in a state of insurrection, Theodore Roosevelt declared the war over on July 4, 1902.

Shortly after, Gifford Pinchot began a trip to the Philippines, by way of Russia and the newly completed Trans-Siberian Railroad. Perhaps part of him was responding to Ahern's 1899 invitation: "Come out here as soon as the war is over + your head will swim at the variety and

[5] Decoded Cablegrams from September 9-13, 1901, Box No. 1, Entry 34, Corr. of the Philippine (Taft) Commission, 1900-1906, Record Group 350 Bureau of Insular Affairs: Special Records Relating to the Philippine Islands, National Archives, College Park, MD.

beauty of the woods."[6] But he was also traveling in his capacity as Chief Forester of the Division of Forestry under the United States Department of Agriculture. He toured Russian forestry efforts before reconnecting with his old friend Ahern, now officially retired from army life and part of the American colonial government in the Philippine Islands.

Pinchot's impression of the Philippine coastline from his transport vessel in late October was not so different from what soldiers often felt as they approached the islands: "Dear Father: When I woke up early this morning we were off the coast of Luzon near Subic Bay. As I dictate this, we are perhaps ten miles from Corregidor Island, just opposite the splendid Sierra de Marivelas, a bold mountain mass in the Province of Batan [sic], just across the bay from Manila." As a forester, Pinchot was paying particular attention to any evidence of the health of the trees of this new-to-him terrain. Already, he was able to observe that "Forests run from the summit of the Mountains down to the edge of the water, and, as we see them from a distance of a couple of miles, they are evidently composed, at least in part, of large trees."[7] This boded well for Pinchot—large trees could mean sizable opportunities for timber development.

Upon arrival in Manila Harbor to a warm welcome from Governor General "Will" Taft and his wife Helen, Pinchot and his traveling companion, George Seymour, were invited to stay at the Palace. Pinchot of course noticed the timber, and marveled at "the beautiful floors — wide planks of dark narrawood, polished by rubbing with bitter oranges cut in two."[8] Though Pinchot was pleased with his reception, he was eager to get out into—or at least among—the islands. Taft

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[6] George Ahern to Gifford Pinchot, Box 966, folder labeled "Gifford Pinchot, Speech, Article, Book file, Breaking New Ground, Correspondence (Selected), 1899, Pinchot Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[7] Gifford Pinchot to James Pinchot, October 26, 1902, Box 62, folder labeled "Gifford Pinchot, Family Correspondence, Oct 1902," Pinchot Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D,C.
[8] Gifford Pinchot, *Breaking New Ground* (NewYork: Harcourt, 1947), 233.

gave Pinchot the use of his gunboat, and outfitted him for a preliminary survey of the forest resources of the Philippines. To his brother Amos's wife Gertrude, Pinchot described the trip this way: "Nothing could be more delightful than cruising among these wonderful islands, where there are new things to be seen at every landing, and where the variety of forest and topography is so great that interest never flags. The sea is full of fish, the woods have monkeys, parrots, cocoanut trees, and the vines and creepers which ought to fill the orthodox tropical forest, and the temperature most of the time is very far from pleasant."[9] And to his father, he described his "first real sight of a tropical forest," writing, "it was full of the keenest interest, although somewhat bewildering to be dropped into the midst of a forest not one tree of which I knew."[10] No matter. Despite the mystery of all of these new kinds of trees, the more Pinchot saw of the islands, the more he began to develop a picture of their timber potential. As the nation's leading forester, Pinchot would have been balancing a range of concerns about the practice of American forestry at home. Though this trip through Russian and Philippine forests could help scholars to position Pinchot as a more broadly international or even imperial forester, his exploratory trip in the fall and winter of 1902 is scarcely more than a footnote in American environmental history. Pinchot's place in that narrative is as the voice of conservation, the wise use of resources, the greatest good for the greatest number—an approach to natural resource management positioned opposite John Muir's preservation, the protection of large swaths of the American West from any sort of development or use. It would be another decade before these two men found themselves on opposite sides of the proposal to dam Hetch Hetchy and create a reservoir to provide water to

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[9] Gifford Pinchot to Gertrude Pinchot, November 8, 1902, Box 62, folder labeled "Gifford Pinchot, Family Correspondence, Nov 1902," Pinchot Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[10] Gifford Pinchot to James Pinchot, November 6, 1902, Box 640, folder labeled "1902 XII Philippines," Pinchot Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C..

the city of San Francisco, but even then, at the turn of the twentieth century, differences of opinion about what American nature—at least certain parts of it—was for, had begun to divide them.[11]

While in the Philippines, Pinchot and his fellow travelers on Taft's gunboat covered about 2300 miles on the southern leg of their survey.[12] (It isn't clear if this mileage includes only the sea-miles or if Pinchot factored all of his hiking through Philippine forests into this estimate.) His notes list summary assessments of the potential of various forests, as well as brief descriptions of even the smallest islands— many of them variations on "a high densely wooded island" or "a low, flat, wooded island."[13] Pinchot's account of the trip conveys a sense of great possibility: "The forest was the most luxuriant I have yet seen"; "the untouched forest was in a superb condition"; "it is exceedingly rich"; "its value is unquestionably very great."[14] He also found some of the islands to be particularly beautiful. Of one collection of limestone islands, Pinchot wrote that they were "the most picturesque I have ever seen. Nearly everywhere they rise in vertical cliffs from the water's edge, and their height, diversified sky line, and rounded peaks are extremely impressive."[15]

Amidst these observations, Pinchot also commented on the challenges of moving through the country. Of Malabang, he wrote, "The vigor of the life in this forest was most striking. Much

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[11] In describing their relationship in the 1890s, Roderick Nash wrote that "their common interest had definite limits." Nash described Pinchot as caring most about "civilization and forestry," while Muir was most concerned with "wilderness and preservation." See Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind,* 135.
[12] Greg Bankoff characterizes this trip as "forestry from the deck of a ship" (371). See Greg Bankoff, "Breaking New Ground?"
[13] "Philippine Islands," a typed and bound narrative of Pinchot's Philippine trip, Box 640, Pinchot Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

of it was literally so dense that a man without a bolo would find it impossible to make more than a few yards an hour."[16] Once on land, Pinchot's descriptions of the challenging terrain aren't much different from the ways soldiers described the country they "hiked" through in search of insurgents. Navigating this ground himself, Pinchot found much to praise when it came to the United States Army. To his father, he wrote of what "fine upstanding, clear-eyed men" they were. "The army," he wrote, "has certainly had a much harder time out here than most people know about, and is doing its work in a way that should win admiration instead of attack."[17] To illustrate this point, Pinchot highlighted the continuing danger. While camping at Mataling Falls, he wrote that "No one leaves the tents in this camp, even within the line of sentries, without being armed. The Moros are very clever at sneaking up under cover of darkness, their main object being to steal rifles and ammunition. It happened not uncommonly in the early part of the trouble that sentries, and even outposts, were cut up at night."[18] From here, Pinchot described (quite favorably) his impressions of the army officers who escorted his party to General Pershing's camp. His observations from this journey make comparisons between the Philippine countryside and parts of Pennsylvania and Connecticut. Pinchot also remarked that the Moros "are very much less formidable in war than any of the warlike tribes of North American Indians." Pinchot suggested that even though they could do "impressive" work with their bolos, Filipinos were not as skilled as the warriors American soldiers had fought in the late nineteenth century.[19] Of course, Pinchot lacked firsthand experience fighting either opponent, and when

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[16] Ibid.
[17] Gifford Pinchot to James Pinchot, November 6, 1902, Box 640, folder labeled "1902 XII Philippines," Pinchot Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[18] "Philippine Islands," Box 640, Pinchot Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C
[19] Ibid.

soldiers made the comparison, they offered more varied opinions on the relative strength and danger of fighting either Indians or Moros.[20]

Pinchot relayed his impressions of the American army to his president, Theodore Roosevelt, in letters sent from the Philippines, alongside comments about the "enormous resources in timber" that the Philippines promised. Pinchot stressed the "enormous difficulty of the country in which our troops are at work," highlighting in particular the "very serious undertaking" that was the project of building a road in Mindanao. Not only did he pronounce the road project "admirably carried out," but Pinchot described the officers he encountered as "men of so high a grade that it makes me proud to be an American every time I see them."[21]

Edgar Mearns wasn't yet assigned to Mindanao, but Pinchot could have been describing him and the men he served with. And just as Pinchot was collecting preliminary information about Philippine forests to bring home to the United States, Mearns would continue to combine military work with natural history collecting once he arrived in the Pacific.

"Wishing you all good luck…in the new field to which you are going"[22]

While Gifford Pinchot was touring Philippine forests, Edgar Mearns was collecting birds and mammals in and around the wonderland of Fort Yellowstone, which was established at Mammoth Hot Springs, within the boundaries of Yellowstone National Park. (Fort Yellowstone was the headquarters for Yellowstone National Park, which remained under the administration of the United States Army until 1918. In fact, after suffering an injury in the Spanish-American

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[20] It seems to me that whichever opponent was more present was the most dangerous, at least in the eyes of American soldiers. (Especially when we account for the presence of bravado.) See my discussion of how soldiers made these comparisons in chapter 3.
[21] All quotations this paragraph, Gifford Pinchot to Theodore Roosevelt, November 22, 1902, Box 640, Pinchot Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[22] Robert Ridgway to Edgar Mearns, April 15, 1903, Box 7, Correspondence, April, 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

War, George Ahern had hoped to become the park's military superintendent, but politics got in the way. Only after it became clear that Yellowstone wasn't an option did Ahern request an assignment in the Philippines.)[23]

When the war with Spain began, Mearns was stationed at Fort Clark, Texas. In letters to his museum colleagues, he wondered when—and where—he might be deployed. Charles Richmond wrote to Mearns of what he was noticing in Washington: "war rumors are in the wind."[24] But Mearns was not sent to Cuba. Instead, he was ordered east to Chickamauga, and then Camp McKenzie in Georgia, to work with the Reserve Hospital Corps. Next he was assigned to Fort Adams, in Rhode Island, and then, after several months medical leave, which he of course spent collecting, he was ordered to head West again, to Fort Yellowstone, in Yellowstone National Park, and then back to Fort Snelling. He kept up his correspondence with museum curators and natural scientists even as he moved around the country. And it is these letters from his colleagues, sent in response to news of the orders Mearns received to report for a tour of duty in the Philippine Islands, that hint at Mearns's feelings on the subject.

F. W. True, the curator of biology at the United States National Museum, wrote, "My Dear Dr. Mearns: I can understand exactly how you feel about going to the Philippines. Under the circumstances, it seems as if another officer might have been selected. It must be very disheartening to have one's affairs upset so ruthlessly." We can hear an echo of how Mearns shared the news in True's next line: "Of course, as you say, that has to be expected in the service, but it does seem to me that you have not been treated fairly in this case - I should think you

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[23] See "Fort Yellowstone Historic District," http://www.nps.gov/yell/historyculture/ftyell.htm, accessed 28 December 2014, and Lawrence Rakestraw, "George Patrick Ahern and the Philippine Bureau of Forestry, 1900-1914."

[24] Charles Richmond to Edgar Mearns, March 5, 1898, Box 5, Correspondence-March 1898, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

might have been left at Ft. Yellowstone or Ft. Snelling for at least two years." And from there, the letter turns lighter. True asked, "Why don't you retire and let the younger men do a little hustling around? Then you could finish up your reports and get some satisfaction out of life."[25]

Many of the letters mention Mearns's health—a concern not just because many believed that white men were not well suited to the tropics, but because of his specific medical condition. Mearns contracted malaria early in his career, and it seemed to recur with some regularity. In fact, a few years earlier, Mearns was given twelve months of sick leave, part of which he spent collecting specimens for the Smithsonian in Florida — after being fitted for a special medical corset to protect and stabilize his stomach and spleen, which seem to have been displaced by the malarial "paroxysms" he sometimes experienced.[26] While resting and collecting in Florida, Mearns wrote to his wife, Ella, "I hate the thought of an army post again. How I wish I had been retired! (But don't tell anybody so.)"[27]

It seems that Mearns was surprised to be sent to the other side of the world; although Mearns didn't let his medical issues get in the way of his avid pursuit of scientific specimens, he wasn't exactly the picture of perfect health in 1903. But his fellow naturalists and scientists sent consoling, encouraging words — think of what he'd see in the Pacific! — and others offered advice on gathering and preparing specimens for transit around the world.[28] Some focused on

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[25] F. W. True to Edgar Mearns, April 13, 1903, Box 7, Correspondence, April, 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[26] Letter dated November 7, 1900, Box 1, Correspondence-Family, 1900. Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[27] Letter dated Jan 27, 1901, Box 1, Correspondence-Family, 1901. Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[28] Just because the Smithsonian didn't have much in the way of material from the Philippines didn't mean that its scientists weren't aware of what was—or might be—found in the archipelago. In *Western Impressions of Nature and Landscape in Southeast Asia*, Victor Savage offers an extensive survey of the ways western travelers wrote about what they saw in this region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Significant nineteenth-century naturalists like Alfred

what Mearns's presence in the Philippines could mean for the United States National Museum. For example, one colleague wrote to him, "The only thing that saves our material from there from being disgraceful is that we haven't any, so the prospect of getting something from you is very gratifying. After you get over there I think you will be glad you were sent particularly if you can help moving about."[29] And True told Mearns, "Now, don't get the idea into your head that the climate will kill you—we won't make any provision for such a contingency. I have faith and believe you will come back all right, with a good lot of valuable material."[30]

The paper record suggests that Mearns's colleagues at the United States National Museum were sincere in their excitement about what Mearns might encounter—and collect. Alongside letters of encouragement there are letters of introduction, fixed with the seal of the Smithsonian. And there are requests: freshwater shells but not "large and showy marine shells"; the "herbarium wants plants of all kinds, large and small"; these were, of course, in addition to the birds Mearns would obtain.[31] E. J. Brown, a friend from Mearns's Florida trip, asked for seeds of "desirable fruits, that so far as you know have not been introduced here."[32] (He also quipped that Mearns should "be careful that some of the natives don't serve you up as a novelty,

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Wallace, Albert Bickmore, William Hornaday, and Carl Bock traveled, observed, and collected in Southeast Asia, and it is likely that Smithsonian scientists were aware of their findings. See Victor Savage, *Western Impressions of Nature and Landscape in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1984).

[29] GSMP (Gerrit S. Miller?) to Edgar Mearns, April 15, 1903, Box 7, Correspondence, April, 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[30] F. W. True to Edgar Mearns, April 13, 1903, Box 7, Correspondence, April, 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[31] F. W. True to Edgar Mearns, May 14, 1903, Box 13, Correspondence, 1903 - Botanical and Ornithology, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[32] E. J. Brown to Edgar Mearns, May 23, 1903, Box 7, Correspondence, May. 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

'Broiled ornithologist on toast'"—which gives us an idea of the kind of "information" in circulation about the Philippines.)

And while the Smithsonian scientists seem to have stayed away from commenting on the American colonial project, one zoologist, Mary Rathbun (Richard's sister), framed her request for fresh-water crabs in a way that hinted at her ambivalence about the larger politics of American empire.[33] "If you could get a good lot of these crabs from many localities," she wrote, "we shall not have taken possession of the Philippines in vain."[34]

The Smithsonian offered materials to aid Mearns in continuing to pursue his work as a naturalist. Perhaps True said it most directly when he wrote, "If you are going to the Philippines, we want you fixed to get specimens to the best advantage. That is rather a selfish way of looking at the matter, but you will understand that a museum has no modesty."[35]

Mearns did understand—and it seems as though it was the unknown scientific possibilities he might encounter, or uncover, that helped him prepare for the work ahead of him.

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[33] On the relationship between museum collecting and American imperialism, see Camilo Quintero, "Trading in Birds: Imperial Power, National Pride, and the Place of Nature in U.S.-Colombia Relations," *Isis*, Volume 102, No. 3 (September 2011), 421-445. Quintero focuses on the relationship between American and Colombian ornithologists in the first half of the twentieth century. Though his focus is later than mine, in some ways, the networks (and power dynamics) he describes grew out of turn-of-the-century collecting. His work, like much of the scholarship on the history of science and imperialism, explores government surveys and museum-sponsored expeditions, rather than the kinds of collecting that Mearns was doing alongside his military work. This focus on more formal collecting expeditions that are necessarily embedded in informal imperial relationships and networks of power pairs nicely, I think, with my examination of Mearns. After all, his collecting is far less formal or planned, but he is part of a formal imperial occupation. See also Camilo Quintero Toro, *Birds of Empire, Birds of Nation* for further elaboration of the ways that scientific imperialism and nationalism work together in the US-Colombian context.

[34] All quotations this paragraph from Mary Rathbun to Edgar Mearns, February 17, 1904, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1904, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[35] F. W. True to Edgar Mearns, April 13, 1903, Box 7, Correspondence, April, 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Armed with letters of introduction and literature on Philippine nature from his friends at the museum, Mearns traveled westward across the northernmost part of the United States and then worked his way down the coast to San Francisco, where he reported for duty.

Military Work and Natural History

Mearns set sail for the Philippines on July 1, 1903. "Weighed anchor after luncheon + passed through Golden Gate," he wrote, "where Hermann's and Western Gulls and California Murres were about with quite a number of Brandt Cormorant."[36] Always, for Mearns, the birds. He had managed to see and hear birds at Golden Gate Park, Cliff House, and the Presidio before departing on the *Sherman*. The entries in his field book for his time on board consist almost entirely of birds seen—along with whales, dolphins, and sharks. He recorded seeing albatrosses, flying fish, terns, and petrels on the way to Guam, where he went ashore and "got skull of deer."[37]

On July 25, 1903, Mearns wrote down that they had seen land that afternoon, and he made a list of things to do upon arrival, including "Visit Capt. Ahern," "Visit Manila Museum," "Call on Chief Surg. Officer," and "Try on suit."[38] Amidst lists and lists of birds, I appreciate the occasional list of tasks, the way daily life creeps into Mearns's records of birds seen, shot, and collected. This particular field book has some torn pages, and the details of the next few weeks are rather spotty. It seems Mearns did not stay in Manila very long; by early August he was

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[36] Edgar Mearns, Field Book 1902-1903, Box 17, folder 8, p. 49 of digital scan of this volume, not page number for volume itself, hereafter "scan"). Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[37] Ibid., p.53 (scan).
[38] Nothing else in Mearns's papers indicates that he knew Ahern, but the connection is interesting — and a previous association is certainly possible. Still, was Mearns visiting Ahern because they were friends, or because Mearns was interested in Philippine forestry, botany, and natural history? Ibid., p.54 (scan).

already at his assigned post on the island of Mindanao. (Richard McGregor, at the Manila Museum, told Mearns in a letter sent after missing Mearns when he visited the museum, "You are going to a good island.")[39]

Figure 20. Map of Mindanao. Google Maps

Mindanao was "Moroland," and even though President Roosevelt had declared the Philippine-American War over the previous July, it hadn't stopped here.[40] While Governor General Taft continued the work of establishing a functional, civilian colonial government—aided by the passage of the Organic Act, which spelled out governing structures, citizenship status, and future plans for a legislative assembly composed of Filipino members—the American

[39] Richard MacGregor to Edgar Mearns, August 1, 1903, Box 7, Correspondence August 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[40] Jack McCallum writes that Moros held roughly 40 percent of the territory in the Philippine Islands, despite being only 5 percent of the archipelago's population. See Jack McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider, Surgeon, Architect of American Imperialism* (New York: NYU Press, 2006), 205.

military was tasked with wrangling those areas not recognizing American control.[41] Civilian governors were named for other islands and provinces, but military authorities remained in control of Mindanao.[42] Historian Paul Kramer called the end of the war "a beleaguered fiction that broke down in unflattering reversals." He pointed to the reestablishment of military control over several regions beyond the island of Mindanao where guerrilla fighting returned in the years that followed Roosevelt's initial proclamation.[43]

Still, for much of the Philippines, the war had ended, and the Philippine Commission, along with Governor General Taft, worked to construct a government and to cultivate collaboration from Filipino elites. Captain Ahern led the Bureau of Forestry; Dean Worcester, a member of the first Philippine Commission, and friend and correspondent of Mary Lawton, became the Secretary of the Interior. Plans for managing the people and resources of the Philippines were drafted. The formal work of imperial administration had begun.

Meanwhile, in Mindanao, the plans were different. When Edgar Mearns arrived, General Leonard Wood had just taken up the post of Governor of Moro Province, which included Mindanao, Palawan, and the Sulu islands to the south. Wood had served with Lawton in the Apache campaigns, and most recently in Cuba as its Governor General.[44] Hermann Hagedorn, Wood's first biographer, opened the second volume of the project (first published in 1931) with an evocative—and problematic—description of Wood's new post:

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[41] On the Organic Act of 1902, see Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 165-66.
[42] Military governance of Moro Province continued until 1914. See Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 217.
[43] Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 154-155.
[44] McCallum calls Wood an "architect of American imperialism" in the title of his biography of Wood: *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider, Surgeon, Architect of American Imperialism.* For more on Wood's leadership in Cuba, see Chapter 7 of McCallum's biography, pp. 147-196.

> In tropic waters, a vast, green crab stretches out an irritated claw after a school of minnows skipping off in the direction of Borneo. The crab is the island of Mindanao, the minnows are the Sulu Archipelago. Southward along the menacing claw the steamer bears the new governor. On the left is a jagged shore rising three thousand feet or more to a ridge dark with forests; on the right is the purple placidity of sheltered waters where white-winged *lorchas*, schooner-rigged, carry cargoes dreamily this way or that across the Sulu Sea, or naked men in queer outrigger canoes float on the swells like huge birds. The air is heavy in the midsummer heat.[45]

Hagedorn's pen practically oozes imperial prose. He describes the languid life of those in the tropics, all the while demonstrating that ideas about "primitive" people and practices that pervaded popular notions of the Philippines in Wood's time persisted at least until Hagedorn's. He wrote of "the world of the white masters" in describing structures built by the Spanish; he called Moro homes "filthy and picturesque"; he spoke of the "monsoon [that] blows softly" and of "Arabian Nights."[46] He's not wrong that Mindanao looks like a crab, but the rest of his description provides less of a picture of the island and more of a sense for how colonial officials, both military and civilian, might have seen it. Hagedorn wrote that Wood's Mindanao was "a wild country and a wilder people which, from this paradise, he was to govern."[47] And in order to govern it —as a military commander, remember—he needed to see it. On August 8, Wood was on the *Borneo* to tour this new territory. Hagedorn called it "a country to stir Wood's blood."[48] In his field books, Mearns noted being on board the *Borneo* on the following day. His notes are rather scattered, and initially more focused on the birds he saw than on his direct orders. But if his notes are any indication, during his first few months of service, he rarely stayed in one place. He might not have accompanied Wood on all of his tour of Moroland, but the *Borneo* is

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[45] Hermann Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood: A Biography, Volume II* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1931; Kraus Reprint Co., 1969), 1.
[46] Ibid., 1-2.
[47] Ibid., 3.
[48] Ibid., 4.

mentioned here and there, and it is clear that Mearns saw quite a lot of this new country at the start of his Philippine service.

He also saw combat.

"Went on a hike to capture the Sultan of Bacayagauan named Macabato," Mearns wrote under the heading of August 20, 1903. "I helped to kill the sultan's brother, and took his war bag, containing, powder, bullets, balls of brass, poisoned stones in wooden tubes, Crag [Krag] shells + bullet, bolts + other missiles [?] for use in guns in lieu of bullets."[49] Mearns noted that they killed fourteen men in this battle — a battle that might have been Mearns's first experience in actual combat. His service during the Apache campaigns in the Southwest occurred during a period of relative peace, and as a post surgeon, he hadn't been detailed to participate in the pursuit of Geronimo and other "renegade" Apache people in southern Arizona Territory and northern Mexico. After that, Mearns had served at both western and eastern forts, with work on the boundary survey mixed in. His earlier field books contain no mention of personal combat experience, and very little of the battle experience of others, except where these details are relevant to his medical work. (And even then, it seems he treated illnesses and accidents alongside any injuries sustained in combat.) But in the Philippines, Mearns was fully in the field, and that meant fieldwork. In a detailed, typescript itinerary of his movements, Mearns included this aside, clarifying his role in the fighting of August 20, 1903: "The command was fired upon, and in the fight that followed, 14 of Macabato's men were killed. (Three of them I killed with my shotgun.)"[50]

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[49] Mearns, Field Book 1902-1903, Box 17, folder 8, p.55 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[50] Edgar Mearns, entry for August 20, 1903, in "Itinerary," Box 22, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

The pages of Mearns's Philippine field books are filled with specimen descriptions and bird lists from all over Mindanao: Zamboanga, Mataling Falls, Malabang, Mati, Glan, Makar, Maliyam, and more. As he traveled, he also began keeping a list of Moro vocabulary, mostly words for birds, fish, and animals. For Mearns, collecting and military work were not in conflict, but not everyone in the army was of that opinion. As early as 1899, Mearns had written a letter to True about the ways "bug doctors" were perceived by their higher-ups in military circles. It seems that True had suggested identifying an officer serving as part of the immediate staff of the commanding generals everywhere the American military was stationed—Cuba, Porto Rico, the Philippines—in order to "act as an agent and supervise the collection of ethnological and historical materials in those countries." Mearns didn't deny that True's idea was a good one. But there were politics to navigate: "All of our medical officers are overworked, and outside interests are severely discouraged by the War Dept. This is true to such an extent that I have not dared take up my work on the Mexican Boundary collections until my examination for promotion is passed, lest the matter attract attention and create an unfavorable impression beforehand." To True, Mearns conceded that some doctors had earned "the feeling hostile to general scientific pursuits" because they worked on these interests while "grossly neglect[ing] their profession and patients." Mearns did not approve of those men. "My own policy," he wrote, "is to work quietly and avoid friction, biding my time. When I reach the head of my department, scientific research will be encouraged throughout the Corps—medicine first, but all science as well. The naturalists of our corps made a strong showing during the last war—better than the 'military' doctors!"[51]

[51] All quotations this paragraph, Edgar Mearns to F. W. True, November 15, 1899, Box 82, folder 1, Smithsonian Institution Assistant Secretary in charge of the United States National Museum, Correspondence and Memoranda, 1860-1908, Record Unit 189, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

When Dr. Edgar Alexander Mearns wrote this letter, he had no idea that he'd be sent to the Philippines, and that he'd be able to do from there exactly what True had been hoping for. Once he arrived, though, he set to work as both soldier and scientist.

Mearns in Mindanao

Mearns's Philippine field books look nothing like the clean and careful registers he put together as a young man. His notes from the Philippines are in small notebooks filled with pencil smudges and strikethroughs. Put plainly, some of them look like they've been through a war — and they have. These books aren't filled with prose that's polished, like the organized notes and reports from Mearns's earlier frontier postings. When Mearns was stationed in Arizona Territory, he was sometimes invited along on expeditions traversing conquered territory—expeditions to meet with Indian leaders or to handle matters of reservation management. He wasn't included in expeditions intended to end in battle. In the Philippines, though, things were different, and the sketch of daily military life his field books provide reflect that.

For example, the entry for November 12, 1903, begins with white cockatoos and "a few small flocks of large green parrots." The following line reads "Brown Java Sparrows," and the next, "1 Moro killed + 2 wounded." After that, a note about some intel on where to find good shells, the name of an island with pigs, and then this: "Killed 20-30 Moros + wounded many."[52] A few days later, on the 16th, Mearns wrote, "Three columns of troops moved forward. Dr. Hicks on right, Patterson with major Bullard's central column, Lewis and Gynn with Scott's column on the left. I remained in camp at foot of Crater Lake Mt." And then the list begins:

Cockatoo, Quail, Dove, Crow

[52] Edgar Mearns, entry for November 12, 1903, 1903-1904 Field Book, Box 17, folder 10, p. 3 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

> Brown Java Sparrow, Gray
> Martin, Chelidon, Yellow-
> Bellied Wagtail, Sedge Warbler
> Black Starling
> 125 Moros killed, 76 in
> one stand.
> Little Dark Bittern
> White-tailed Tattler, sirge flavipes
> Small flocks great green parrot,
> flight + notes like duck.
> Flock of 1-200 Cockatoos at
> evening feeding in corn + tapioca fields.[53]

I've preserved the line breaks in this quotation from Mearns's field book in order to convey both the order and the mess of his lists. For some dates, like this one, there's a brief narrative of the day's activities — miles marched, notable action of both the bird and enemy variety. It is not unusual to find discussion of birds shot mixed in with a record of the number of Moros killed. But even though these lists seem to suggest that Mearns was documenting birds and bodies seen and shot in real time, I think there is more underneath these tangled lists. They challenge the boundary between the people of the Philippines and the nature, the animals, Mearns encountered there. Moros make it onto these lists containing Philippine bodies—avian and human, but American injuries, American casualties don't. One reason, of course, is the lopsided nature of these fights—far fewer American dead and wounded—but another is the complex intersection of military and scientific work. For while in the Philippines, the scientific field and the battlefield were often the same; the work Mearns did to aid, treat, and heal American bodies was very different than the work of collecting, work that required a different kind of preservation. The records Mearns preserved from his time in the Philippines, of course, document all of it, but different details figure into different kinds of records. Mearns's military paperwork, especially

[53] Mearns, entry for November 16, 1903, 1903-1904 Field Book, Box 17, folder 10, p. 5 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH. I am not sure that I have transcribed "sirge," the word before "flavipes" in the fifth line from the end of the list, correctly.

the typescript itineraries he prepared, though primarily a detailed accounting of his military work, do contain notes about birds seen and shot, even notes on shell collection. Mearns's scientific work crept into his military paperwork, perhaps even unintentionally.[54]

Mearns's notes on these skirmishes match up with accounts of General Wood's activities against hostile Moros on the island of Jolo—the same place Walter Cutter had described as a paradise a few years earlier. They were after a datto (the title given the Moro leader of a cotta, or village) named Panglima Hassan, and the march inland to find him was, according to Wood, "one of the hardest and roughest marches I have made for a long time."[55] Wood's men weren't able to capture and keep Hassan (he escaped), but this series of hikes and skirmishes resulted in somewhere between 1200 and 1500 Moro casualties (and only seventeen on the American side).[56] By the start of December, both Wood and Mearns were in Zamboanga, the port city on the tip of the crab claw of Mindanao.

On December 2, Mearns and Wood got up early to go hunting, and in just a few hours they managed to bring in snipes, plovers, sandpipers, a rail, and a tree duck. They "shot at a huge iguana, which escaped in the grass."[57] Mearns knew Wood from his service in the Southwest. How well, at least before their time together in the Philippines, is unclear. Mearns mentioned Wood to F. W. True in an earlier letter as someone who would be open to soldiers with scientific interests, but in the intervening years there doesn't seem to be any personal correspondence between Mearns and Wood.[58] Now that they were stationed together in the Philippines, though, their shared interests in hunting and natural history made them a predictable pairing. Mearns's

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[54] See Box 22, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[55] Wood, as quoted in McCallum, *Leonard Wood*, 217.
[56] McCallum, *Leonard Wood*, 217-218.
[57] Edgar Mearns, December 2, 1903, 1903-1904 Field Book, Box 17, folder 10, p. 11 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[58] At least none that I've located.

notes for December 7 say that he "tramped 9 hours"; in the description of birds that follows, we learn that Wood accompanied him on this excursion as well, shooting two herons.[59] From here, this particular field book shifts into a specimen list, with numbers, collection locations, scientific names, even some measurements. This is a more specific kind of bird list—these birds weren't just seen; they were shot, skinned, stuffed, numbered, and set aside to be shipped to the Smithsonian.

Mearns and the Museum

Mearns was an experienced collector and preparer—his papers include records for birds shot and stuffed as early as 1874, meaning that he had been skinning birds for close to thirty years by the time he was assigned to serve in the Philippines. Still, these were different conditions, both in terms of the military situation and, perhaps more significantly for his specimens, the climate and the distance they would need to travel. Mearns's friends and colleagues at the Smithsonian had much to say about tropical preparation, and the instructions began arriving even before Mearns boarded his ship for the Philippines. Charles Richmond, a curator at the Division of Birds, and a dear friend to Mearns—before he left, Mearns wrote to him, "I wish you were to be a fellow passenger!"—sent very detailed advice. "Your way is clear as far as packing birds is concerned," he wrote. "If you follow my directions all will be well."[60]

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[59] Edgar Mearns, December 7, 1903, 1903-1904 Field Book, Box 17, folder 10, p. 14 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

[60] Also in the letter from Mearns to Richmond, "At Frisco will run out doors somewhere and shoot some birds just so you'll know I got there safely." Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, May 27, 1903, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C. Charles Richmond to Edgar Mearns, May 16, 1903, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1903, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Richmond's instructions began, "In the first place, take out the tendons in the legs of birds larger than an ordinary pigeon, or where the tarsus is heavy. Use a mixture of arsenic + alum on the skins. Keep a solution of bichloride on hand, and paint the feet, tarsi (when naked), bills, and any naked spots on head, with it." The arsenic and alum were intended to protect against bugs; the bichloride was actually mercuric chloride, a mercury solution that museum preparators recommended be applied, as Richmond did, to certain parts of skins (as well as ethnographic materials) to prevent damage from pests.[61] Richmond's instructions continue, with details about how to wrap the birds—use a paper that is porous, like newspaper, but not cotton—so that they would arrive "in beautiful shape." Rather than pulling moisture out of the skins, cotton, "which requires much coaxing to take up any moisture at all," would result in skins that would arrive "soggy, mouldy, and badly out of shape."[62] Next, Richmond had advice about the boxes—tin-lined were preferable to regular boxes—and about adding a drop or two of formaldehyde prior to sealing it, which "would absolutely prevent the formation of mould."[63] I know these details are rather technical, but recognizing the care and skill required to do this well is part of understanding Mearns's relationship with—and significance for—the Smithsonian Institution.[64]

But Richmond wasn't the only scientist sending instructions. Leonhard Stejneger, the Smithsonian curator for reptiles and amphibians, sent advice for collecting and preparing

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[61] See Lisa Goldberg, "A History of Pest Control Measures in the Anthropology Collections, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 35:1, pp.23-24. http://cool.conservation-us.org/jaic/articles/jaic35-01-003.html. On arsenic poisoning experienced by naturalists, see Daniel Lewis, *The Feathery Tribe*, 134.
[62] Charles Richmond to Edgar Mearns, May 16, 1903, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1903, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[63] Ibid.
[64] For more on both the mechanics and politics of collecting and empire (in a different empire) over great distances, see Jim Endersby, *Imperial Nature*.

herpetological specimens: "In labeling use only paper labels with indelible ink or pencil writing, not tin tag. Wrap specimens well in cheese cloth or Japanese paper." He advised curing in formalin, and to avoid crowding specimens into too small a space before fully cured.[65] Stejneger warned that "formalin attacks tin and iron," and cautioned against keeping even wrapped specimens in tin boxes too long "or the tin box will rust through."[66] So tin boxes were best for bird skins, but not ideal for specimens cured with formalin.

And this, from Frederick V. Coville, of the National Herbarium, regarding a poorly prepared box of plant specimens that arrived in Washington, D.C., supposedly from Mearns. "The specimens," described Coville, "which are fragmentary, were placed in folded sheets of newspaper without drying and were so badly moulded and rotten when they reached us as to be unsuitable for preservation." Coville wrote that he "presume[d] they were prepared by some inexperienced volunteer collector," differentiating, it seems, between the quality he had come to expect from Mearns and the quality of this particular box of specimens.[67]

Still, specimens that all knew to be Mearns's sometimes arrived in poor condition. In early February, Gerrit Miller sent Mearns a letter about the mammals he'd sent to him at the museum: "I am sorry to say that the specimens in your last shipment were badly damaged by dampness. By careful treatment, however, we were able to save the rats and the flying fox, though their fur was already slipping…I think it might be a good plan to try the experiment of sending some small mammal skins in packages by mail. They would undoubtedly travel more

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[65] He included additional instructions for snakes: "Cut all snakes, even small ones, open along the middle of the belly to whole length." Leonhard Stejneger to Edgar Mearns, September 12, 1903, Box 7, Correspondence-September 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Leonhard Stejneger to Edgar Mearns, October 21, 1903, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1903, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

rapidly and might be safer from harm by dampness."[68] And even when Mearns's packages arrived unscathed, museum curators worried about them. Richmond wrote to Mearns in December, 1903, "to call your attention to the fact that parcels coming from the Philippines in the mails are very liable to be smashed, unless forwarded in tin boxes or strongly reinforced cigar boxes." Richmond suggested stockpiling specimens until he had a larger lot to send, and to consider sending boxes express or using the military transport system through the Quartermaster General.[69]

In early Feburary, 1904, Mearns received a letter from Richard Rathbun, the Assistant Secretary for the whole Smithsonian Institution, and the person in charge of the United States National Museum. After praising Mearns's "unabated zeal in making a thorough investigation of the natural history of the Philippine Islands" and confirming that the museum would "gladly furnish all the collecting material required," Rathbun, too, turned to the condition of specimens received. "I am sure you will not think I am criticizing anything you have done for us by inclosing a copy of a memorandum which Dr. Richmond has sent me in regard to the condition in which some of the specimens already sent by you arrived," he began. "I fully understand the difficulties under which you are laboring, and for this reason it is natural that we should be anxious about the preparation and packing of the specimens, so that the fruit of your labors may not be wasted."[70]

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[68] Gerrit S. Miller Jr. to Edgar Mearns, February 8, 1904, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1904, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[69] Charles Richmond to Edgar Mearns, December 3, 1903, Box 7, folder 3, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[70] Richard Rathbun to Edgar Mearns, February 13, 1904, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1904, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Richmond's memo, passed along to Mearns by Rathbun, certainly confirms the soggy, moldy, ruin of much of what was in the box in question. But it also tells us what, exactly, was in the box—and that is equally, if not more interesting than the condition of its contents. The box contained "ethnological material, mammal skins and skulls, osteological material, insects, living and dead shells, samples of nuts or fruit, coral, birds' eggs and nests, and 138 bird skins."[71] Richmond's memo isn't dated, but it was sent alongside Rathbun's letter of February 13, suggesting that the specimens and artifacts inside the box were gathered in the fall of 1903, when Mearns (and General Wood) traveled all throughout Mindanao. Though Mearns's primary scientific expertise was ornithological, the circumstances of his military service—and the requests of those in his scientific network—prompted him to collect as widely as possible. Amidst his 1903 papers is a bulletin from the Smithsonian's Division of Anthropology with a ranked list of the items they most desired: (1) "Brains of pure-bloods of any tribe; also those of monkeys and animals or birds of any kind"; (2) "Embryos, foetuses and infant bodies of pure-bloods of any tribe"; and (3) "Skulls and other parts of skeletons of pure-bloods of any tribe." This list is accompanied by instructions for preparation, and this gem: "Male adult brains or heads are more important than others."[72] This call would have gone out to everyone in the Smithsonian's collecting network; the Department of Anthropology was growing a global collection. (Did collectors gathering American Indian ethnographic material receive this bulletin as well? It seems likely.) While the bulletin does not specify where, exactly, these human specimens were to come from, the use of "tribe," "pure-blood," and even the inclusion of

[71] Memo written by Charles Richmond accompanying letter from Richard Rathbun to Edgar Mearns, February 13, 1904, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1904, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[72] "Information," undated, in Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

"monkeys and animals or birds of any kind" alongside "brains of pure-bloods" makes clear that the Smithsonian was desirous of the brains and bones of non-white, non-Western people.

And Mearns, when he could, delivered. His itineraries for the spring of 1904 describe the presence and acquisition of human remains. For April 24, 1904, Mearns wrote, "Found graveyard. Skulls of natives abundant in boxes on surface. Obtained one good skull lacking lower jaw—Visayan (no. 5655)."[73] He also gathered different kinds of native knives, as well as an unidentified haul of "Moro loot" that he sent to the National Museum.[74] The 1904-1905 annual report of the Department of Anthropology notes the significance not simply of what Mearns collected for them—two skulls and 134 Moro artifacts—but how he labeled them: "He is an experienced collector, hence every piece will serve as a type in labeling a vast amount of valuable but hastily gathered material with little information."[75] Even outside of the divisions of birds and mammals, Mearns had a reputation for being careful and detailed. His abilities and his enthusiasm, combined with the access to a whole new environment filled with potential specimens, made Mearns an ideal collector for the United States National Museum.

And they supported him materially, with far more than friendship and advice on specimen preparation. The collecting outfit the Smithsonian sent to Mearns in February of 1904 was substantial. It contained:

300 loaded # 12 shells #10 shot.
300 loaded # 12 shells # 6 shot
1000 empty #12 shells good quality waterproof.

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[73] Edgar Mearns, April 21, 1904, "Itinerary," Box 22, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[74] Edgar Mearns, March 11 and April 4, 1904, "Itinerary," Box 22, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[75] Otis T. Mason, "Report on the Department of Anthropology for the Year 1904-1905," Box 26, folder 16, United States National Museum Annual Curators' Reports, 1881-1964, Record Unit 158, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

1000 loaded #32 (center fire) shells #10 shot (shells than [sic] can be reloaded).

2000 primers for #32 shells.
2000 wads for #12 shells.
Wad cutter #32
2 sets reloading tools for #32 shells.
1 shot gun (12 bore).
225 loaded #12 shells #10 shot.
225 loaded #12 shells #8 shot.
25 loaded #12 shells #7 shot.
50 loaded #12 shells #5 shot.
50 loaded #12 shells #2 shot.
200 loaded #12 shells #6 shot.
250 loaded #12 shells #4 shot.
75 loaded #12 shells #1 shot.
100 loaded #12 shells BB shot.
6 one lb. cans powder.
14 oz. loose powder. 4 auxiliary barrels #32.
1 reloading machine.
35 lbs. shot assorted sizes.
1 box No. 2 primers.
1 doz. brass #12 shells.

2 1/2 doz. Out o' sight rat traps.
4 3/4 doz. Out o' sight mouse traps.
18 doz. Cyclone mouse traps.
9 1/3 doz. Schuyler mouse traps.
2 doz. Schuyler rat traps.
5 3/4 doz. B.&L. steel traps assorted sizes.

4 scalpels.
4 scissors.
4 forceps.
4 long stuffers.
4 dividers.
4 metric tapes.
25 lbs tow.
50 lbs. wire assorted sizes.

10 lbs. alum.
4 lbs. moth balls.
10 lbs. arsenic.
20 lbs. cotton batting.
1000 standard labels.
1000 shell tags.
8 balls twine (3 sizes).

2 cyanide bottles.
2 boxes small vials.
2 bottles eternal ink.
6 note books.
1 package plant paper.
12 packages pins.
12 taxidermist needles.
12 spools thread.
10 yards cheesecloth.
4 quarts formalin.
8 quarts alcohol.
1/2 pound corrosive sublimate.[76]

When I first read that the Smithsonian had sent Mearns a collecting outfit, I imagined a small, portable set of supplies, something akin to a camping first aid kit—certainly not anything of this size, scale, and specificity. Mearns had received support in the form of supplies from museum curators since his service in Arizona Territory in the 1880s, but not like this. The supplies in this collecting outfit indicate not only the significance of the collecting possibilities in the Philippines for the Smithsonian, but also Smithsonian enthusiasm for Mearns's efforts to support and mentor other collectors.

A few things stand out about this list. First, there is a lot of ammunition, in sizes suited for everything from small birds to larger mammals. (The higher the number the smaller the ammunition.) The outfit contains the necessary tools for preparing and loading shells suited to the intended target—in this case, birds and mammals for the museum. The Smithsonian also included a 12-bore shotgun. Standard-issue military weapons were not necessarily ideal collecting weapons. Unlike a Krag-Jorgenson rifle, used earlier in the war, or a Mauser, the rifle adopted by the United States Army by the time Mearns was deployed to the Philippines, a

[76] List appended to letter from Richard Rathbun to Edgar Mearns, February 13, 1904, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1904, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (I have written out the words where Rathbun used " to indicate the same words in successive entries for clarity.)

shotgun could be loaded with ammunition of different sizes, making it possible to match ammunition with an intended future specimen.[77] As an experienced hunter and collector, Mearns would have brought his own shotgun with him to the Philippines.[78] And as a medical officer, rather than an infantryman, it is unlikely Mearns would have required—or even been issued—a standard rifle. This gun wasn't only for Mearns's use; rather, it was useful because it could enable others to shoot and kill specimens that could then be prepared. The collecting outfit sent to Mearns by the museum contained four sets of scalpels, scissors, forceps, long stuffers, dividers, and metric tapes—too many for Mearns to use all at once. These sets of preparation tools reflect the hope that Mearns would be able to find other soldiers to assist him in his scientific work.

The Philippine Scientific Association

On July 31, 1903, Gerrit Miller, in the Division of Mammals, received a letter from Edgar Mearns. Its contents were so exciting that he showed it to multiple people, who then mention having seen the letter in their individual correspondence with Mearns. The letter from Mearns appears to have outlined plans to form the Philippine Scientific Association, to be led by General Leonard Wood, and with Edgar Mearns as its vice-president. Miller's response to Mearns's letter affirms the broader enthusiasm for Mearns's new project, the news of which "spread a glow of delight on more faces than is usually the lot of letters." Miller's reply, on September 12 (the same day Mearns's letter arrived in Washington), is full of energy and support for what Mearns had begun: "Everyone to whom I have shown it agrees with me that a better

[77] Many thanks to Brian Schmidt, Museum Specialist at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, for talking with me about appropriate weaponry for collecting. Any errors are my own.
[78] Recall that Mearns noted that he used his shotgun to kill three Moros during a fight on August 20, 1903.

move could not have been made than the foundation of your Philippine Scientific Association under presidency of General Wood. The idea seems to me perfect in all respects, and all that remains is to work out the details of the relationships between the Society and the U.S.N.M." Miller's letter continues, at a pace that feels almost like thinking out loud: the new association's secretary should send something official; Miller will go ahead and send 100 sets of instructions for specimen collection; they'll prepare a large collecting outfit for him and the PSA, etc., etc. "Of course it is premature to talk of all of this now, but you have set us thinking!" Miller exclaimed.[79] And Richard Rathbun also wrote with encouragement and approval: "It is very gratifying to us here in Washington to see the kindling of the scientific flame in our far off possessions, and especially so when I realize the fact that the Society in question was organized by you, and that you are the controlling force in its operations. We shall naturally expect great things after a while."[80] Miller, too, saw the potential of the Philippine Scientific Association. To Mearns, he wrote, "What we need is a representative in the Philippines, and one of the good things about your plan is that it seems to offer a means for establishing something of the kind."[81] In fact, the Philippine Scientific Association sounds similar to what Mearns and True had been envisioning in their correspondence at the start of the war. Now, Mearns was able to organize a more formal association of collectors and enthusiasts to support the work of natural history in the Philippines.

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[79] All quotations this paragraph, Gerrit S. Miller Jr. to Edgar Mearns, September 12, 1903, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[80] Richard Rathbun to Edgar Mearns, September 18, 1903, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1903. Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[81] Gerrit S. Miller Jr. to Edgar Mearns, September 12, 1903, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1903, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

The Constitution of the Philippine Scientific Association was written on July 26, 1903 and adopted the following day. Article II of the Constitution stated that "the object of the association is to promote and unite scientific effort in the Philippine Islands; to make known the physiographic features and products of the Islands; to gather collections for the enrichment of the museums of the United States government; and to collect such information as may contribute to a better knowledge of the Islands and their inhabitants."[82] Though not expressly a military or colonial organization, the Philippine Scientific Association comprised mostly members of the American military community—both army men and some of the wives and daughters of officers whose families had accompanied them overseas. Also on the list, Richard McGregor, of the Philippine Museum in Manila, and Captain George Ahern, of the Philippine Bureau of Forestry. Among the fifty-nine members listed below Mearns's copy of the PSA Constitution, officers of the 17th Infantry were particularly well-represented. Annual dues were $1.00, and Mearns's copy of the PSA Constitution included notes on those who had paid their membership fees.The PSA sent out requests to potential members, inviting them to join the organization and notifying those who wished to "become active workers" that they would receive more information soon.[83]

Meanwhile, Mearns began to build a library of materials and supplies for the Philippine Scientific Association. Included in his PSA correspondence file is a list of scientific papers and bird lists which Mearns seems to have annotated with marginalia including "Want it"; "Want

[82] "Constitution of the Philippine Scientific Association," July 26, 1903, Box 15, Correspondence, Philippine Scientific Assoc., 1904, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[83] Form letter appended to "Constitution of the Philippine Scientific Association," July 26, 1903, Box 15, Correspondence, Philippine Scientific Assoc., 1904, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

all"; and even, "Want it! Mearns."[84] Smithsonian curators sent several duplicate copies of circulars with collecting instructions, and Gerrit Miller made special mention of a "standard" field notebook included in the large collecting outfit sent to Mearns by the museum. He wrote, "The pages can be detached and sent to us with the collections to which they refer, and when we get enough of them together we can have them bound for permanent record."[85] Miller offered to include several of them for Mearns's "voluntary workers," and noted that he had included "several sets of skinning tools in the outfit" for the same purpose.[86] While intended for the Philippine Scientific Association, it seems likely that the some of these materials were also used by assistants Mearns recruited or met on his travels; for example, while on an expedition to collect materials from the Mt. Apo region, Mearns wrote to his daughter that the he and his colleagues had "let them learn to use our guns" and "Bogobos or one of the Moros were always out hunting and bringing in good birds and animals for food or specimens."[87]

Mearns was doing more than collecting; he was training and supporting new collectors. In his field notes from March 1904, Mearns recorded that he "sent Nat. Mus. pamphlets giving directions for collecting Birds, nests + eggs, Mammals, Reptiles + Batractuans, Molusks [sic] and Shells, and Insects (6 pamphlets) to the officers' clubs at the following places": Marahui,

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[84] Note: while there is no indication that this list of papers is not related to Mearns Philippine Scientific Association work, it is a partial list, and so I cannot be completely sure that these annotations are for the PSA. Box 15, Correspondence, Philippine Scientific Assoc., 1904, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[85] Gerrit Miller to Edgar Mearns, February 27, 1904, Box Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, 1904, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Edgar Mearns to Lillian Mearns, July 22, 1904, Box 21, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

Parang, Malabang, Zamboanga, Jolo, and Cottabato.[88] Notes like this help us to trace the impact of Mearns's work as an advocate for the importance of scientific exploration and collection alongside military work. General Wood's leadership of the PSA offered an important endorsement of this position. With the support of his commanding officer, it seems Mearns pursued every opportunity for scientific work.

In fact, reading his entries from January and February of 1904, it is easy to forget that Mearns was an army officer. His notes are focused on birds, and aside from the occasional Moro or Spanish words (bird song, bird names), these pages are all science, no war. These entries aren't mixed together with military details; there's nothing here about territorial politics or shooting people. Only birds, and notes about moving through Philippine landscapes. From February 25: "After breakfast, walked down the rocky shore to the west, it being low tide. Saw plenty of little Blue Herons…"; later the same day, "After lunching + skinning a couple of birds I set out through coconut groves eastward…At length we reached a stream and mangrove swamp in which a large herd of Monkeys was found. I shot a large male monkey that kept by himself." Mearns continued, "Green Parrots screamed everywhere towards night; and I heard the soft cooing of the little green pigeon in the swamp." And the next day, "Skinned mammals + birds until 2:30 P.M. Spent rest of day shooting."[89] But Mearns's correspondence from this same period suggests that he was not writing everything down. His letters to the museum say very little, on the whole, about the work he'd been assigned to do, and mostly stick to specimens. But to Richmond, perhaps his closest friend at the museum, he acknowledged that there were military

[88] Though spelled incorrectly, it looks like Mearns meant Batrachians; Batrachia is an order that includes frogs and many kinds of amphibians. Edgar Mearns, Field book labeled March 1-3, 1904, Box 17, folder 11, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[89] All quotations this paragraph, Edgar Mearns, Feburary 25-26, 1904, 1903-1904 field book, Box 17, folder 10, pp. 56-65 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

reasons for the delay in shipping more material. On February 19, he wrote, "I have a lot of stuff collected, but between the fighting + field work, can find little time for packing."[90]

In March, Mearns participated in the Rio Grande Expedition, under the leadership of General Wood. With five companies of soldiers, Wood started out from Cotobato and headed up the river in search of a Moro leader named Datto Ali.[91] Mearns's notes from this assignment again combine military, medical, and scientific work. For example, the entry for March 9 reads: "Remained at Barak [their camp from the previous night]. At 6 A.M. one Co. went out with Capt. Van Horne, accompanied by Pvt. Darrah, Hospt. Corps. I accompanied a reconnoisanse [sic] party sent to examine Alli's left flank at Serenaya. We left soon after sunrise and returned at 1 P.M., having been to 600 yards sth of the big bastioned fort on the left of their line. Saw the following birds."[92] That last line is underlined in pen, as if Mearns returned to these books to review the natural history of this expedition. The birds take up the rest of the page and all of the next one:

> Black-throated Sunbird, Long-tailed Herinda, Plucky Swift, Gray Martin, Dendrocygna, Black Ibis, Carabao Bird, black legs, Great Blue Heron, Black Heron (or Bittern), Waterhen (Gallinulau chlorppa), Kingfisher, blue, white-belly, Oriole, Necrops philippinus, Brown Java Sparrow, Whitish-gray Shrike, White-headed Hawk, rain-crow, brown winged, Black (Barbet?), Solitary Tattler, Gallinggo, narrow-tailed, Crow, White + Gary bird in flocks, Little red + green Paroquet, Cockatoo, Large Green Parrot, Long-tailed Shrike, Porphyrio- Flying at evening night, Burorides, Dried green Tree Frog in botanical press.[93]

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[90] Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, February 19, 1903, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C. Mearns's itinerary for this week confirms that he and his colleagues were busy with military work. Mearns noted "several hundred" Moro casualties, 1 dead American soldier, and several wounded after a fight on February 21st. See "Itinerary," Box 22, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[91] For more on this expedition, see McCallum, *Leonard Wood*, 219-220.
[92] Edgar Mearns, entry for March 9, 1904, Field book labeled Mar 4-15, Box 17, folder 12, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[93] Ibid.

I am a novice birder. And the reason I'm a birder at all is Mearns. His books, filled with unfamiliar words, birds, specimen descriptions, and ornithological shorthand, prompted me to try to learn something about how he saw the world around him. And also, more practically, I thought it might improve my own ability to interpret his script. It is hard enough to decipher century-old handwriting when the words are in my vocabulary, but these bird lists presented additional challenges. But the more bird lists I read, the more I start to learn that yes, a shrike is a kind of bird; that's not a spelling error. After only a spring of Sunday-morning birding field trips, I can't look at these lists and offer any sweeping conclusions about the birds of the Philippines, but I do have a new appreciation for what it must have taken to not only see so much while looking at a single bird, but also to see all of these things often while fulfilling other, often military, obligations.

I don't have the training or preparation to make sense of the ornithological significance of Mearns's field work and findings, at least not on my own. But I've been finding that what I don't know about birds and birding has given me a particular perspective on Mearns's expertise. This list of birds seen by Mearns on March 9, 1904, contains a mixture of common names, scientific names, and brief descriptions (instead of names) for the birds Mearns didn't know. His skills as a naturalist, developed and honed all his life, enabled him to notice, describe, and list birds familiar to him, as well as species he'd never before encountered. And he did all of this—on March 9—while scouting in the territory of an unfriendly Moro leader.[94]

The entry for the following day describes shelling Datto Ali's fort—and more birds. On March 11th, a morning attack, and more birds. Partway down, this day's bird list shifts from birds

[94] Samuel Tan writes that it was Datto Ali's "exclusion by the American authorities from the St. Louis Exposition" that gave him "a reason to fight against American rule." See Samuel K. Tan, *The Filipino-American War, 1899-1913* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2002), 171.

seen to weapons collected: brass and iron guns, lantacas, and plenty of ammunition. Mearns described "the white flag" appearing when they began to shell Serenaya. "Then," he wrote, "we marched over and looted the place."[95] (And then, of course, there is another bird list.) By the 14th, after almost ten days in the Rio Grande estuary—which Wood biographer McCallum calls "a morass of standing water covered with a mat of floating vegetation thick enough to support small trees but porous enough to drop men, guns, and animals into the twenty-foot-deep liquid muck below"—Mearns was back on the *Ranger*.[96] The following day, he was back in Zamboanga, where he unpacked his belongings, skinned a few birds shot on the expedition, and met up with two other army doctors who had specimens to show him. In terms of Wood's military aims, the expedition had been a partial success; they had shelled Serenaya heavily, confiscated weapons, and captured Datto Djimbangan, Ali's brother. And in terms of scientific goals, Mearns's efforts had been successful. He'd collected both Moro property and Philippine birds from the area in and around Datto Ali's fort. Here, at least, conquest and collection were compatible. Still, the material victory was partial. Datto Ali remained at large.

Wood planned another expedition in the Lake Lanao region for April with the same basic plan: "Wood's men went from cotta [village] to cotta, firing from the parapets until there was no sign of life then destroying the structures and everything in them."[97] Rather than attempt to solve issues in Mindanao peacefully, Wood pledged "to go thoroughly over the whole valley,

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[95] Edgar Mearns, entry for March 11, 1904, Field book labeled Mar 4-15, Box 17, folder 12, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH. See Samuel Tan, *The Filipino-American War*, 171, for an estimate that "hundreds" of Moros died at Seranaya.
[96] McCallum, *Leonard Wood,* 219.
[97] Ibid., 220.

destroying all warlike supplies, and dispersing and destroying every hostile force, and also destroy every cota [sic] where there is the slightest resistance."[98]

The violence of Wood's campaign in Mindanao—and Mearns's part in it—isn't addressed explicitly by Mearns's museum colleagues. Their letters are focused on science, specifically, the potential losses to science resulting from damaged or unlabeled specimens. For example, the correspondence between Mearns and Richmond contains much discussion of specimens arriving without labels. Richmond asked Mearns for information about specimens he couldn't label, and then, roughly six weeks later, Mearns would write back with as much information as he could provide from his notes. It seems that most of these identification problems were eventually solved, though it is clear that the lack of information caused a little bit of frustration. (Gerrit Miller began one letter, "Humbly, on my knees, in the dust, with ashes on my head, and with humility and the fear of God in my heart, I send you this prayer and supplication that you will not forward any more skins with mere numbers on them.")[99] And in an exchange with Richmond over 5 cockatoo skins, when Richmond asked for help in matching the birds with their correct labels, Mearns wrote back, "With the 5 Cockatoos you are up against a hard proposition. You have the 5 labels and you have the five unlabled [sic] skins. Both are correct. What more could be asked?"[100] In the context of their friendship and their correspondence, I read this—as well as Miller's overly exaggerated supplication—as an attempt to lighten the mood while doing the best work possible under current conditions.

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[98] From Wood's diary, April 7, 1904, as quoted in McCallum, *Leonard Wood*, 220.
[99] Gerrit Miller to Edgar Mearns, March 25, 1904, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
[100] For the exchange, see Charles Richmond to Edgar Mearns, April 18, 1904, Box 7, folder 3, and Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, June 2, 1904, Box 22, folder 8, both United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

The curators' requests to Mearns reflect their commitment to the work they could do with these specimens from their positions inside the museum. Here's Miller, again: "It's such fine stuff and we need it so much that it makes me weep to see it in anything but first class shape."[101] Their investment in the material coming from the field also hints at its importance. Without details about the specimen's context—the information Mearns recorded about locality, appearance, and sometimes behavior—the work that museum scientists could do with these specimens was limited. These letters between friends and colleagues remind us of the primacy of the field for those in the museum—and that the limitations of this particular field were also felt by museum curators, even if they were far away from the conditions in which Mearns collected.[102]

This went both ways: Mearns asked Richmond to share the names he'd assigned to the birds Mearns had sent to the museum, but couldn't confidently identify. That way, Mearns would be able to update his notes, and draw on the expertise of the museum curators, who could

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[101] Gerrit Miller to Edgar Mearns, March 25, 1904, Box 13, Correspondence-Botanical and Ornithology, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[102] There is a rich literature on the relationship between the field and the museum, and the field and the lab, in the history of science. As the questions asked by historians of science have broadened over the last several decades, scholars have begun asking questions about a broader set of scientific practices and practitioners. With this expansion has come greater attention on field sites and field workers. See especially the work of Robert Kohler, but also Jeremy Vetter, James Secord, Jim Endersby, and Camilo Quintero Toro, among others. This work takes seriously issues of power, expertise, and knowledge production. But much of it, understandably, gets at these questions through planned surveys and collecting expeditions by scientists, universities, museums, and governments. Actors like Mearns—collectors who were incorporating collecting work into military obligations—don't quite fit into these frameworks for understanding the place of the lab and the field in scientific practices. For an excellent overview of the questions that studying the field can help us to think about, see the introduction written by Henrika Kuklick and Robert E. Kohler to a special volume of *Osiris* on Science in the Field (1996), in Vol. 11, pp. 1-14. See also Robert Kohler, *Landscapes & Labscapes*; Jeremy Vetter, "Cowboys, Scientists, and Fossils; Jim Endersby, *Imperial Nature*; Nicholas Jardine, James A Secord, and E. C. Spary. *The Cultures of Natural History*, (Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Camilo Quintero Toro, *Birds of Empire, Birds of Nation*.

compare Mearns's birds to other specimens in their holdings, to build his own knowledge. This request would be "an advantage to [Mearns's] work" and also an advantage to the museum. Mearns noted that there were collectors for foreign museums in the Philippines; identifying Mearns's birds as they arrived "may save some types from going abroad." Furthermore, it would help the Philippine Scientific Association. Mearns wrote that this information from Richmond would allow him "to make some reports of results of work and to identify specimens for the members of the Philippine Scientific Association at our meetings or when they come 'round to ask questions." Although he was getting information from McGregor at the museum in Manila, his bulletins did not cover much of what Mearns was encountering. "Besides," he wrote, "I am 'on the go' in the field much of the time."[103]

The field that Mearns was referring to, of course, was also sometimes a battlefield. Mearns mostly mentioned fighting in passing, as in his letter of February 19, where he wrote that "fighting + field work" were making it hard for him to find time to pack specimens."[104] But on June 2, he addressed Richmond's question about a particular Granculus specimen this way: "If the Granculus specimen came from Sulu (Jolo) in the box with the 5 Cockatoos + above 3 green Parrots it is certainly No. 13339 which I see was never entered in my register before. A big battle was going on. A soldier near me was shot while I skinned the bird. I skinned a big Monkey at the same time but could not carry the skin away; but I saved the dark-gray bird and the skull of the

[103] All quotations this paragraph, Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, June 2, 1904, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Box 22, folder 8, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[104] Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, February 19, 1903, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

Monkey. Bird size of Mourning Dove, not rare on Sulu but not seen elsewhere by me; my only specimen."[105]

Not only does this anecdote offer a sense of how close Mearns was to the fighting; it also reminds us of Mearns's particular role in the violence of this campaign against the Moros. Mearns wasn't holding his gun; he was skinning a bird. Though he'd seen combat as a member of the expeditions against the dattos who did not recognize American authority, Mearns's work was more likely to occur after the fighting, rather than as part of it.

Preparation

This image, of Mearns skinning a bird while a nearby soldier is shot, raises questions about the violence of both kinds of labor, about the connections between following orders and fighting Moros, and killing animals in order to collect them for science.

The letters between Mearns and the museum are centered on the logistics of collecting — what to collect, sending tools and materials to help with collecting, how to ship specimens halfway around the world, the challenges of making sense of the specimens and their identifying information once (or if) they arrived. But what about the logics of collecting? I have to imagine that Mearns thought about the work of war and the killing of collection. As a young man, he described the sounds a night heron made as it suffered from a shot through the wing. Mearns had to chase the wounded bird and kill it with his hands: "I caught him, and ended his existence after no tame struggle on the bird's part, while I was nearly deafened by his screams."[106] The details in this description are striking—the scene is clear and vivid, as is the bird's distress. Mearns did

[105] Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, June 2, 1904, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[106] Edgar Mearns, entry for May 23, 1877, Box 8, folder 6, p. 172 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

not minimize this; he simply described what happened, owned his place in this bird's end. This is one of the few moments in Mearns's papers where he describes not just the details of collection (place, date, time, or even shot used), but the actual dying of birds that will become his specimens. For him, these deaths have purpose. He never comes out and says so; I see this in the care and attention he committed to the work of scientific collection and study, in the catalogue of a life spent preparing.

Mearns's field books, too, are filled with the data of scientific collection. Lists of birds seen, lists of birds shot, notes about specimens prepared. The books are smudged, but still careful. And they are dynamic; the entries are peppered with checkmarks, underlining, numbering and renumbering in different shades of ink. Mearns returned to these notes over and over again, refining them, constructing a living record of the specimens he had killed and preserved.

For some days, there are only lists, and no narrative to help me, now, a century later, attempt to make sense of what Mearns's Philippine battlefield collecting might have been like. Sometimes I read them quickly; sometimes I Google every bird to try to see parts of what he saw (while recognizing the futility in trying to close the gap that separates me from Mearns).

And once, I turned the page and encountered a completely different sort of list. Still a list of bodies, but not of birds. This was a list of soldiers, American soldiers, casualties of a war already declared over. Mearns's list contains the names of fifteen soldiers from the 17th Infantry, killed by Datto Ali's men earlier that month.

<u>May 25, 1904</u>
1. Lieut. Woodruff
2. Lieut. Hall
3. Sergt. Wachter
4. Pvt. Eineit
5. Pvt. Osborn

6. Pvt. Molde
7. Musician Quillan
8. Pvt. Cole
9. Pvt. Smith
10. Sergt. Wallen
11. Pvt. Hughes
12. Pvt. Merredeth
13. Pvt. Litchens
14. Pvt. Gillam
15. Pvt. O'Connor[107]

Mearns prepared their bodies too, and packed them in boxes for transport to a coastal town. The next page in Mearns's field book lists their contents: nine boxes, fifteen bodies. Mearns does not say anything about the condition of their bodies, or about the proper method for preparing the bodies of the dead. His notes, however, indicate that he packed two men to a box, and that Private Eineit's skull was separate from the rest of his body, "name written on skull and label attached."[108] From there, the boxes were moved to Cottabato, where their contents were sealed into caskets and shipped home across the Pacific.

I haven't found many instances like this in my reading of Mearns's field books—the preparation of human bodies for transport home seems to have been rare, at least for Mearns—but here the resonance between his work with bird bodies and the bodies of soldiers killed in action seems impossible to ignore. Yes, there's something here in the materiality of these comparisons. As a surgeon, Mearns's job was to heal— to dress wounds, treat illness, and respond to the trauma of war. As a scientist, his primary task was to collect—to observe, shoot, skin, and preserve specimens for future study. These occupations, surgeon and scientist, though focused on different ends, utilized many of the same tools and skills. Mearns's papers are filled with painstakingly detailed instructions for how to get dead plants and animals from the

[107] Edgar Mearns, May 25, 1904, field book labeled "1904 May 17-29," Box 17, folder 13, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[108] Ibid.

Philippines to the United States without rotting or molding. The Smithsonian sent Mearns several chemical agents to aid in this process: arsenic, alum, formalin, formaldehyde. The Department of Anthropology even sent instructions for preserving brains—animal and human.[109] But what happened to the remains of dead soldiers who also needed to make the long journey home?

It seems that some of them were embalmed, using methods developed by Chaplain Charles Pierce, head of the United States Morgue and Office of Identification. As many American casualties as possible were repatriated through the combined effort of Pierce's office and the Quartermaster Burial Corps.[110] Mearns's inclusion of this list of bodies in his field notes helps to make visible this other work of war—dealing with the dead. Though soldiers' letters often gesture toward what might happen, toward the danger and uncertainty they lived with, they rarely explain the structures (both military and civilian) for handling casualties of war and disease.

While serving as a correspondent for the Chicago *Record*, John McCutcheon encountered a member of the Quartermaster Burial Corps—an undertaker—aboard the *Helena*. "There is one young fellow on board who has been something of a mystery to me. He wears a neat trim suit of tweed, a watch cap, eyeglasses, and has more the look of a tourist than either a soldier or a correspondent." McCutcheon asked about him, and "in a low tone" the ship's doctor told him, "He's the undertaker. He's a mighty nice fellow but if it is known what he's here for, the men

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[109] Of course, the brains requested belonged to specific humans: not the brains and skulls of soldiers, but the bones and bodies of non-white, non-Western, so-called "primitive" people.
[110] During the Spanish-American War, the Quartermaster Burial Corps was comprised of contract morticians who were civilians employed by the United States Army. See Leo P. Hirrel, "The Beginnings of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Service," *Army Sustainment*, 46: 4 (July/Aug 2014), pp. 64-67; Constance Potter and John Deeren, "Care for the Military Dead" in James C. Bradford, ed., *A Companion to American Military History, Vol 2* (Chichester and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 1035; and Michael Sledge, *Soldier Dead: How We Recover, Identify, Bury, and Honor our Military Fallen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005). The mention of Pierce's experimentation with embalming techniques occurs in Hirrel, 65.

would shun him and have nothing to do with him. We try to keep it quiet what his business is." Though they didn't speak of it often, the army was prepared for death. McCutcheon observed that there were "a number of rough pine boxes on board - about six feet long by three wide and two and a half deep. They are now down in the hold, comparatively light for their size."[111]

Caskets like these were the destinations for the bodies in boxes that Mearns prepared. Mearns described this work to Charles Richmond. He told Richmond that the officers who had been killed—Lieutenant Hall and Lieutenant Woodruff—had both been members of the Philippine Scientific Association. They, along with thirteen enlisted men, were killed "at Simpitan by Datto Ali in his last fight (May 8)." Mearns wrote that on May 25, he "packed the 15 bodies for transportation to Cottabato by native carriers and made a hard, hot march the same day + night."[112] He said nothing of the methods he used to prepare and pack the bodies of these men, but the link between preparing birds and preparing bodies can't have been lost on Richmond. Before concluding this letter, Mearns asked Richmond, "How would you like to be a soldier?"[113]

The question makes me wonder something I've been thinking about ever since I began spending time with Mearns's papers: how did he like being a soldier? There are brief moments—one, in a letter to his wife Ella, comes to mind—where he says something about leaving the

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[111] John T. McCutcheon, Entry for January 19, 1900, Volume labeled "1900- Jan 17-31, Opening the Hemp Ports, sketches also, Detail(?) Journal, 24," Box 34, folder 872, John T. McCutcheon Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago.

[112] Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, June 2, 1904, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C. For more on the pursuit of Datto Ali, and an example of a bird that Mearns collected near where American troops recovered Lieutenant Woodruff's compass, see the entry for *Megalaima haemacephala mindanensis* in "Dr. Mearns's Birds," at the Division of Birds website. I wrote the text for this collaborative web project in 2013.

[113] Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, June 2, 1904, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

army, but for the most part, the written record he left us is silent about how he felt about this work. Still, the military enabled a scientific career, one that might not have been possible without the opportunities—and specimens—the United States Army placed in his field of vision. When he looked at those birds later, when he pulled them out of their boxes and drawers to study them, compare them, did he see other bodies, the Moros he'd killed, the soldiers he'd sent home? Or were these bird bodies in a separate category for Mearns? Maybe these bodies were counted differently than casualties; they added up to a fuller picture of avian life, rather than contribute to an impossible number— of how much resistance to offer, how much force to use to subdue it.

How would you like to be a soldier? I wouldn't, I imagine Richmond responding as he read Mearns's letter about the officers and enlisted men killed at Simpitan. I wouldn't, except for all of the things I might see. Maybe Richmond, when he looked at Mearns's birds, saw more than just their beaks and their wings, more than their feet and feather patterns. Is this what empire looks like? Carefully labeled birds in boxes, young men in pine caskets, all collected where they fell and shipped home across the Pacific.

The Malindang Mountain Group

Though most often it seems that Mearns's scientific collecting was shaped or governed by his military assignments, sometimes he was able to get military approval for tasks that were explictly scientific. In 1905, after six months medical leave in the United States, Mearns returned for a second tour of duty. He was eager to continue his scientific work, and during his tenure as the Chief Surgeon of the Department of Mindanao, he proposed and carried out scientific expeditions to Mount Apo, Mount Malindang, and Mount Halcon, all under the auspices of the United States Army.

Mearns's notes from this tour of duty seem to suggest a period of relative calm, but even if this was true for Mearns—after all, he was proposing scientific survey expeditions—it was not true for the rest of Moroland. Just a few weeks before his Mount Malindang expedition was to begin, approximately one thousand Taosug Muslims, including many women and children, were slaughtered in a four-day "battle" at Bud Dajo, a volcano on the island of Jolo. The Taosugs had fled to the volcano—literally to inside the crater—to avoid local leaders and American colonial policies; in response, General Wood ordered soldiers up to the mouth of the volcano, where their firepower (guns and grenades) was further supported by shelling from American gunboats. An image of several American soldiers standing over the dead, who lay piled in trenches at the soldiers' feet, conveyed what words could not about the continuing violence in the southern Philippines.[114]

[114] For more on the Bud Dajo massacre see Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 218-219; McCallum, *Leonard Wood*, 227-231; Hagedorn's 1931 biography of Wood offers a blindly sympathetic narrative that refuses to judge Wood's actions beyond acknowledging that "the killing of women and children had indeed an ugly sound" (66); see Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood: A Biography*, 63-69.

Figure 21. First Battle of Bud Dajo.[115]

Mearns's field books do not mention Bud Dajo, but his military paperwork does. In a list detailing all of his absences from his assigned post at Zamboanga, one of the entries reads, "Absent March 8th at Jolo, P. I. in answer to emergency call for medical assistance from Commanding Officer, Jolo, Jolo, on account of numerous casualties resulting from engagement of troops with hostile Moros at Bud-Dajo, P. I."[116] The trip to Jolo took about nine hours, and once he arrived, on the evening of March 8, Mearns "dressed wounded until 12 midnight and brought 34 wounded soldiers" back to Zamboanga.[117] There were twenty American casualties.

A few weeks later, in northeastern Mindanao, though, Mearns moved forward with what he was calling a "biological and geographical reconnoissance [sic] of Mt. Malindang."[118] He proposed beginning as soon as possible. Mearns wanted "to spend twenty days as high on the mountain as water can be found, gathering specimens to illustrate the gross surface geology, fauna, and flora of the mountain region; also to roughly determine the altitude of Mt. Malindang and the extent of its vertical life zones."[119] The specific military benefits of an expedition like this one are rather unclear. Of course, having a better idea of the topography of the island is not a

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[115] See Kramer, *The Blood of Government,* 219; image in the public domain, from the National Archives. (Also here: http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2006/03/12/what_happened_at_bud_dajo/) and uploaded to Wikipedia.

[116] Edgar Mearns, "Statement of Absences from Zamboanga, Mindanao, P.I., of Major Edgar A. Mearns, Chief Surgeon, Department of Mindano, From December 27th, 1905 to August 9th 1906," Box 23, folder 15, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

[117] Edgar Mearns, March 8, 1906, "Itinerary," Box 22, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

[118] I have also written about this expedition as part of a web project for the Smithsonian's Division of Birds.

[119] "Proposed Itinerary for Mt. Malindang Expedition," Mearns to Brig. Gen. Bliss, April 14, 1906, Box 21, folder 3, p. 13 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

bad thing for an army department or a colonial government — but this expedition is framed less as a route-finding survey and more like a biodiversity survey.

Once the expedition had been approved, Mearns put together a team. The expedition called itself the Malindang Mountain Group. One sergeant and three soldiers with the rank of private were assigned to the expedition along with their "usual field equipment": rifle, ammunition, and long underwear for the conditions at higher elevations. It was also specified, in correspondence from the Department of Mindanao's Military Secretary, that Sergeant Leakins was to "bring [a] National Museum shot-gun in addition to his equipment."[120] In addition to the army men, the expedition members included a representative from the Philippine Bureau of Forestry, members of the U.S. Engineers Corps, and a member of the Hospital Corps, as well as representatives from the Philippine Constabulary, a native force established and trained by the American military, and twenty-eight Moro porters.[121] Additionally, the group included Wenaslao Estrella, listed as "Dr. Mearns bird shooter."[122] The basic plan was this: The party established a base camp at Catagan, and from there took trips in smaller groups to the surrounding peaks and rivers, while gathering information about how to climb Mt. Malindang, collecting specimens as they went.

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[120] J. R. Williams to Edgar Mearns, April 25, 1906, Box 21, folder 3, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[121] See list of expedition members appended to Robert Schroeder's letter to the Military Secretary of the Department of Mindanao, July 10, 1906, Box 22, folder 10, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[122] Edgar Mearns, "Malindang Notes," Box 22, folder 1, p. 6 (scan), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

Figure 22. Mt. Malindang Range Natural Park Location Map, Department of Environment and Natural Resources[123]

Despite the challenging conditions, some of the correspondence between expedition members remains, and it offers a snapshot of what it might have been like to be a member of this expedition. The letters we have cover quite a bit of ground: the Moro porters, or cargadores, did not want to work for American soldiers (more specifically, the letter says they "bucked");[124] directions for returning borrowed carabao (for transporting supplies) to their owner with payment

.[123] Map of Mt. Malindang Natural Park from official park website. Accessed 28 December 2014. http://mt.malindang.mu.edu.ph/download.php

[124] Letter to Col. Steerer, May 28, 1906, Box 21, folder 3, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

for services rendered; and news of orders for two of the military members of the Malindang Mountain Group to report for duty in Zamboanga even though the expedition was only partway complete. (This last bit of news is a reminder that although Mearns's expedition was approved by General Tasker Bliss, other military needs still came first.) The reassigned soldiers sent their best guesses for how to approach the summit of Malindang: "I believe the top can be reached from Jimenez in three to four days…The trail is very rough, and in some places passes over ravines on logs which the Subano, with whom we talked, said could not be crossed by men wearing shoes, but I think it can be done."[125]

That we have these letters to examine is incredible to me. Each note, whether about new military orders or carabao return, was hand-carried through difficult terrain, often between the group's base camp and the smaller teams further afield. The letters between members in the field and the expedition's established base camp are mostly logistical: one group requests rice for a certain number of days; another letter alerts the recipient that specimens were on their way down the mountain with hired cargadores. For example, one such letter reads, "I am sending one deer skin and skull to be taken care of. The Major regards it as the most valuable specimen secured on this trip as it is intirely [sic] new. Also one squirrel skin and a box of birds and rats it is to [sic] damp up here to care for them properly. The trays should be placed near the fire every day until dry."[126]

These letters can be difficult to decipher; the group encountered plenty of rain, and one letter describes sending a telegram up to Major Mearns, only after it had been dried "by the fire"

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[125] J.P. Jervey to Major Mearns, June 5, 1906, Box 21, folder 3, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[126] Pvt. West to Major Mearns, June 4, 1906, Box 21, folder 5, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

and "wrapped" in dry paper."[127] "If the constabulary is careful," wrote Private West to Mearns, it "will reach you in good shape."[128] (To Sergeant Leakins, West wrote, "This is a bum camp. It rains everyday, the tent fly leaks and everything gets wet and then it is cold enough at night to freeze a fellows balls.")[129]

Despite many false starts and attempts that ended on different mountain tops or contained impassable obstacles, the group eventually found a workable route up Grand Malindang. Scientific readings of many kinds were taken and recorded, a significant number of specimens were collected from the summit, and the expedition was pronounced a triumph. Robert Schroeder, one member of the expedition, said that from the summit he saw "a view too grand for description." And then he described it: "Down before our eyes lay Mindanao like one great miniature; mountains 3000 feet high looking like small hills, and beyond them from the coast very clearly defined, stretched the ocean in its calm magnificence to the very horizon, many miles away."[130]

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[127] Pvt. West to Major Mearns, June 5, 1906, Box 21, folder 5, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Pvt. West to Sergeant Leakins, June 5, 1906, Box 21, folder 5, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[130] Robert Schroeder to the Military Secretary, Department of Mindanao, July 10, 1906. Box 22, folder 10, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

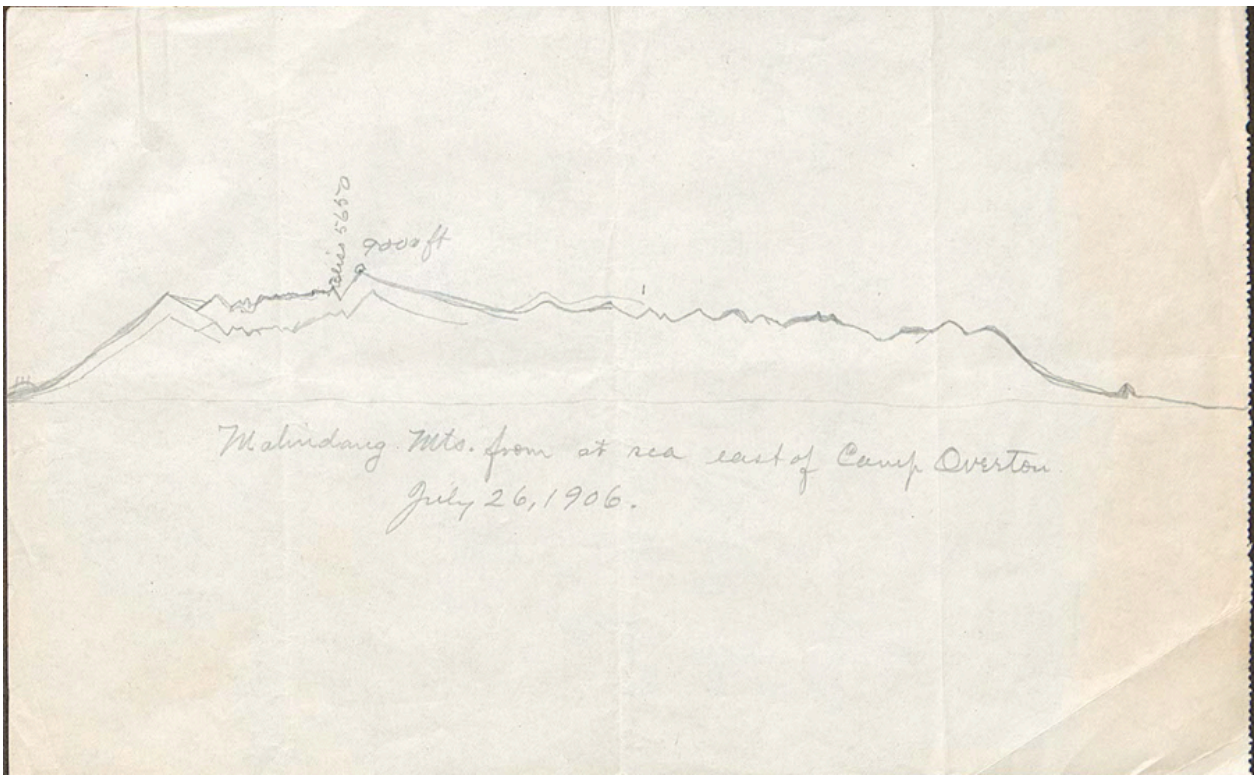

Figure 23. Malindang terrain sketch drawn by Edgar Mearns. Smithsonian Institution Archives.[131]

"This sight alone," wrote Schroeder, "was worth the climbing of grand old Malindang."[132]

The memo sent to General Tasker Bliss, under whose authority this expedition was carried out, focused on the expedition's deliverables: "A monument was placed upon the highest peak, known as Grand Malindang; and a map and a report embodying photographs and topographical drawings, klinometer sightings, altitudes of peaks, barometric and thermometric readings is being prepared." As for natural history, "Major Mearns and Mr. Hutchinson collected 1000 good Botanical specimens…Major Mearns, for the U. S. National Museum, made a large

[131] Edgar Mearns, Box 23, folder 12 (labeled "Terrain Sketches"), Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[132] Ibid.

general collection in zoology, including 240 birds and 80 mammals, with new genera and species."[133]

The specimens that Mearns and his colleagues in the Malindang Mountain Group collected were a significant contribution to the collections of the United States National Museum. Some were completely new to science, and all helped to advance American knowledge about Philippine natural history. The expedition itself also expanded American military knowledge of the terrain surrounding Mount Malindang.

Mearns's birds are a material example of the interplay between his military and ornithological work. But his papers model all sorts of productive interactions between them: bird lists on government forms for documenting patient care, messages from soldiers in other regiments about birds they had seen or shot, letters to and from museum scientists into which the military work occasionally creeps in.

Beyond the role that scientific work in the Philippines played in the geography of American empire, many of the material outcomes of this work—specimens, artifacts, information—followed pathways back to the United States, evidence of both the complex labors of American soldiers in the Philippines and the stretch of imperial work beyond expressly military tasks.

Collecting the Philippines for the Fair

Some of the objects that traveled from the Philippines to the United States did so for a purpose more specific than the advancement of American scientific knowledge about its Pacific possessions; while perhaps initially sent to Washington or to the Smithsonian, these artifacts

[133] "Memorandum for General Bliss," Box 22, folder 10, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

were destined for the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. Preparation began years in advance, and by the time Gifford Pinchot arrived in the port of Manila in October of 1902, plans were already in motion for a Philippines display at the St. Louis World's Fair. Governor Taft circulated a letter throughout the territory of the Philippine Islands with instructions for collecting materials to display at the fair. From the beginning, the emphasis was on the natural abundance of the archipelago—and on the financial opportunities available to those willing to invest in harnessing the resources of the Philippines. Taft wrote, "The visitors to the Philippines exposition must see the possibility of good investments and successful enterprises in these Islands. All sources of wealth must be laid open to the world as a basis of future prosperity."[134] The stakes were high. After all, "The purpose of the Philippine exhibit is not only to create interest and sympathy for the Philippine Islands, and to give confidence in the intelligence and capacity of the natives, but also to look for permanent profitable markets for the natural resources, in showing and in illustrating the fertility of soil and climate and the great wealth in forest, agricultural, fishing, mining, and other products."[135]

Members from several bureaus of the American colonial government were involved in the work of acquiring items for the fair. The Secretary of the Interior, Dean Worcester, in his annual report for 1903, wrote that in preparation for the exposition, "each field party has been called upon to devote more or less time to the collection of material," including "logs for the forestry building" and "a botanical collection." In addition, "numerous samples of byproducts of

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[134] William Taft and Philippines, *Circular letter of Governor Taft and information and instructions for the preparation of the Philippine exhibit for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition to be held at St. Louis, Mo., U.S.A., 1904* (Manila: Bureau of Public Printing, 1902), 29-30.
[135] Ibid.

the forest, including gums, resins, vines, bejucos, tan bark, dye woods, bamboos, etc. were collected for exposition purposes."[136]

As he traveled throughout the Philippines on Governor Taft's gunboat, Gifford Pinchot began making notes about what should be included in the display of Philippine forestry at the fair. His field notebooks from the trip include a brief sketch—or "Prelim. scheme"—of an exhibit focused on Philippine forestry:

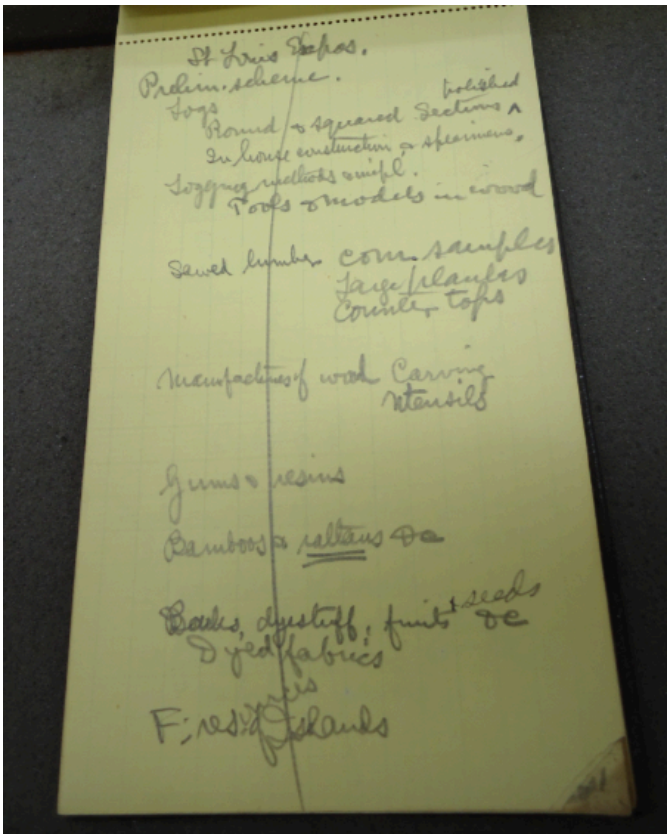

Figure 24. Gifford Pinchot's 1902 Forestry Notebook, Library of Congress, Manuscripts and Archives Division.[137]

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[136] All quotations this paragraph, Fourth Annual Report of the Philippine Commission, 1903 (Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department: Government Printing Office, 1904) in Library Materials, Volume 1368 (Forestry Information), Entry 95, Record Group 350, National Archives, College Park. MD.

[137] Gifford Pinchot, Forestry notebook, 1902, Box 37, folder 5, Pinchot Papers, Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, June 2, 1904, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

First on Pinchot's list were logs, "Round + squared, sections polished," as well as "in house construction + specimens." He also wanted to display "logging methods," "tools + models in wood," and samples of "sawed lumber" in different sizes. In addition to the timber itself, Pinchot mapped out ideas for displaying wood products and handiwork, as well as samples of forest products beyond valuable timber: "gums + resins" that could be derived from the archipelago's myriad tree species, along with "dyestuff" and "fruits + seeds."[138] It is hard to decipher all that Pinchot included on this draft list, in part because it seems that he crossed off the material in his forestry notebooks as he went back through it. There are lines drawn through most, if not all of the pages of this particular field book from 1902. He continued to refine his ideas about the display's content and approach, and at the conclusion of his Philippine trip, he and George Ahern wrote a set of recommendations for Governor Taft. "The idea which should guide the formation of this exhibit," wrote Pinchot and Ahern, "is that of making it striking at the expense of completeness. For example," they explained, "a collection of small pieces of every wood grown in the Philippine Islands would be complete, but it would attract no attention whatever, and would altogether fail of the principal object of this exhibit, which is to call attention to the forest resources of the Islands." In case their point wasn't clear, they stressed it again: "Completeness is impossible and should not be aimed at."[139] Pinchot and Ahern were emphatic about the goals of their exhibit, and about the elements they perceived to be crucial to

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[138] Gifford Pinchot, Forestry notebook, 1902, Box 37, folder 5, Pinchot Papers, Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, June 2, 1904, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

[139] Gifford Pinchot and George Ahern, "Philippine Forest Exhibit," Box 1010, Gifford Pinchot Book File, Breaking New Ground, Philippine Islands, Miscellany, Pinchot Papers, Edgar Mearns to Charles Richmond, June 2, 1904, Box 22, folder 8, United States National Museum Division of Birds, Records, circa 1854-1959, Record Unit 105, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

their success: "Unusual specimens and unusual yet suitable methods of installation will be necessary if the exhibit is to be remembered by those who see it." This emphasis on the unusual points to a sense of the Philippines as different—tropical and exotic, able to attract and command the attention of fairgoers who would be stimulated on every side.

Pinchot and Ahern advocated a holistic approach to displaying Philippine forest resources. They wanted to show "every stage of manufacture from the raw material down" to the finished product, along with "large and numerous photographs to complete or supplement the story." This," they wrote, "will be the keynote of the Government forest exhibit of St. Louis, and it should be kept constantly in mind in preparing the exhibit from the Islands." Furthermore, they explained, this exhibit of Philippine forestry would probably be part of the larger Philippines Exposition, a separate, forty-seven-acre area that would function as a kind of fair within a fair. Because this would be elsewhere on the grounds, away from the American forestry exhibit, Pinchot and Ahern suggested including "striking specimens of Philippine products" in the Forestry, Fish, & Game Palace, where the American forestry exhibit would be located, along with directions to the Philippine forestry exhibit.[140] These guidelines shaped efforts to prepare materials to send to the United States for the St. Louis World's Fair.

Though the forest resources of the Philippine Islands were, for Pinchot and Ahern, a crucial part of the Philippine section of the fair, Taft's instructions for gathering materials for display encompassed far more than forest products. He urged all branches of the American colonial project to participate, writing, "We trust that every provincial government and every municipality, without exception, will be proud to contribute, to show to the world the immense natural wealth, great fertility of soil, and enormous economical opportunities of these Islands and

[140] Ibid.

will not lose a moment's time in starting the highly appreciated work of collecting exhibits of all resources and conditions of their respective territories."[141]

This work of "collecting exhibits of all resources" included collecting people—this time, alive.[142] While stationed in Mindanao at Camp Overton near Iligan Bay, Cornelius Cole Smith wrote in his diary that on January 30, 1904, "fifty or sixty Moros, men, women, and children, came down from Lake Lanao, under one Wax a discharged soldier of the twenty eighth, Infantry, to await a steamer to take them to the United States where they were going to form a part of the great exposition at St. Louis."[143] Smith wrote that he "saw much of them" while they were at Camp Overton "and found them more or less interesting—no doubt they will be looked upon with much curiosity at the fair."[144] This particular example highlights the role of the American military in facilitating the transport of both artifacts and people from the Philippines to the fair.

In fact, arrangements had been made in 1900 to assist Frank Hilder (from the Smithsonian) and Penoyer Sherman (a photographer who also worked for Dean Worcester in the islands) as they collected materials for an exhibit to be displayed at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York.[145] Even with military support, the two reported that the work of preparing an exhibit from a war zone was particularly challenging. Not only were they attempting to gather materials that did not exist—villages, farms, and fields had been burned,

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[141] William Taft, *Circular letter of Governor Taft*, 15.
[142] Or at least initially. Robert Rydell describes a conversation between representatives of the Smithsonian, Columbia University, and the American Museum of Natural History about dividing up the bodies of those who died on their way to or at the Fair. While clear that at least one of the representatives understood the problematic optics of such an arrangement (if not the problematic ethics), Rydell explains that the brains of some Filipinos who died at St. Louis were sent to the Smithsonian after the fair. See Rydell, *All the World's A Fair*, 164.
[143] Cornelius Cole Smith, Diary Part 2, Box 1, folder 4, Smith-Cole Family Papers, USAMHI, Carlisle, PA.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 233-242.

and many farmers were also soldiers—but Sherman and Hilder found that they had competition. Soldiers collected souvenirs whenever they could ("curio crazy volunteers" is what Sherman called them) and other arms of the federal government were interested in gathering relics from the war.[146]

Though they weren't collecting expressly for the exposition, Mearns and the Philippine Scientific Association may have benefited from existing agreements between the Smithsonian and the military to use military pathways (especially transport vessels) to move museum material intended for the fair. While the Philippines Exposition at the St. Louis Fair was coordinated by the Philippines Exposition Board, Smithsonian anthropologists, scientists, and curators were deeply involved in the preparation of the federal government's displays at the fair. Indeed, some of the individuals whom Mearns corresponded with, especially Frederick True, were responsible for designing the federal government's exhibits at several fairs and expositions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The exhibits they coordinated centered on American nature and American science. The materials sent to the United States from the Philippines, some of which traveled further to the fair, helped to shape popular ideas about nature and empire on both sides of the Pacific.

[146] Sherman quoted in Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, 235.

Chapter 5: The Frontier In Miniature: Transforming the Wilderness, Planning a Fair

The 1904 St. Louis World's Fair was supposed to have happened in 1903. The Fair, officially designated the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, was to commemorate the centennial of Jefferson's decision to nearly double the size of the nation, to buy from France terrain that remained unexplored, at least to the Washington politicians and diplomats involved in the deal. The greatest world's fairs in American history all celebrated significant anniversaries: in 1876, the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia marked 100 years since the Declaration of Independence; the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago honored four hundred years since the supposed discovery of America by Columbus in 1492 (or it was supposed to, before it was delayed from 1892 to the following year).

The city of St. Louis had, in fact, also bid to host the World's Columbian Exposition, and the success of the Chicago spectacle smarted. But the St. Louis elite were determined that their city should have the opportunity to host a world's fair, and in 1899, against the backdrop of war in the Philippines, key players in Missouri politics and business set in motion plans to convince the people of the city of St. Louis that they should invest in a bid to host another exposition. Other cities, meanwhile, had hosted smaller fairs and expositions in the years since Chicago: Atlanta, Omaha, Buffalo. But St. Louis wanted a world's fair, an exposition that would surpass Chicago, a victory that would land a decisive blow in the rivalry between these midwestern centers of American capital.

The Louisiana Purchase became a central feature of the case fair boosters made, both to potential supporters within the city of St. Louis and to the federal government. The Louisiana Purchase, they argued, occupied a central place in the context of the whole of American history,

and in the establishment of the city of St. Louis as the gateway to the West.[1] Standing before the House of Representatives on February 5, 1901, Chairman Tawney, speaking on behalf of proposed legislation that would authorize the exposition and provide the project with federal support, argued eloquently that the Louisiana Purchase ranked alongside the American Revolution and the Civil War as a defining moment in the nation's history, saying, "we must all admit that it justly occupies a place by the side of our triumph for liberty and the victory of the union over the notion of a states' rights confederacy. The glory of this achievement…deserve(s) to be commemorated in a manner befitting a nation which by that acquisition has become the greatest nation on earth."[2] Chairman Tawney continued, echoing Frederick Jackson Turner's argument for the frontier experience as a defining element of American democracy—an argument Turner had voiced at the 1893 American Historical Association meeting at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago:

> At the time of this purchase nineteen-twentieths of the territory embraced in it was unpeopled save by wild beasts and savages. The rivers flowed unvexed by the fretting wheels of commerce; on the broad prairies the flowers bloomed and died with none to note their beauty or enjoy their fragrance; luxuriant grasses ripened in summer airs, rotted and enriched a soil on which no harvest waved. In less than half a century all this was changed. The strong hand of the pioneer was laid upon the mighty forces of nature, bringing them under his complete control.[3]

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[1] See, in particular, the 1899 speech made by the chairman of the executive committee of the Committee of Two Hundred, in which he traces the booming growth of St. Louis when compared to 1890. "What was the St. Louis of 1890 compared with the St. Louis of 1899? We have thirty per cent more people than we had then, and the assessed value of our taxable property has almost doubled. Our railroad facilities have increased, our tributary territory has been enlarged by the opening of Oklahoma to settlement, and the rapid immigration to that productive region has contributed no little to the large growth of the city's trade." David Rowland Francis and Louisiana Purchase Exposition Co., *The Universal Exposition of 1904* (St. Louis: Louisiana purchase Exposition Company, 1913), 28.
[2] Ibid., 34.
[3] Ibid., 35.

"The strong hand of the pioneer," but not the strong hand of the soldier. Here, our story shifts. Though so central to the work of transforming the West and pacifying the Philippine Islands, American soldiers quickly lost their places in the story of the making of America. In Chairman Tawney's narration of the growth of the nation, soldiers' labor became invisible. President Roosevelt made similar points at the dedication of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. He, too, placed the acquisition of the American West—not the occupation and domination of it—alongside other defining moments in American history, and he praised the frontiersmen and the settlers for the virtues they developed and then instilled in the nation's identity.[4] This is not to say that some of those virtues weren't characteristics also found in soldiers. President Roosevelt described the people of the states formed from the Louisiana Purchase as both "mighty in war" and "mighty in strength to tame the rugged wilderness. They could not thus have conquered the forest and the prairie, the mountains and the desert," said Roosevelt, "had they not possessed the great fighting virtues, the qualities which enable a people to overcome the forces of hostile men and hostile nature."[5] The people who settled the West, tamed the wilderness, and formed state governments were heroes. Soldiers, agents of the federal government sent to fight and then manage both native people and the territory of the West's natural wonders, weren't mentioned. Their part in the work of remaking the West wasn't what the people of St. Louis had proposed to celebrate. But even though soldiers' actions become harder and harder to see in the narratives offered by exposition planners and politicians, the products of their labor—all that their work in the West and the Philippines had enabled—became focal points of the St. Louis World's Fair.

Roosevelt's remarks echoed those of Frederick Jackson Turner, and the connection wasn't a coincidence. Turner's arguments about the frontier as central to the formation of

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[4] Ibid., 142-145.
[5] Roosevelt, quoted in Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, 145.

American identity fit perfectly with the ways exposition planners were positioning the significance of the Louisiana Purchase—and thus, the significance of their proposed Louisiana Purchase Exposition—in American history. Early in the planning process, the president of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company, David Francis, shared the stage of the Contemporary Club in St. Louis with Professor Turner himself. Francis's prepared speech began this way: "I am confident that after hearing the interesting historical remarks from the speaker who has just preceded me, (Prof Turner), you will be deeply impressed with the importance of celebrating so great an event in our history."[6] Francis's prepared remarks suggest that Turner's talk may have outlined ideas that would become "The Significance of the Louisiana Purchase." First published in 1903, this essay certainly added a notable historian's weight to the hype that the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company was working to generate in the years leading up to the Fair's opening day.

Still, the argument that the Louisiana Purchase was a significant moment in American history, the act a justification of the destiny of the nation, wasn't brand new. It had been used by Brigadier-General Francis Vinton Greene, on board the *China*, to inspire those he commanded as they steamed across the Pacific to the Philippines on the fourth of July, 1899. Greene used Jefferson's decision to acquire Louisiana to imagine how he might have understood the situation in the Philippines; Greene decided Jefferson would be on the side of empire, that the man who had doubled the size of the continental United States would of course be eager to occupy the Philippines. Domestic voices, too, used the history of the Louisiana Purchase as a frame for understanding American empire in the Pacific. Henry Cabot Lodge, then Senator from

[6] "President D.R. Francis before Contemporary Club, at St. Louis on evening of Oct 26, 1901, the principal speakers of the evening being Mr. W. I. Buchanan, Director General of the Pan American Exposition, and Prof. Turner, of the Wisconsin University," Box 10, folder 11, David Rowland Francis Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

Massachusetts, positioned the acquisition of the Philippines as both consistent with Jefferson's expansionist views and with his decision to acquire Louisiana. To the Senate, he declared, "In 1804 the party which opposed expansion went down in utter wreck before the man who, interpreting aright the instincts, the hopes, and the spirit of the American people, made the Louisiana Purchase. We make the same appeal in behalf of our American policies. We have made the appeal before, and won, as we deserved to win. We shall not fail now."[7] Others, such as W. Bourke Cockran, a New York Congressman who switched sides to campaign for McKinley in 1896 but returned to support William Jennings Bryan in 1901, argued that the Philippines case was completely different from the Louisiana Purchase. He claimed that while the Louisiana Purchase was a means to achieve peace, taking ownership of the Philippine Islands was an act of empire inconsistent with the values of American democracy.[8]

Meanwhile, President McKinley, as he campaigned for reelection in the West, thanked Jefferson: "I never travel through this mighty West, a part of the Louisiana purchase, Iowa, part of Minnesota, and the Dakotas, that I do not feel like offering my gratitude to Thomas Jefferson and his wisdom and foresight in acquiring this vast territory, to be peopled by men and women such as I have seen before me as I have journeyed through these states."[9] McKinley's "gratitude" came at the end of a speech mostly about the American project in the Philippines, the war, the volunteers from Iowa, and the power of the flag. Concluding with where the West had been

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[7] Henry Cabot Lodge, The Retention of the Philippine Islands: Speech of Hon. Henry Cabot Lodge, of Massachusetts, in the Senate of the United States, March 7, 1900 (Washington, 1900), 5.

[8] "MR. COCKRAN IN CHICAGO: Addresses Over 12,000 People in the Coliseum. 'McKinley Making War to Take Territory'-- Jefferson's Policy of Expansion Defined and Upheld." *The New York Times*, (New York, NY) 30 Sep 1900: 2. Accessed 9 January 2015, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

[9] "THE TRIP THROUGH IOWA.: The President, in His Speeches, Devotes the Greater Part of His Time to the Philippines," *The New York Times* (New York: NY) 17 Oct 1899: 5. Accessed 9 January 2015, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

before Jefferson and the Louisiana Purchase suggested a similar track for the Philippine Islands, a place where "our flag…still waves."[10] Articles and letters to the editor in a range of newspapers demonstrate the frequency—and perceived utility—of this connection: the imperialists, to position the acquisition of the Philippines as a logical step in a Jeffersonian view of the nation, the anti-imperialists, to suggest the difference between the two cases.[11] Politicians and concerned citizens both linked the future of the Philippine Islands with the history of the American West—and while sometimes the connection was a cautionary tale, for fair planners, it was more of a rallying cry.

So when Chairman Tawney, and David Francis, and even Frederick Jackson Turner, spoke of the Louisiana Purchase in the same breaths as they did the proposed Louisiana Purchase Exposition, the contemporary relevance of this long past event and the modern political value of celebrating this centennial would not only have made perfect sense; it would have been especially appealing. The fair, a business venture for the people of St. Louis, could—and would—do other work to strengthen a particular narrative about the place of the United States in the world.

The Louisiana Purchase and the Louisiana Purchase Exposition

The scholarship on American world's fairs is surprisingly limited given the grandeur of these events and the national attention they garnered. The literature seems to fall into two categories: histories focusing on a particular fair or string of fairs, and histories aimed at telling broader or bigger stories, but which use the fairs as representative markers or signposts of a

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[10] Ibid.
[11] See, for example, the letters to the editor about the Philippines in the Sunday *New York Times*, (New York, NY), 15 January 1899. Accessed 9 January 2015, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

particular aspect of American culture.[12] World's fair scholarship has prioritized certain expositions over others, and for better or worse, the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition has garnered the lion's share of coverage, often serving as representative of other fairs of this era. The focus on Chicago is understandable: its White City is etched into American memory; this fair, more than the others, seems to have marked America's 'coming out' to the world. But the World's Columbian Exposition is studied as much for what was happening outside Daniel Burnham's Court of Honor as within, as Alan Trachtenberg has pointed out: "The irony of opening its gates almost at the exact moment in May 1893 when banks and factories closed theirs in the worst financial panic of the nation's history only highlights the contrast, the dialogue of opposites between the Fair and the surrounding city, between White City and the great city of Chicago."[13]

Just as the 1893 World's Fair did not happen in a vacuum, neither did the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition. And while the "dialogue" Trachtenberg highlighted between the fair and the goings-on outside it centered on domestic concerns, the St. Louis World's Fair, with its focus on the products of American expansion to the Pacific and across it, emphasized a different set of stories about the United States and the rest of the world.

One of these stories was about scale. The Louisiana Purchase had doubled the size of the nation, and the leadership of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company, the businessmen

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[12] For example, Robert Rydell's *All the World's a Fair* and *World of Fairs: The Century-of-Progress Expositions* (Chicago Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1993) are examinations of the fairs themselves, while Alan Trachtenberg's *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*, 25th ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007) and David Nye's *American Technological Sublime* consider specific fairs (Chicago and New York, respectively) as part of broader cultural projects. Additionally, there is a rich literature available to the student interested in the architecture of the fairs.

[13] Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America*, 211. Most of the scholarship on the St. Louis World's Fair centers on the Philippines Exhibit, W.G. MgGee and anthropology at the fair, and the 1904 Olympics, also held at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

behind the St. Louis World's Fair, planned an exposition that would both beat Chicago in size and reflect the expansion they were commemorating in the physical landscape of the fairgrounds. At 1,270 acres, the Louisiana Purchase Exposition would be almost larger than the fairs at Philadelphia, Chicago, Omaha, and Buffalo combined. (The Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company did the math—the area of those four fairs combined to total 1,319 acres—and they used this fact to promote their project.)[14] Though the emphasis would be "both national and international in its character," the planners wrote that the fair would "present, in a special degree, and in the most comprehensive manner, the history, the resources, and the development of the states and territories lying within the boundaries of the Louisiana Purchase, showing what it was and what it is; what it contained and produced in 1803; what it contains and produces now." Furthermore, their exhibit, they wrote, would "make plain that the prophecy of 1803 has been more than fulfilled, and show that a veritable empire now lies between the Gulf of Mexico and Puget Sound, within the limits of the territory Jefferson obtained by the Louisiana Purchase."[15] But it would showcase American expansion beyond those limits, too: "It will show the history, resources, and development of the possessions of the United States, including Porto Rico [sic], Alaska, Hawaii, Samoa, Guam, and the Philippines."[16] To do this, exposition planners needed space, and after considering their options, the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company settled on Forest Park.

Formally established in 1876 after much debate and several land transactions, the twelve hundred acres of Forest Park became a destination for picnickers, horseback riders, young athletes, bicyclists, even boaters and winter tobogganers. Before 1876, the land that became

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[14] See Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, 46.
[15] Ibid., 50.
[16] Ibid.

Forest Park had been "forests, commons, orchards, coal mines, cultivated fields, and the Cabanne Dairy Farm." In order to create the park, laborers took down fences, shacks, and barns, and "removed trees to break up straight planted lines."[17] Artificial lakes were constructed, and in the Wilderness, the western section of the park, "men cleared trees from the virgin forest that had given the park its name, to make room for roads and to open scenic vistas."[18] The first streetcar line to Forest Park was completed in 1885, and by 1896, seven streetcar lines were bringing more than 2.5 million visitors through its gates.[19]

The city of St. Louis granted the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company permission to use the western half of Forest Park, an area of 657 acres at the edge of the city, and, as Francis recounted, the planners began discussions about "the annexation of additional territory for exposition purposes."[20] (The eastern half of Forest Park was not an option; it already contained several heavily used community resources, including a boathouse, a zoo, greenhouses, picnic grounds, and a police substation.)[21] Local property owners, including Washington University, leased the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company the rest, and in the case of the university, the arrangement included the use of its new campus buildings. Though all of these arrangements were temporary—from negotiations in 1901 through the conclusion of the Fair itself and the clean-up afterward—the planners began an involved process of imagining, and then transforming the landscapes that would host their fair, an exposition that would "exhibit the arts and

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[17] Caroline Loughlin and Junior League of St. Louis, *Forest Park* (Columbia: Junior League of St. Louis: University of Missouri Press, 1986), 16.
[18] Ibid., 17.
[19] Ibid., 32.
[20] Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, 46. See Caroline Loughlin's incredibly detailed park history for debates over the fair site. One of the concerns articulated about selected site was that "there would be damage to 'that glorious gift of nature,' Forest Park." Loughlin, *Forest Park*, 64-65.
[21] See Loughlin, *Forest Park*, 40-50, and map on 59.

industries, the methods and processes of manufacture of the whole world; it will gather the products of the soil, mine, forest and sea from the whole earth."[22]

But first they had to prepare the grounds.

Wandering in the Wilderness

A ceremony to "driv[e] the first stake" and begin "the physical work" of the exposition was scheduled for September 3, 1901.[23] More than two thousand people had gathered to witness this formal beginning to the project, but the ceremony was delayed because the official party, comprising President Francis and the other World's Fair directors, were lost. Apparently "the geography and topography of Forest Park were not so familiar to the World's Fair Directors as they afterward became."[24] The chief civil engineer found the group "wandering in what was known as the wilderness."[25] This wasn't just a descriptive label for undeveloped terrain in a portion of the park; this is actually how the western portion of Forest Park was labeled on the map.

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[22] Ibid., 50.
[23] Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, 66.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid. The detour taken by some members of the group was not mentioned in the write-up of the ceremony in the *World's Fair Bulletin*.

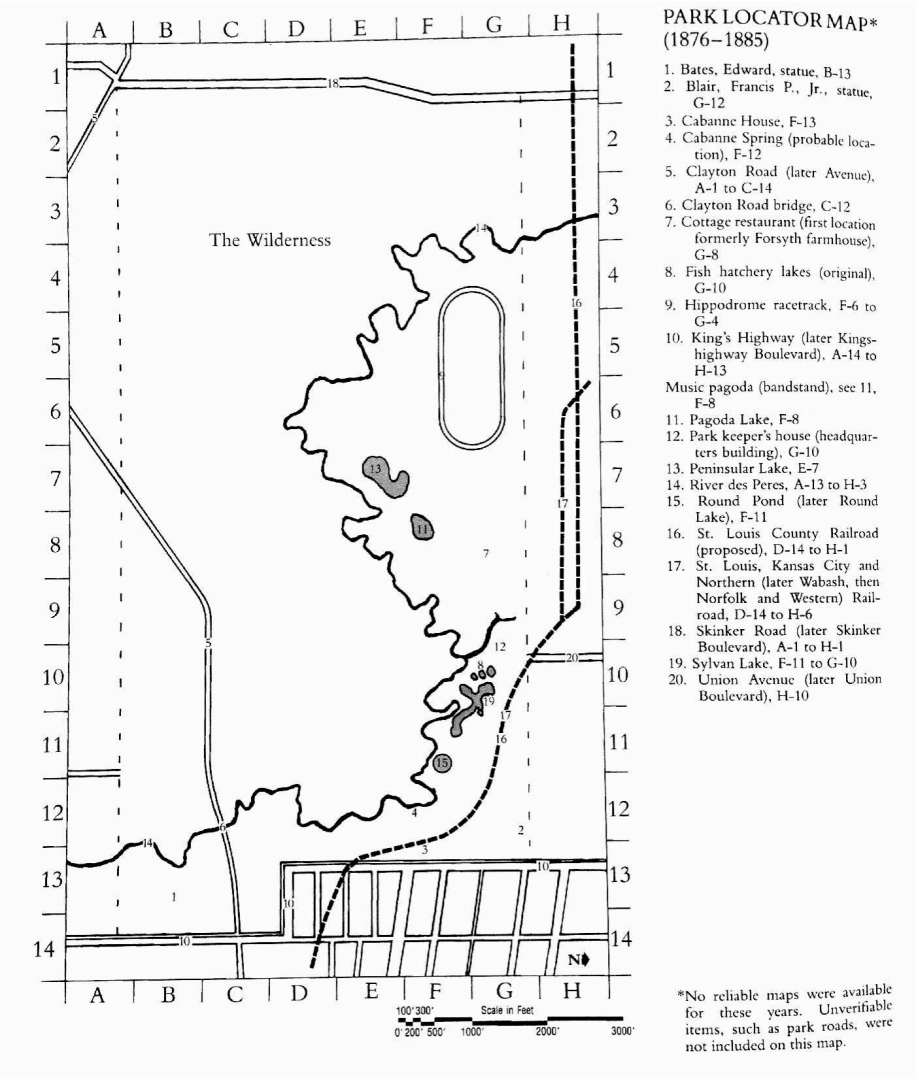

Figure 25. Map of Forest Park, ca 1876-1885.[26]

The directors of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition saw only potential in the Wilderness of Forest Park; it was to become the center of the expansive exposition. The directors marked the beginning of the process of remaking the landscape by burying in the ground a two-foot stake, "hewn out of a stout, young oak which grew upon the Worlds' Fair grounds" and had been "polished and varnished" for the occasion.[27]

[26] Loughlin notes that there aren't reliable maps from the period before 1885; this map is her reconstruction of verifiable details. "Park Locator Map" from Loughlin, *Forest Park*, 20.
[27] Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, 67.

Figure 26. The handwriting on the back of this image reads, "Scene on site before construction." Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Photographs and Prints, Missouri History Museum Archives.[28]

An official groundbreaking ceremony was scheduled a few months after the first stake had been driven into the ground with "a new ax."[29] This time, everyone found their way to the designated place. As should be obvious by this point, the directors of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition never wasted an opportunity to connect their project to the moment it commemorated and its significance in American history, and thus, they carefully dug into the soil of Forest Park with a shovel from 1803. Reflecting on this moment in the history he authored of the Fair, David Francis wrote, "These simple tools were in strange contrast to the powerful tractor excavators, the steam shovels, and twenty-horse plows with long trains of dump wagons which in a few months were to move a million cubic yards of earth and bring the site to building levels."[30]

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[28] Image from Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Box 002564, folder labeled, "Forest Park Before the Fair," Photographs and Prints, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[29] Both the stake and the ax were later "preserved among the souvenirs of the Exposition." Ibid.
[30] Ibid., 69.

Despite the natural beauty of Forest Park's grounds, the vision of Isaac Taylor (Director of Public Works) and his commission of architects required substantial changes to this Wilderness in order to make it suitable for the Fair, and Francis's words describe the process witnessed by planners, laborers, and early fairgoers alike.

Transforming Forest Park

"Our first visit was just after the surveyors had finished their preliminary work and the hills and valleys bristled with their stakes. I am told that much annoyance was caused by some of these stakes being carried off by souvenir fiends. We did not get one. Many trees were tagged—some for felling and others for transplanting."[31] Sam Hyde was a bookkeeper from Illinois with a penchant for collecting and a talent for calligraphy. These words are part of his Memory Book, a volume filled with beautifully crafted words. They swirl around photographs and sketches from the months he spent at the Fair. He began collecting memories of the exposition long before the palaces were constructed, before the "grand picture" at the center of the fair was in place. When Sam Hyde first visited Forest Park two years before opening day, he saw hills and valleys bristling at the changes soon to come.

Director of Works Isaac Taylor saw wild woods. "This northern portion was sparsely grown with trees at its eastern end; at its western end there was a tangle of wild woods, with trees of large dimensions and a dense undergrowth, the ground being swampy in places, while in

[31] Hyde Memoir (Photocopy), Journals and Diaries Collection, Missouri Historical Society Archives, St. Louis. Text of Memoir, along with some illustrations, excerpted in Martha Clevenger, *Indescribably Grand: Diaries and Letters from the 1904 World's Fair* (Saint Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1996).

others it rose in elevations twenty to thirty feet in height, divided by deep ravines; this portion was commonly known as the Wilderness."[32]

James Buel, author of a ten-volume history of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, saw nature's beauty. He described Forest Park as "the largest public ground of the kind in the world, as well as being one of the most beautiful, diversified as it is by hills, ravines, graceful prospects, charming lakes, level expanses of sward, and a lovely natural forest…"[33] He knew the rest of the story, though, and he could see the possibilities: "beautiful as it was to visit, that part of the park selected for Exposition purposes required an immense amount of grading, filling, clearing, excavating and replanting."[34]

Sam Hyde saw those changes taking place. "We went again," he wrote, "when the hills and valleys were disappearing before the dredge and scraper and the face of the landscape was changing every day. And again when the sights of the vast buildings had been marked and long trains of cars were unloading lumber and iron and sewer pipe and rock and sand and cinders. And we were there when the skeletons of the buildings began to rise from the broad acres that had been leveled by the hand of man."[35]

Sam Hyde was not the only person visiting Forest Park in the months leading up to the exposition. In fact, up to 100,000 visitors were drawn to Forest Park each day to observe the transformation underway. A fence dividing the eastern portion of Forest Park from the section allocated for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition was constructed, though visitors were free to

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[32] Quoted in Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, 83.
[33] James Buel, *Louisiana and the Fair. An exposition of the world, its people and their achievements*, [Monroe ed.]. (Saint Louis: World's Progress Pub. Co, 1904), Vol. 4, 1298.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Hyde Memoir (Photocopy), Journals and Diaries Collection, Missouri Historical Society Archives, St. Louis. Text of Memoir, along with some illustrations, excerpted in Martha Clevenger, *Indescribably Grand*.

wander throughout the grounds of both landscapes.[36] George Stark, a photographer assigned to capture the transformation of Forest Park in 1901, took several photographs of the clearing of this Wilderness.[37]

Figure 27. Clearing the Wilderness. Photograph by George Stark, 1902.[38]

[36] Loughlin, *Forest Park*, 70-71.
[37] Timothy Fox and Duane Sneddeker, *From the Palaces to the Pike: Visions of the 1904 World's Fair* (St. Louis, Mo: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1997), 260.
[38] Ibid., 5. When I saw this photo, I immediately thought of the work my colleague, Daegan Miller, is doing on A.J. Russell's photography of the Civil War and the American West. Many thanks to Daegan for his advice on reading this and other photographs. See Daegan Miller, "Witness Tree: Landscape And Dissent In The Nineteenth-Century United States," Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 2013.

To capture this image, George Stark pointed his camera westward across an expanse of stumps and stakes. One tree stands off to the left — saved for some special purpose? Or simply not yet chopped down? The new buildings of Washington University emerge from the hazy background. This is not the work of David Francis's commemorative shovel, but of forces far more powerful and operating on a larger scale: steam shovels, tractors, concession contracts, city boosterism. George Stark's photograph echoes a battlefield. Branches and limbs lie strewn across the landscape, and a trench in the foreground offers mirror images of nearby stumps. There appear to be wagons, and perhaps laborers, in the distance, but it is difficult to separate them from what remains of the forest. One of the workmen told a *Globe-Democrat* reporter that some of the trees had seen three centuries go by. Stark's image feels grim, but interviews conducted by reporters reveal ambivalence about this transformation of the Wilderness: remorse one week, and anticipation the next.[39] There is something in this anticipation, even in the face of stump-strewn acres, that captures a critical element of the spirit of the Fair: it is the sense that anything is possible, that the future is as yet unknown. Yes, much of what had existed on the site was cut down, removed, destroyed. Even the park's river was forced underground.[40] But something new, something bigger, and maybe better, was planned for the site, and visitors from near and far continued to visit as the fairgrounds came into focus.

All of this labor was in service to a particular design aesthetic: "In no matter what direction he looks, the view obtained will be ample reward for the longest journey to the World's Fair."[41] This reward would be imparted through the "absolute harmony" of architecture and landscaping: "The conception is one of grand display, calculated to fill the spectator with

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[39] Loughlin, *Forest Park*, 71.
[40] Ibid., 71-72.
[41] Publicity Department Materials, Box 1, folder 3, George E. Kessler Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

admiration and completely occupy his vision." The approach was different than for previous expositions: in searching for ways to set the St. Louis fair apart from the legacy of Chicago and its White City, exposition planners and designers highlighted Forest Park itself as one of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition's unique features. In fact, the *Official Guidebook of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition* played up the diversity of the Forest Park landscape to Fair visitors: "Surrounded on three sides with primeval forests, and embracing hill and valley, plateau and lowlands, precipitous ravine and gently undulating slope, the ground on which the Louisiana Purchase was built afforded the architects opportunity for beautiful effects such as were denied the builders of former Expositions."[42] Note: this is not a typographical error. The guidebook describes "the ground on which the Louisiana Purchase was built"; not "the ground on which the Louisiana Purchase Exposition was built," further conflating the work of remaking both the American West and Forest Park.

The Exposition's Publicity Department made much of these "beautiful effects." Despite (or because of) the substantial modifications made to the Wilderness of Forest Park, the Fair was praised repeatedly for its attention to the "natural landscape." Newspaper articles leading up to and during the Fair highlighted the site again and again: "No exposition of the past has had a situation so naturally attractive. Its hills and shallow valleys give it many landscape features. Portions of the ground are covered with tall trees, and the delightful groves will serve as restful retreats for tired visitors who seek diversion from sight-seeing."[43] Professor Victor Wilker, writing in the *Christian Advocate* about the uniqueness of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition,

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[42] Major Lowenstein and Louisiana Purchase Exposition, *Official guide to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at the city of St. Louis, state of Missouri, April 30th to December 1st, 1904, by authority of the United States of America ...* (St. Louis: Official Guide Co., 1904), 36.
[43] "The Louisiana Purchase Exposition," *Current Literature* (1888-1912), June 1, 1903, 666-672, Proquest Historical Newspapers, Accessed 16 May 2009, 670.

wrote, “This ideal arrangement was made possible by the natural condition of the ground. So beautiful a location has never been witnessed before at any world’s fair.”[44]

Figure 28. The Fair’s “Main Picture.” Photograph by F. J. Koster, 1904[45]

While the architecture of St. Louis mostly maintained the Beaux Arts style of the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition, the fan-shaped layout and the integration of Forest Park’s ravine and plateaus invited the viewer to take in the Fair from all angles. The “Main Picture” consisted

[44] “Victor Wilker. "The Louisiana Purchase Exposition How it Differs From former World's Fairs," *Christian Advocate* (1866-1905), August 25, 1904, Proquest Historical Newspapers, Accessed 16 May 2009, 1386.
[45] In Fox and Sneddeker, *From the Palaces to the Pike*, 248.

of "eight big exhibit palaces and a mile and a half of lagoon, [and] is on a level area surrounded on two sides by hills that rise to a height of 65 feet."[46]

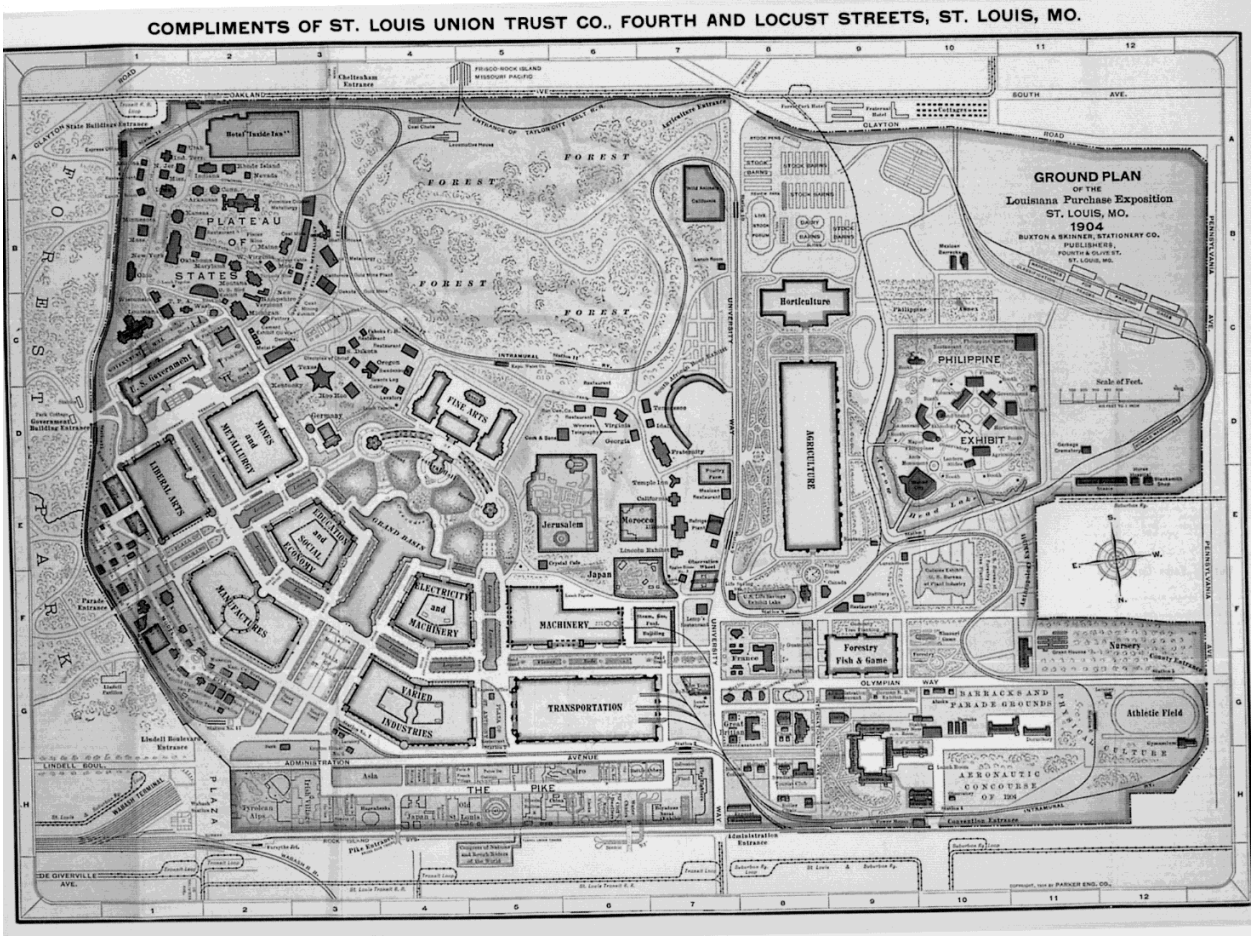


Figure 29. Map of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.[47]

These palaces were oriented around the semi-circular Grand Basin. "No handsomer artificial basin can be found anywhere in the world," reported the guidebook.[48] David Francis commented that visitors to world's fairs were sick of symmetry. "You never tire of Forest Park," he said.[49] James Buel echoed this sentiment in his history of the fair. "The gorgeous scene had as many

[46] Lowenstein and Louisiana Purchase Exposition, *Official guide to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition,* 21.
[47] From Fox and Snedecker, *From the Palaces to the Pike*, 36.
[48] Ibid., 40.
[49] Quoted in the August 1901 *World's Fair Bulletin*, in Fox and Sneddeker, *From the Palaces to the Pike*, 8.

different points of view as there was standing room in the vast area. The slightest change in the angle of vision revealed an effect different from all the rest and equally wonderful."[50]

Buel was pointing to how the view changed, depending on from where the viewer looked, but this focus on different angles of vision speaks to me, too, more than a century later. This focus on looking emphasized appearances. Beneath their gleaming exteriors, after all, the palaces were just temporary buildings, masterfully sculpted staff (a plaster of paris mixture) on a wooden frame. But the finished grounds, shiny palaces, and sparkling lagoons that constituted the Main Picture did more than hide their temporary status; the view also managed to obscure the labor that constructed it.

Which is part of what makes the *World's Fair Bulletin,* a monthly promotional magazine, so interesting. Though the majority of this monthly publication's pages were devoted to other sorts of Fair details—commitments from foreign governments, press coverage of the exposition, profiles of the directors, architect's renderings of the palaces and the grounds—in its coverage of the progress toward opening day, the *World's Fair Bulletin* also tracked the physical work that occurred at Forest Park. For example, in the November 1901 issue, under the heading, "Scenes on the World's Fair Site. Transforming the Wilderness of Forest Park into an Exposition Landscape," the *World's Fair Bulletin* made the link between the remaking of the American West and the remaking of Forest Park explicit.

[50] Buel, *Louisiana and the Fair*, 1393.

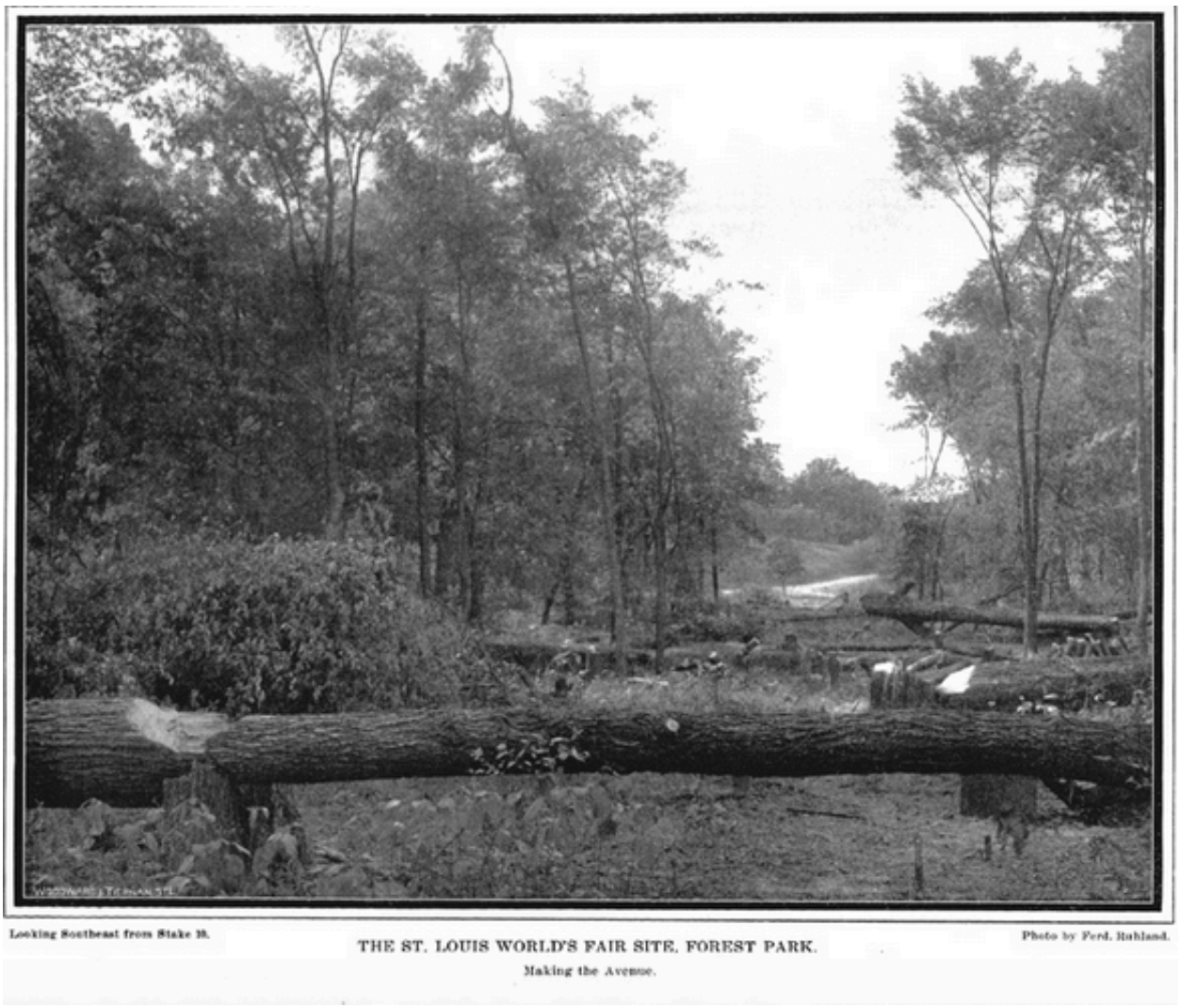


Figure 30. "The St. Louis World's Fair Site, Forest Park," Ferd. Ruhland for the *World's Fair Bulletin*.[51]

First, the "beautiful, undulating forest of unculled timber and tangled undergrowth" of Forest Park is described as a "cherished" piece of the "unsettled Louisiana Purchase." Then, the author suggests that the Wilderness of Forest Park "has passed through the various stages of a pioneer 'clearing,' presenting scenes of timber destruction and burning brush-piles, now almost

[51] "The St. Louis World's Fair Site, Forest Park," Ferd. Ruhland for the *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 1 1901/02, p. 8. The *World's Fair Bulletin* has been digitized by the University of Missouri Library System's Digital Library. See http://digital.library.umsystem.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=lex;sid=cdadd5f986d194177d5f282c5bca2ca1;tpl=browse.tpl.

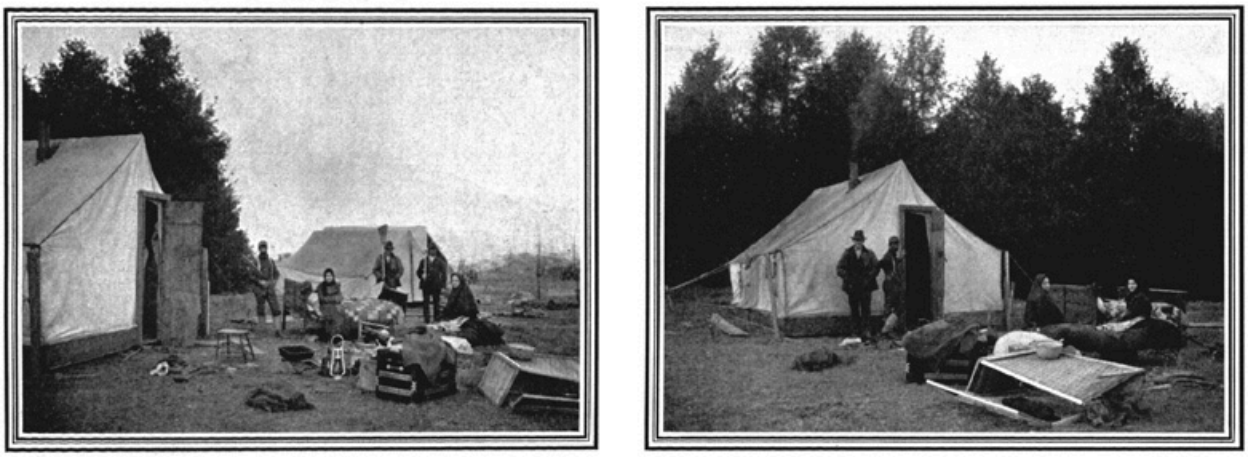
as novel as the untouched forest itself."[52] So, not only would Forest Park be transformed into the Louisiana Purchase Exposition; the Wilderness of the park became a stand-in for the wilderness of the American West. Just as the West was cleared, settled, and planted, so too was the Wilderness of Forest Park transformed. But in this analogy, who were the pioneers?

Looking East from Stake 10. THE GRAND WORK OF TRANSFORMATION IN FOREST PARK. Photo by C. B. Woodward.
Site of Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

Figure 31. "The Grand Work of Transformation in Forest Park," image taken by Ferd. Ruhland for the *World's Fair Bulletin*.[53]

[52] "Scenes on the World's Fair Site. Transforming the Wilderness of Forest Park into an Exposition Landscape." *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 1 1901/02, p. 8.
[53] "The Grand Work of Transformation in Forest Park," Ferd. Ruhland for the *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 1 1901/02, p. 4.

Well, to the *World's Fair Bulletin*, they were an "army"—an army "nearly as large as the American force that stormed and took Manila."[54] And they streamed into the city, this "World's Fair army" of "graders and teamsters from all sections of the country," ready to do the work of clearing trees, digging channels, and regrading the Wilderness and the leased land beyond it.[55] And like the pioneers, they set up temporary camps—or "colonies"—on the fairgrounds.



Sunday in Camperstown. Sunday at Graders' Home.

SCENES ON THE ST. LOUIS WORLD'S FAIR SITE.

Figure 32. "Sunday in Camperstown" and "Sunday at Graders' Home," *World's Fair Bulletin.*[56] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 4 1901/02, p.10

As part of their coverage on the construction, the *World's Fair Bulletin* published pictures of "Camperstown" for their readers. These images are among the few that feature World's Fair workers and their families as the subjects; while workers are in many pictures of the transformation of Forest Park from Wilderness to World's Fair, they often seem to be there incidentally, or for scale.

[54] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 4, 1901/02, p.5.
[55] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 4, 1901/02, p.4.
[56] "Sunday in Camperstown" and "Sunday at Graders' Home," *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 4 1901/02, p.10.

The work was backbreaking. Sometimes workers were hacking through frozen ground; other times, they were digging up roots and stumps loosened by dynamite. Once the stumps were removed by men wielding axes, then came plows, and after that, grading machines. Even this progression mirrored the settlement of the West—or one version of it.

But just as the transformation of the West—a violent, uneven process of removing native people and confining them to reservations—had itself been turned into a simpler story of preparing a waiting landscape, of building homesteads and planting fields to fulfill a Jeffersonian vision of an American continent, the remaking of Forest Park was more complicated than this story of it as untouched Wilderness might have us believe. For Forest Park contained Indian mounds, evidence of human history. Always focused on promotion and public relations (which they called "exploitation"), the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company approved an excavation of the Indian mounds, hoping that they might contain possibilities for display: "The mounds that were on land to be graded were carefully opened up and the examination resulted in the finding of one almost complete skeleton, three skulls, fragments of pottery, and numerous flint arrowheads, besides bones too much decomposed for preservation."[57] The archaeologist supervising the excavation was careful to point out that these remains and artifacts were not from the Mound Builders, but from the more recent past: tools and graves belonging to the Omaha Indians, who had interacted with Lewis and Clark after the Louisiana Purchase and traded along the Missouri River in the nineteenth century.[58] (Read: not as exciting as they'd hoped; not valuable enough to display.)

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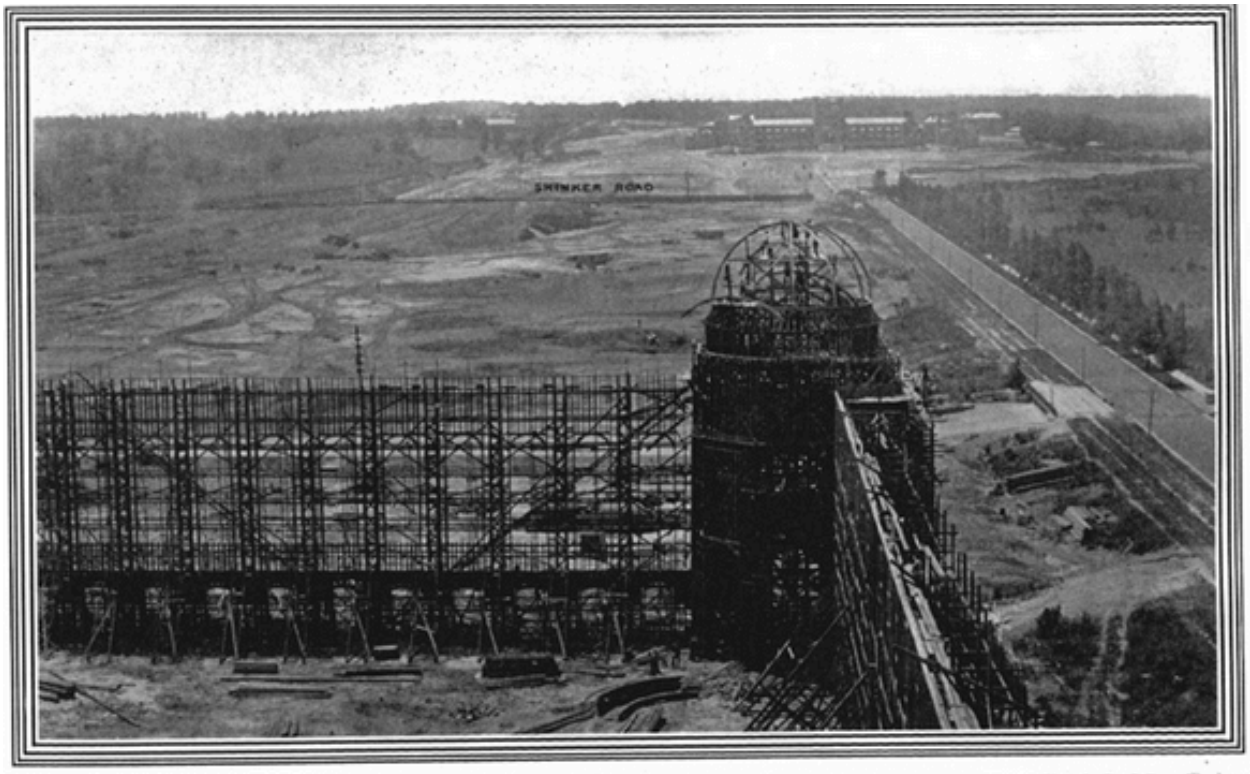
[57] *World's Fair Bulletin,* v.3 no.2 1901/02, p.9.
[58] See Ibid. for archaeologist identifying artifacts as belong to Omaha Indians; see "Omaha History Upstream," http://omaha-nsn.gov/tribe/history/ for Omaha tribal and territorial history. Accessed 7 February 2015.

Once the terrain had been graded to the specifications of Isaac Taylor and his team of planners, work began on the buildings themselves, and the *World's Fair Bulletin* shifted its focus accordingly. Its issues are filled with images of palace scaffolding, and I can understand why: the wooden architecture of the palaces—what Sam Hyde called "skeletons"—is lovely, haunting against the backdrop of newly cleared land.



LOOKING WEST FROM VARIED INDUSTRIES BUILDING, ACROSS SKINKER ROAD. Photo by Dr. J. Perry Worden.
Administration Building in background.

Figure 33. "Looking West from Varied Industry Building," Dr. J. Perry Worden for the *World's Fair Bulletin.*[59]

This particular image, looking westward toward Skinker Road, depicts the Wilderness, cleared, and the Varied Industry Building in progress.[60] These images, of the palaces rising, are everywhere in the *World's Fair Bulletin*, scattered amidst articles on all aspects of the fair. But some of the text is building-specific, describing "How Staff is Made" or profiling individual

[59] "Looking West from Varied Industry Building," Dr. J. Perry Worden for the *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no.10 1902/03, p. 33
[60] Ibid.

buildings, their materials, and their architects. "Staff," we learn, "is simply long fiber soaked in simple plaster of paris, mixed thin with water. Manila hemp fiber, such as seen in rope, is ordinarily used."[61] There were two staff workshops on the grounds, where artisans crafted the plaster artifice that would adorn the skeletons and create the picture envisioned by the planners of the fair. The *Bulletin* coverage focused on how the plans were made—even how the buildings and grounds were constructed—but after the grounds were prepared, the *Bulletin* contained very little about the laborers doing the work.

The work they did was impressive. One of the major projects required to prepare the site for the fair was to reroute and contain the River des Peres. While the proposed fan-shaped layout of the palaces, along with the waterfalls and lagoons, would take advantage of the hills and valleys of Forest Park, the meandering River des Peres remained an obstacle that Taylor could not work around: "It was found necessary to change the course of the stream."[62] The river could not be removed from the fair site entirely, so instead, the construction team straightened and deepened the flow of the river, and built a wooden conduit to contain the river at sections so that some of the palaces could be built above it.[63] Or, in the words of the *World's Fair Bulletin*, "The River des Peres was wiped off the face of the Fair site during the past month."[64]

With the Wilderness cleared, the grounds prepared, and the main palaces rising, the next step was the exhibits themselves. What would be displayed inside the palaces? Which governments, of both foreign nations and American states, would commit to constructing buildings and exhibits on the fairgrounds? The *World's Fair Bulletin* reported every detail of these developments, even noting when foreign newspapers were using space in their pages (and

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[61] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 7 1901/02, p.10.
[62] Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, 83.
[63] Ibid., 113.
[64] John C. Lebens, "Progress in Fair Building," *World's Fair Bulletin,* v. 3 no. 9 1902/03, p.15.

how much) to cover the coming exposition. The planners sent delegates around the world, and David Francis, the president of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company, traveled abroad to generate interest in the fair and secure commitments to participate.

The natural setting of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition remained a through-line for Fair coverage even after the work of transforming Forest Park was complete. J. W. Buel wrote that "The buildings and grounds present a picture themselves that is charmingly lovely, but the general effect is immeasurably heightened by the introduction of cascades, waterfalls, fountains, basins, and lagoons."[65] These features displayed the fair's central theme, motion, and encouraged visitors to look at them—and at the palaces—from every angle. The hills of the fairgrounds created additional opportunities for gazing upon the fair's "Main Picture"—and the many other pictures it provided. These "pictures" were no small piece of the exposition experience—for planners and for fair enthusiasts. Even if the focus of a particular piece of promotional material was something having nothing to do with the natural environment, it was not unusual for some commentary about the beauty of Forest Park to creep in. (After all, both the size and the character of the fairgrounds were a way for planners—and especially promoters—to point out the ways in which the fair at St. Louis would surpass all previous expositions—Chicago, in particular.)

A brief word on the work of securing support, in the form of investment and commitments to exhibit at the Fair: while world's fairs received government support, federal money did not drive these expositions. Boosters and businessmen put up the initial funds, made their bid, and, once a site had been selected, the leaders of that city's efforts began to assign roles and divide up the tasks. Some of the steps are obvious: choose a location and negotiate for its

[65] Buel, *Louisiana and the Fair,* 1472.

use; hire people with exposition experience to manage exhibits and departments; keep raising money and interest. This meant a lot of traveling, a lot of lectures, and a lot of promotional coverage. (It's why the *World's Fair Bulletin* exists.) As early as February of 1902, Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company President David Francis was in Boston, making the pitch for New England to be well represented at the Fair: "Send your representatives as ou[r] guests to the scene of the Exposition and we will show you a landscape of a thousand acres, dotted with primeval forests, through which courses a natural water-way, a location for an Exposition which is beautiful beyond compare, and which is accessible from the heart of Saint Louis within twenty minutes for electric or steam lines of transportation."[66] (Note the way he worked in both the beauty and the accessibility of the fairgrounds.) And then, at a banquet the same evening, Francis continued to argue for New England participation in St. Louis. His strategy? To highlight the significance of the Louisiana Purchase ("The development of the Louisiana Territory is unparalleled in the history of the United States, or of the world")[67] and to remind Bostonians of the place of New England men in the making of the West. He told them, "The progress of which we are so proud is due in great measure to the industry of the sons of New England, who left the homes of their youth to settle in the West." And then, "Not only have the cultured minds and skilled hands sent us from your universities and the workshops trained our youths and built up our industries, but the capital which you have furnished has enabled us to bridge rivers, tunnel mountains, build cities, open mines, enrich lands, establish manufactories and extend commerce until what some of Jefferson's critics called a 'boundless waste' has become the seat of

[66] David Francis, Boston speech, February 27, 1902, Box 11, folder 4, David Rowland Francis Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[67] Ibid.

productive power of the nation."[68] Francis was good at this; he moves from the West owing everything to New England to the West as the new "seat of productive power of the nation," thanks, of course, to the East. Now, would they please commit to a large showing at the Fair?

These speeches and banquets and meetings led to commitments, which led to boards of commissioners, who then traveled to St. Louis for ceremonies commemorating the future sites of their buildings at the Fair. These ceremonies, and details about the size and style of the planned buildings (and commentary on what might be displayed inside) received extensive coverage in the *World's Fair Bulletin*; there are too many pictures to count featuring groups of people standing on their assigned plots of land while work on the grounds occurs around them. This was the work taking place in St. Louis—the large-scale coordination and actual construction of the exposition. The world was being recreated, albeit in miniature, in St. Louis. And most of the pieces came from somewhere else. Louisiana Purchase Exposition employees and ambassadors traveled the country—and the globe—to find exhibitors and convince exhibitors—American states and territories, foreign governments, corporations, individuals—to be part of the fair. The goal was for it to be complete—universal. David Francis called it a success: "So thoroughly did it represent the world's civilization," he wrote, "that if all man's other works were by some unspeakable catastrophe blotted out the records established at this Exposition by the assembled nations would afford the necessary standards for the rebuilding of our entire civilization."[69]

The Louisiana Purchase Exposition wasn't the only institution interested in tracking, collecting, and preserving the human and natural history of civilization; if it had been, it wouldn't have had a chance to be as successful as Francis claimed. Not only did the Louisiana

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, vi.

Purchase Exposition Company turn to the world's fairs that had come before as sources of material (and points of comparison); it also turned to the Smithsonian Institution.

The Smithsonian and the St. Louis Exposition

The involvement of the Smithsonian Institution and its United States National Museum in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition was practically a foregone conclusion. After all, the Smithsonian had played a significant role in world's fair exhibits from the beginning; in fact, the national museum owed its existence (at least in part) to the first world's fair held on American soil, the 1876 Centennial Exposition, held in Philadelphia. At its founding in 1846, the Smithsonian's shape and form remained unclear. The bequest from James Smithson was supposed to go toward "the increase and diffusion of knowledge."[70] But exactly how to do that was up for debate, and not everyone was convinced that the Smithsonian needed a museum. Enter the 1876 Exposition. Spencer Baird, as Joseph Henry's Assistant Secretary, with the assistance of George Brown Goode, supervised the design and installation of a Smithsonian exhibit in Philadelphia. The exhibit attracted plenty of attention and interest, and contributed to the overall success of the fair. Afterward, Baird made arrangements for significant portions of the fair's varied displays to find permanent homes in the Smithsonian's collections. The upward momentum from the Exposition, paired with the practical need for a place to store and display the Institution's latest acquisitions, resulted in the formal establishment of the United States National Museum—as well as the go-ahead on plans to construct a building where the museum would be housed.[71]

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[70] Quoted in Pamela Henson, "'Objects of Curious Research': The History of Science and Technology and the Smithsonian," *Isis* (90) Supplemennt, S249.
[71] Ellis Yochelson and Mary Jarrett, *The National Museum of Natural History: 75 Years in the Natural History Building* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press), 15-16.

Thus established, the Smithsonian would continue to play a significant role in American government exhibits at world's fairs and expositions.[72] And although their ever-growing holdings provided a strong base to work from, Smithsonian curators used their extensive networks to collect specific items for their world's fair displays. If existing correspondence records are any indication, Smithsonian staff spent a significant amount of time working to acquire desired specimens and artifacts, plan exhibits, transport materials, and construct their exposition displays. And by the time preparation began for the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, curators who had been at the Smithsonian for even just a few years had already participated in the planning process for government exhibits at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo. Still, St. Louis was going to be bigger, and the Smithsonian's efforts, which included a wrought-iron birdcage the size of a football field and the skeleton of a sulphur-bottom whale from Newfoundland, look to me like an attempt to outdo itself yet again.

Preparation began early. Public Act No. 192, approved on June 26, 1902, authorized the appropriation of $800,000 for the "selection, purchase, preparation, transportation, arrangement, installation, safe-keeping, exhibition, and return of such articles and materials as the heads of the several Executive Departments, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum, the United States Fish Commission, the Department of Labor, and the Library of Congress may respectively decide shall be embraced in the Government exhibit," as well as for the physical installation of the exhibit and to cover the salaries of those involved in the undertaking. An additional sum

[72] The Smithsonian also participated in smaller fairs and expositions, like the South Carolina Inter-State and West Indian Exposition in Charleston in 1902. (A part-time employee in the Smithsonian's Philippine Exhibit in Charleston wrote to ask if there might be work for him in St. Louis.) See letter from W. S. Senteney to F. W. True, May 30, 1902, Box 61, folder 7, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

($200,000) was appropriated for the construction of the buildings that would house the federal government's exhibits.[73] While the Government exhibits covered more than just the Smithsonian and the National Museum, these entities received the largest funding allocations from the appropriations bill—as well as the largest allocations of physical space at the fair: 15,275 feet combined for the Smithsonian and the National Museum. (After the Smithsonian and the National Museum, the next largest amount went to the Department of Agriculture, whose exhibits included the display of American forestry.)[74]

The Smithsonian's exposition records are grouped first by event and then alphabetically, which makes for a particularly jumbled picture of the planning process. Incoming letters are organized by the last name of the sender, so a systematic review of these records quite literally covers from A to Z (or almost): fair-related correspondence from J. A. Allen at the American Museum in New York to letters about alligator acquisition from Charles K. Worthen. Incoming and outgoing correspondence are filed separately—a system that can make it difficult track both sides of a complex conversation—but this system, which seems to be the way Smithsonian staff decided to organize their files, does have its benefits for the contemporary researcher. This structure highlights the scale of these government exhibits. These files contain bird cage measurements and orders for replenishing the birds that lived inside.[75] There are offers from commercial collectors, furriers, and taxidermists able to provide birds and bird eggs, reptiles,

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[73] Extract from Public Act No 182, Box 62, folder 26, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[74] "Uncle Sam at the World's Fair," reprinted from the *St, Louis Globe-Democrat*, *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4 no. 4 1902/03, p.28.
[75] See "Dimensions of Bird-Cage at St, Louis," and correspondence between Lyon and Frank Baker, Superintendent of the National Zoological Park, Box 61, folder 9, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

grizzly bears, fish, even ostriches.[76] There's an exchange between the Smithsonian's Special Agent, Dr. Marcus Lyon Jr., in charge of coordinating a lot of exposition arrangements, and a young man who claims he can provide a large elk. The conversation broadens to include the Game Warden of the state of Washington, once it becomes clear that the young man broke state game laws to shoot the elk in question.[77] There is an invoice for a Mongolian tiger skin, and a note from a shipping company about the transport of two live cobras, warning that the company "cannot of course accept risk of mortality of the snakes, and would ask you to meet the amount of our Bill whether the snakes arrive alive or dead."[78]

From the sheer volume of correspondence, it seems that Lyon and Frederick True, the head of the Smithsonian's exhibits, did nothing but write letters to all of the individuals engaged in acquiring and preparing materials for the fair. For while existing holdings by the different Smithsonian divisions and the United States National Museum represented a significant portion of the Government's displays in St. Louis, several specimens and display concepts were brand new for the 1904 World's Fair.

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[76] "The cost of a full grown, live male ostrich would be at least $350." Edwin Cawston to M. Lyon, May 14, 1903, Box 61, folder 23, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

[77] See Correspondence between Lyon and Roy M. Cabot, and then Lyon and Game Warden H. Reif in Box 61, folder 24, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

[78] You can guess how that turned out, right? Eastern Landing, Clearing, & Forwarding Company, 28 August 1903, to F. W. True, Box 61, folder 38, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C. For Mongolian tiger skin invoice, see Box 62, folder 1, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

True presented a draft plan to Smithsonian Secretary Langley in 1902, and Langley responded that he liked what True was planning, but also that "nothing can be found more attractive than things in motion, living things, at the summit of which come living men and women engaged in their avocations,—showing as yourself well suggest, such exhibits as the preparators and the modellers actually at work."[79] Langley's opinion echoed the established themes of the Fair: objects in motion, processes explained. The exhibits designed specifically for St. Louis seem mostly inspired by these organizing principles. For example, the contribution of the National Zoological Park's bird cage was filled with more than eight hundred varieties of birds, "notable for their brilliant colors, sweet songs or peculiar forms."[80] A passageway built through the cage allowed visitors to watch as the different species flew all around them. The cage included "trees and shrubs, pools and running streams, where the perching birds can find shelter and the aquatic birds proper exercise."[81] The *World's Fair Bulletin* described how in constructing the bird cage, it was "the aim to counterfeit nature as near as possible"; "there will be trees, brush and rocks that will give it the appearance of a miniature forest."[82] And that forest would be filled with birds from all over the world.

But the Smithsonian displayed more than birds. The Division of Biology focused its energies on acquiring a wide range of specimens. The goal was to exhibit a series of mounted large game—including a hippopotamus, wild sheep, deer, caribou, and "an exceptionally fine

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[79] Samuel Langley to F. W. True, October 11, 1902, Box 62, folder 24, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[80] Drafts of "Exhibit of the Smithsonian Institution and National Museum at the St. Louis Exposition" in Box 70, folder 3, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[81] Ibid.
[82] "Uncle Sam at the World's Fair," Reprinted from the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4 no. 4, 1902/03, p. 28.

example" of a giraffe.[83] Much effort was expended to acquire the best possible elk: first, the museum's efforts to get one from Washington State resulted in the arrest of their collector, who shot the elk out of season. The Game Warden agreed to send the confiscated elk once the proceedings against the poacher were complete. (An exhibit summary lists an Olympic elk, so it must have arrived in time!) In 1902 the Smithsonian also requested an elk from the herds at Yellowstone National Park—using, as their go-between, Dr. Edgar Mearns, who was stationed at Fort Yellowstone. (Mearns offered advice to "take immediate action in the elk matter, as the beasts are more easily taken and in better coat than later. An old male," he wrote, "would not be missed from the vast herds in the Park.")[84] Did one of these "beasts" arrive in good enough condition to be displayed at the Fair? The exhibit also contained a black bear and a polar bear, though I'm not certain of the polar bear's coloring. Letters written by George Turner, the museum's head taxidermist, describe a polar bear whose fur seemed to turn brown during the preparation process. A. Bowsky and Sons, Fur Dressers in New York, suggested hydrogen peroxide might help.[85] But one of the biggest projects undertaken by the Department of Biology for the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair was the acquisition of a sulphur bottom whale.

The undertaking was enormous—and so was the whale. The sulphur bottom whale (or blue whale) is the largest animal on the planet, and as such, it was the perfect animal to display at the world's largest exposition. F. A. Lucas was the Smithsonian curator in charge of supervising the whale's collection and preparation. He traveled to Newfoundland, and coordinated the work

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[83] Ibid.
[84] Edgar Mearns to F. W. True, December 13,1902, Box 63, folder 3, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[85] See George Turner, Chief Taxidermist, to M. W. Lyon, January 15, 1904, Box 64, folder 13 and A. Bowsky and Sons to Lyon, January 22, 1904, Box 61, folder 16, both from Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

of inspecting whales brought in during the whaling season. He was looking for the biggest whale—definitely over seventy feet—and it was important to find an animal without injuries to its vertebrae or overall shape; not only was he interested in the skeleton, but the museum also wanted to make a plaster mold of the whale so that they could construct a full-scale model for the exposition, and later, the museum. Once Lucas selected his whale, he and the men he'd hired (through Ward's Natural Science Establishment in Rochester, NY) made a cast. The process wasn't complicated, but the sheer size of the whale added to the challenge. Once the molds were hardened, Lucas and the preparators from Ward's built a temporary maceration plant on site in Newfoundland and began the work of preparing and packing the bones, which Lucas described as "a greasy, laborious, and puzzling piece of work."[86] Lucas described "cut[ting] out brains" and "measur[ing] intestines and tak[ing] out pelvic bones," and commented on both the difficulty of the work ("But there isn't much fun in working with one's fingers bleeding") and on the particular challenges of moving a whale ("a box as large as a room and weighing four tons is not an easy thing to handle").[87] Still, Lucas and company managed to get the bones into thirteen packages, which were loaded onto the *S.S. Silvia* and transported to New York, where they were placed onto two different railcars, weighing 26,550 pounds total, bound for Ward's in Rochester.[88] It was quite a feat. To True, Lucas wrote, "To a man brought up on Finbacks and

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[86] F. A. Lucas to F. W. True, March 23, 1903 and June 24, 1903, Box 62, folder 27, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[87] F. A. Lucas to F. W. True, June 24, 1903 and June 16, 1903, Box 62, folder 27, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[88] Memo from George O. Cornelius, U.S. Consular Service, July 15, 1903, Box 61, folder 23, and Henry Davis, Lehigh Valley Railroad Agent, to Mr. S. C. Brown at the Smithsonian, July 29, 1903, Box 62, folder 27, both from Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

Humpbacks a Sulphur bottom is no joke, as it takes two men to handle even a single lumbar vertebra."[89]

Ward's Natural Science Establishment in Rochester, NY, handled the work of getting the whale skeleton and cast ready for the fair, and it was not the only work that Ward and company did for the Smithsonian that year. And Ward's was not the only commercial establishment supporting the development of exhibits for the Government building, either. The list of items purchased for the fair—along with the price and the name of the payee—reveals a significant network of natural history firms, collectors, furriers, and taxidermists supporting (for fees, of course) the work of the Smithsonian Institution.[90] The fair was not simply an opportunity to construct the finest exhibit imaginable; it was a business opportunity for those in the business of natural history.[91] Firms offered their services, wrote with their price lists, described their most exciting stock. Some made donations, hoping for future business, no doubt. And others, like Byron Andrews, made more complicated arguments for why a certain specimen should be exhibited at the fair. Andrews was particularly concerned with the display of the blue fox; he had sent "the best specimen…of the thousands of which we have taken in the past ten years" to the Smithsonian, and he hoped all who attended the Fair might see it. "Although the blue fox is nearly all produced in America," he wrote, "it is little used and little known in this country." Instead, the market was flush with "cheap imitations, mostly dyed red fox, white fox, raccoon

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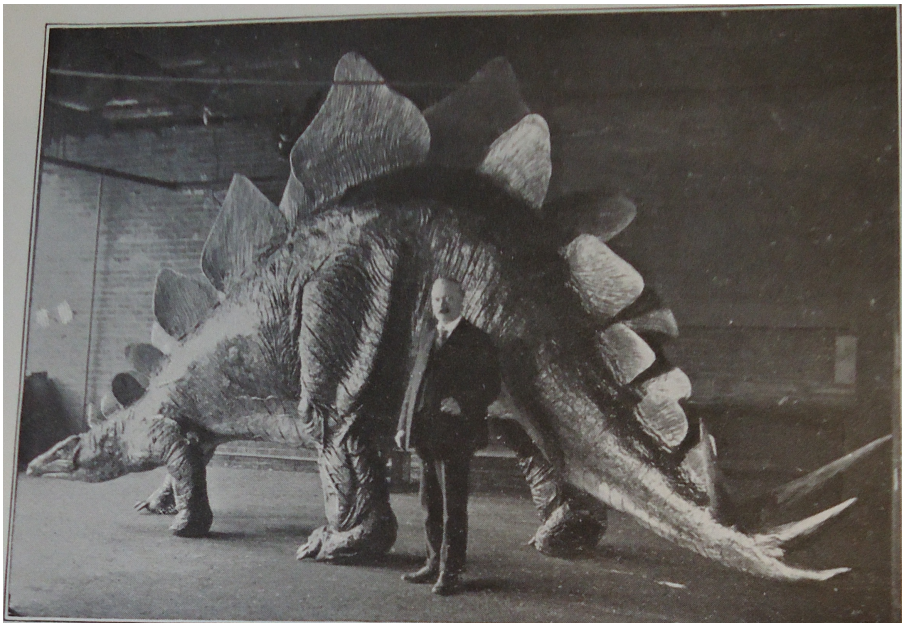
[89] F. A. Lucas to F. W. True, June 16, 1903, Box 62, folder 27, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

[90] For the list, see "Articles and Property Purchased By Smithsonian Institution and U. S. National Museum, Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis, Missouri, 1904," Box 62 folder 7, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

[91] For more on natural history firms in the second half of the nineteenth century, see Mark Barrow, "The Specimen Dealer."

and lynx," mostly from France. Furthermore, Andrews hoped that the specimen he'd sent would also find a permanent home in the United States National Museum. The animal currently labeled "blue fox" at the National Museum, was, to Andrews's eye, "a dirty fox, that is, a white fox in summer dress." Not only would including the blue fox in an exhibit at the world's fair "serve" the "public interest," it would also benefit the companies hunting and farming blue fox in the United States.[92]

Other companies benefited from the opportunity to display their commissioned handiwork in the Smithsonian exhibit. For example, the newest addition to the Department of Geology's display was also a (not quite) walking advertisement for the Milwaukee Papier Mache Works: a model of a stegosaurus.



[92] All blue fox related quotations, see Byron Andrews to F. W. True, January 27, 1904, Box 61, folder 6, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

Figure 34. This image, from a promotional flyer, is captioned, "Stegosaurus: Reproduced in Papier Mache for the United States National Museum by the Milwaukee Papier Mache Works."[93]

Extensive correspondence between the model-makers and the Smithsonian reveals the degree to which the stegosaurus had to be perfect. There are letters about the bracing inside the dinosaur, the coloring of different parts of the back and belly, even the texture of the model's skin. The modeler at the Milwaukee Papier Mache Works wanted to get it just right, and cited his previous experience "in scientific studies," including "a good deal with Edward Cope and one time with Major Powell on the Green and Colorado Expedition" to indicate his attention to detail and concern for authenticity.[94]

This commitment to authenticity was important to curators and exhibit planners at the Smithsonian. William Henry Holmes of the Bureau of American Ethnology wrote to ask Frederick True if they could simply put Smithsonian ethnologists in the field on the payroll for the Exposition instead of hiring other people to aid in gathering materials for the department's display at the Fair. "It will be apparent to all that these experienced ethnologists are better qualified than any other persons to undertake the assemblage of collections that will represent the operations of the Bureau," he wrote. (True's marking on his copy of the correspondence: "Approved.")[95] The anthropologists he requested salaries for were mostly focused on the American West: Matilda Coxe Stevenson was headed to Arizona and New Mexico Territories,

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[93] "Stegosaurus," Milwaukee Papier Mache Works, Box 63, folder 25, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[94] Milwaukee Papier Mache Works to F. A. Lucas, August 10, 1903, Box 63, folder 5, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[95] W. H. Holmes to F. W. True, November 10, 1903, Box 62, folder 16, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.

John Swanton to Alaska and British Columbia, and J. Fewkes to the West Indies. James Mooney had already been working and collecting in Indian Territory; the artifacts he collected would find a prominent place in the Department of Anthropology's display.

Though the states and territories of the American West had their own spaces at the fair to display their history, resources, and wares, the Smithsonian also exhibited a fair amount of material from and about the people and resources of the American West. Departments focused on biology, geology, and anthropology featured specimens, art, and artifacts from the American West alongside models of Mayan ruins, the giant whale skeleton, and replicas of ancient art from around the world. After all, materials from the West made up a significant portion of the Smithsonian's oldest collections; the survey expeditions led by army men and scientists to explore the continent in the nineteenth century brought back quite a lot of material to be studied, described, and displayed.

In addition to displaying artifacts from the West, the fair's Government exhibit would include "representatives of almost every tribe of American Indians." The *World's Fair Bulletin* reported that these representatives would "give their dances and illustrate their sports and modes of primitive and modern life"—and, furthermore, that there would be no additional admission fee for this part of the exposition, unlike at other world's fairs. The Government exhibit would give visitors to the St. Louis fair a special opportunity—the chance to see "a real, live midway show for nothing."[96] WJ McGee, Chief of the Department of Anthropology at the Fair, explained that the native groups at the fair would "typify aboriginal life"; and that "both special students and general visitors [would] find in them an index to the inner life of the Red Race whose rise and

[96] "Uncle Sam at the World's Fair," Reprinted from the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4 no. 4, 1902/03, p. 28.

passing form the opening epic of American history."[97] But despite their "passing," McGee also reported that three well-known figures had "signified their intention of attending the Exposition and participating in the work of the department": Chief Joseph, "one of the ablest leaders ever sprung from American soil,"; Geronimo, "who withstood the United States army for years"; and Quanah Parker, "the stately Kiowa chief."[98] It seems that their part in the "work of the department" was mostly to be on display, signaling the history of the American West. The future was to be demonstrated through the inclusion of a "modern Indian School" in the federal government's display at the fair, which McGee described as "not beyond betterment, yet good enough to be a boon to the survivors of our passing race and worthy to be exhibited." The school represented not just the supposed progress made in the American West, but could be seen also "as a prophecy." McGee wrote, "Over against the Indian on the grounds, just beyond Arrowhead Lake, will stand the Filipino, even as over against the Red Man on the continent, just beyond the Pacific, stands the brown man of the nearer Orient"; the Indian School on display was to be one of several examples of how "past progress" could be used "as a guide to the future."[99]

At the 1901 Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, the Philippines had been part of the Government exhibits; in fact, the Smithsonian Institution had sent Colonel F. F. Hilder to the Philippines in 1899 to collect items for the fair at Buffalo. The Philippine Exhibit, included in the fair's Government Building, displayed to fairgoers "how the Filipinos live, what kind of houses they live in, what clothes they wear, what they eat, how they cultivate the soil, their fisheries, their industries, their trades and manufactures, their games and amusements, and the thousand and one things that make up their home environment." Frederick True described how the

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[97] "Anthropology by WJ McGee, Chief of Department," *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 5, no. 4 1903/04, p. 5.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid, 6-7.

Government Board, despite the lack of specifically designated funding for a separate Philippines display, "took steps at an early day to represent in an adequate manner the life of these new wards of the nation."[100] The plan was different for St. Louis. This time, there would be a separate Philippine Exposition, with exhibits gathered from all over the archipelago at the urging of Governor General Taft.

A Fair Within a Fair: The Philippine Exposition

"I can assure you that our people feel the Philippine Exhibit will be one of the leading, if not the overshadowing feature of the Exposition," wrote Exposition President David Francis to Governor Taft. "You can depend on our hearty co-operation. Your statement to us of the far-reaching influence and value of a thorough and complete representation from the Archipelago has not only aroused great interest here, but has been widely and favorably commented upon by the press of the country."[101] In April of 1902, Governor Taft came to St. Louis to meet with President Francis and the other members of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Board about plans—and support—for a Philippines exhibit at the fair. At a luncheon given in his honor, he articulated the importance of the St. Louis Fair for the work taking place in the Philippines. "We are at a point where there prevails misinformation, misunderstanding, and an unconscious misrepresentation regarding us," Taft said. "Nothing, I think, can bring the two peoples together to promote friendly and trade relations between the States and the Archipelago so well as such an exhibit as I hope we will be able to make at your exposition."[102] With the (financial) support of

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[100] All quotations this paragraph from F. W. True, handwritten draft of "The Philippine Exhibit in the Government Building," (later published in the *Buffalo Courier* in April 1901), Box 52, folder 23, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[101] David Francis to William Taft, May 15, 1902. Box 11, folder 8, David Rowland Francis Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[102] William Taft, as quoted in *World's Fair Bulletin,* v. 3 no. 7 1901/02, p.20-21.

the Exposition Company and its backers, Taft explained, he could "go back to the Filipinos and say that the Louisiana Purchase Exposition was willing to help us, and this will have a deep effect in demonstrating to the Filipinos the friendliness and sympathy of the United States toward them."[103]

The Exposition Company gave Taft $100,000 to begin putting together a Philippines exhibit, and once back in Manila, Taft issued a circular that encouraged people throughout the archipelago to aid in preparing materials for St. Louis.[104] After all, the fair was to be an opportunity—"to create interest and sympathy for the Philippine Islands," "to give confidence in the intelligence and capacity of the native," and perhaps most importantly, "to look for permanent profitable markets" for Philippine natural resources.[105] While a compelling Philippine Exposition would almost certainly guarantee a successful exposition for those on the St. Louis side, the economic possibilities it might open up in the Pacific could have significant financial benefits for all involved in the American colonial project.

Taft's visit—and the funds from the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company—set several processes in motion. The Philippine Exposition Board was established, with Dr. W. P. Wilson of the Philadelphia Commercial Museum at the helm, and Dr. Gustavo Niederlein as the director of exhibits. On his way to the Philippines, Niederlein traveled to St. Louis. The *World's Fair Bulletin* reported that "The Skinker tract, a dense primeval forest, thick with tangled

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[103] Ibid.
[104] Financing the Philippine Exposition seems to have involved a lot of negotiations during the lead up to the fair. See the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Collection for the details, specifically Series XI, Subseries III, Folder 10, Exec. Committee Minutes 2/14/03-3/31/03, and Folder 14, Exec. Committee Minutes 9/1/03-12/1/03, pp. 1801-1998, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[105] William Taft, *Circular letter of Governor Taft*, 29-30.

underbrush and oak and other forest trees of various sizes, pleased the doctor greatly."[106] This section of the grounds, even further west of what had been the Forest Park Wilderness, was to be the site of the Philippines Exposition: forty-seven acres, to be exact. Neiderlein asked that the trees be preserved; they could be useful in keeping the different exhibit villages, and the people who would be brought to St. Louis to live in them, separated from each other. Not long after Neiderlein headed overseas, Gifford Pinchot began the trip that would take him across Siberia and to the Philippines. Before leaving, Pinchot agreed to serve as Honorary Chief of the Department of Forestry for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, and to coordinate with Tarleton Bean, the man in charge of the Forestry, Fish, and Game exhibits at the Fair.[107] And the *Bulletin* reported on Pinchot's participation, and on the ways his trip to the Philippines would benefit the exposition: "While in the islands, he will also assist in arranging plans for securing an elaborate collection of specimens of timber, illustrating the wonderful variety of hardwood and other species of trees found in that region, where nearly 700 valuable varieties have already been found."[108]

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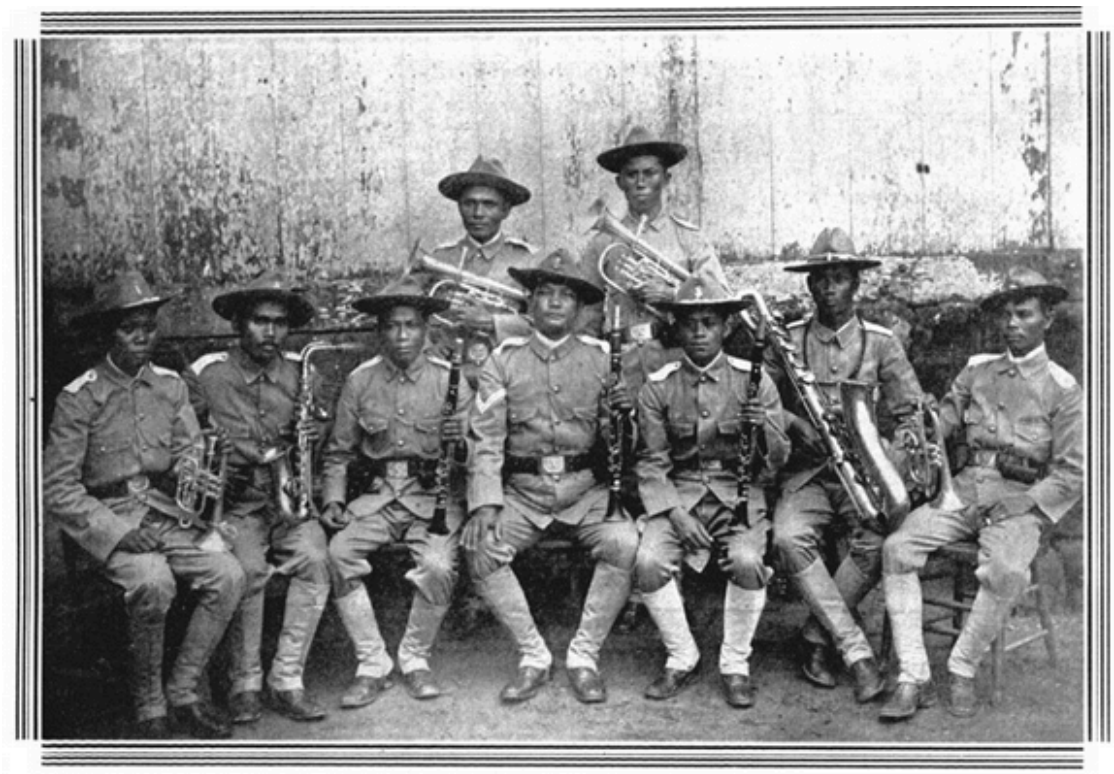
[106] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 12 1902/03, p.30.
[107] Pinchot wrote to accept the honorary position, stating, "My interest in the exposition, and my conception of the immense utility of a wisely planned department of forestry, together with my cordial regard for Dr. Bean, will make it extremely pleasant for me to be connected in this way with the World's Fair." Gifford Pinchot to Frederick Skiff, Director of Exhibits, August 8, 1902, Box 12, folder 1, David Rowland Francis Papers, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[108] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 11 1902/03, p.34.



FILIPINO MEMBERS OF THE U. S. INFANTRY BAND,
Now in the Philippines. They will probably play at the World's Fair.

Figure 35. "Filipino Members of the U.S. Infantry Band." This is from the September, 1902 issue of the *World's Fair Bulletin*, before Neiderlein arrived in St. Louis, before Pinchot reached the Philippines, and still during the early stages of exhibit planning. Note the caption: "They will probably play at the World's Fair."[109]

While the *World's Fair Bulletin* seems to have contained plenty of speculation about what (and who) might be on display at the Fair (there's no such thing as bad publicity?), this reportage of Pinchot's involvement was not exaggeration. Philippine forestry—as currently practiced, and as an industry filled with potential—was a focal point of the Philippine Exposition. Forest products were not simply displayed in the different parts of the exhibit; they were used in several parts of the exhibit's construction. The Forestry Building was to be made out of one hundred varieties of Philippine wood, and once complete, would house samples of these tree species in various forms, from raw material to finished product. And the houses for the

[109] "Filipino Members of the U.S. Infantry Band," *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 11 1902/03, p. 16.

Filipinos joining the exhibit were to be made from materials transported across the Pacific for this purpose. Filipino workmen from various ethnic groups, all of them "experts in the construction of the thatched bamboo houses common in their country," escorted "2,000 tons of bamboo poles, palm leaves for use in thatching, and much other building material, including some very fine woods and a big canoe sixty feet long, hollowed out of one 'madera' log." The construction on the Philippines "reservation," as many called it, was to be as authentic as possible, as close a replication of homes and living conditions as could be constructed in a Missouri forest halfway around the world.[110] The *World's Fair Bulletin* reported that over 8,000 tons of building material was on its way, all of it necessary for the construction of homes for the almost 3,000 Filipinos who would be living on these forty-seven acres at the Exposition.[111]

The Philippine exhibit was to be "the garden spot of the Exposition," a place where Filipinos from "some twenty tribes" would "live under the same surroundings as in their Island home." The *World's Fair Bulletin* editorialized that "the people of the United States owe a vote of thanks" to the Philippine Exposition Board "for the striking miniature of the Philippine Islands and their inhabitants" that had been recreated in St. Louis.[112]

"Perhaps the most striking feature of the display is its naturalness. There is no attempt at artificiality, no straining after effect," asserted the fair's official guidebook.[113] This is a particularly strange assessment of the Philippine Exposition, given that the exhibit was filled with constructed replicas of "life" on the other side of the world. This emphasis on naturalness

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[110] John C. Lebens, "Philippine Exhibit: Forty Acres of Ground Covered with Native Buildings," *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4 no. 12 1903/04, p.7 and "Arrival of Filipino Workmen," *World's Fair Bulletin,* v. 4 no. 12 1903/04, p. 43.
[111] Ibid. This number was a bit of an exaggeration; the final number of residents in the Philippine Exposition ended up being closer to 1100. See *World's Fair Bulletin,* v. 5 no. 8, 1903/04, p. 1.
[112] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 5 no. 8 1903/04, p. 1.
[113] Lowenstein and Louisiana Purchase Exposition, *Official guide to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition,* 117.

evoked the broader anthropological framing of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. The St. Louis World's Fair was organized according to an elaborate system of taxonomy, grounded in a carefully articulated set of ideas about the evolution and progress of man, as espoused by WJ McGee. This particular brand of anthropology attempted to look at the processes of the past in order to "predict the future and legitimate the rapid societal and technological changes" that had occurred.[114] According to this logic, all that had happened in the past had made possible the pathways to progress that white, western, industrial, imperial powers had followed.[115] The "naturalness" of the Philippine Exposition also served to place its cultures on display as earlier, more primitive examples on the spectrum of savagery to civilization, with the world's Western, industrialized nations representing the peak of progress, the top of the evolutionary hierarchy.

This hierarchy played out in quite visible ways, beginning with the physical organization of many of the ethnographic villages at the Exposition. Arrowhead Lake was at the outer edge of the acreage designated for the Philippine Exposition. Representatives of a range of American Indian tribes were given space on the other side of Arrowhead Lake. The arrangement of American Indians and Filipinos "made explicit the connection between America's imperial past and imperial future."[116]

But visitors were also intended to interpret the "naturalness" of the exhibit as an actual analog for the (so-called) virgin landscape of the Philippine Islands themselves. One of the fair's official histories described the Philippines as containing "50,000,000 acres of untouched and unsurpassed forest."[117] And Gustavo Niederlein, in *The Official Handbook of the Philippines and Catalogue of the Philippine Exhibit,* described the mountains of the Philippines as "forest

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[114] Parezo and Fowler, *Anthropology Goes to the Fair*, 10.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, 167.
[117] Bennitt, *History of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition*, 469.

clothed. In the higher elevations," he wrote, "are found large pine trees, with open spaces between carpeted with pine needles, but lower down huge trees tower to an enormous height. These mighty forest monarchs are draped and festooned with fantastic creepers and beautified with graceful ferns and exquisite orchids. Vegetation runs riot."[118] This language — trees as "monarchs," ferns as "graceful," mountains as "forest-clothed" — calls up an earlier moment of abundance, evokes a New World, a new landscape, as yet unspoiled, filled to overflowing with plant and animal species divinely provided for colonists to use.[119]

Preparing exhibits that would effectively represent such abundant, undeveloped resources was an extensive undertaking. The artifacts and specimens on display at the fair had come "from more than a thousand islands populated by a hundred different tribes, speaking different dialects."[120] Mark Bennitt, in his *History of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition*, praised all who did this labor. "In the prosecution of their work," he wrote, "the agents of the Exposition Board had to penetrate mountain fastnesses accompanied only by guides and interpreters, and often to visit districts previously unexplored."[121] These agents seem to be doing the work of soldiers, pushing deep into the hills to gather materials to send first to Manila, and then onward to St. Louis.

But the agents of the Exposition Board weren't the only ones with Philippine items to display. Frederick True received a letter from the National Army and Navy Spanish War Veterans asking if there might be "space in the Government exhibit to display souvenirs and

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[118] *Official handbook of the Philippines and catalogue of the Philippine Exhibit. In two volumes* (Manila: Bureau of Public Printing, 1903-04), 26.
[119] For more on the rhetoric of abundance used by colonists in early America, see Cronon, *Changes in the Land,* and Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*.
[120] Bennitt, *History of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition*, 472-473.
[121] Ibid.

relics of our service."[122] And early in the fair planning process, the *World's Fair Bulletin* pointed to "a widely spread desire among soldiers and ex-soldiers to utilize the World's Fair…for national soldiers' re-unions and military pageants."[123] There were even soldiers inside the Philippine Exposition: among the representatives of the different Filipino groups and tribes was a battalion of Philippine Scouts and even a Filipino military band. So although soldiers were written out of the story of the Louisiana Purchase and the settling of the West, soldiers themselves were very much a part of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

Dedication Ceremonies

Though the Exposition wasn't slated to open until April of 1904, the fair's Dedication Ceremonies took place on April 30, May 1, and May 2, 1903. St. Louis pulled out all the stops to introduce their fair to the world: a massive military parade, speeches from honored guests, and an extensive series of fireworks seemingly designed specifically to celebrate the fair. For example, the Centennial Day display included "gigantic fire portraits of Washington, Jefferson, Napoleon, and McKinley" and "One hundred The Eagle Screams rockets," which were, as you can imagine, rockets from which emanated "the national bird's screech realistically produced."[124]

Everything was coming together, and the Dedication Ceremonies were meant to share this with the rest of the nation, to send forth "a host of competent witnesses" who could testify that the fairgrounds would be ready, that the fair would open as scheduled in 1904. The *World's*

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[122] L. Dyer, Adjutant General of the National Army and Navy Spanish War Veterans to F. W. True, March 16, 1903, Box 61, folder 29, Smithsonian Institution, Exposition Records of the Smithsonian Institution and the United States National Museum, 1867-1940, Record Unit 70, Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C.
[123] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 3 no. 2 1901/02, p.13.
[124] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4, no. 7, 1902/03, p. 5, 7.

Fair Bulletin editorialized that the transformation of the American West, "this marvelous development of a mighty, prosperous, and happy civilization, in what was so recently a savage wild, is the proudest human achievement of the century of the world's grandest forward strides in every line of progress."[125] And the fair would display all of that progress to the world.

The Dedication Ceremonies began with the entrance of the president of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt. He was followed by a parade of American soldiers and members of the National Guard.[126] And then the speeches began, alternating with choral performances of songs titled, "The Heavens Proclaiming," "Unfold, Ye Portals," and simply, "America."[127] The Honorable Thomas H. Carter described "The conquest of space, forests, streams, and deserts, and the founding of cities and States in waste places within this territory" as "an advance unsurpassed in the history of human endeavor." And while President Roosevelt highlighted qualities associated with masculinity and conquest, "the qualities which enable a people to overcome the forces of hostile men and hostile nature," the Honorable Grover Cleveland told the assembled crowds that "every feature of our celebration should remind us that we memorialize a peaceful acquisition of territory for truly American uses and purposes."[128]

This idea of a "peaceful acquisition" particularly worthy of celebrating wasn't Cleveland's frame. It ran throughout the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company's narration of the event they were commemorating. The *World's Fair Bulletin*, in one of its many editorial overviews of the history of the Louisiana Purchase, highlighted this very angle, writing that the exposition

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[125] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4 no. 7 1902/03, p. 3.
[126] General Nelson A. Miles was in attendance as an honored guest. See *World's Fair Bulletin,* v. 4, no. 8, 1903/04, p. 25.
[127] "Official Program of the Great Dedication," *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4, no. 7 1902/03, p. 5.
[128] *World's Fair Bulletin,* v. 4, no. 8, 1903/04, p.13, 18, 20.

> celebrates the centennial of the first extension of the boundaries of the United States and the peaceful acquisition of a wilderness that has yielded up its riches generously as a reward for the unceasing toil of the pioneer and home-builder. Where the savage dwelt and herds of bison roamed a few decades ago are now the cultivated farms and the flourishing cities of a progressive people.[129]

The fact of the transformation, from savages and bison herds to flourishing farms and cities, is clear. But what is obscured by the language of "peaceful acquisition" is how these changes actually transpired. Roosevelt's mention of "fighting virtues" alluded to the work of not simply conquering the wilderness, but also of fighting, killing, and containing the previous occupants of the territory. The Louisiana Territory might have been peacefully acquired, through negotiation and purchase, but it was not peacefully won on the ground.

This language of peaceful expansion wasn't limited to Cleveland; the *World's Fair Bulletin* editorialized about what a wonderful time it was for attending an exposition, calling the present moment (1903) "a prolonged season of peace, a remarkably prolonged series of prosperous years for all industrial nations."[130] This selective storytelling seems particularly strange, given the visibility of soldiers at the fair's Dedication Ceremonies—soldiers who had fought to establish peace in the Louisiana Territory and the Mexican cession and, who had most recently fought to oust the Spanish and then quell an "insurrection" in the Philippines. Despite the violent work of expansion and empire, some continued to characterize the acquisition of California, New Mexico, Arizona, and even the Philippines as "peaceful" processes, even as the fighting continued in Mindanao. Still, the language of peaceful acquisition did not preclude the celebration of American empire, and the extensive pyrotechnic display on first night of the Dedication Ceremonies had significant imperial overtones. The program described each kind of firework in detail, and Number 40, named "Our Empire," seems like it would be particularly

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[129] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4, no. 7, 1902/03, pp.15-16.
[130] *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 5 no. 3, 1903/04, p. 1.

impressive: "This unique novelty is produced by mammoth combination shells, which at 1,000 feet release a large bomb with red, green, blue and white stars, representing the United States, followed by a gold shell representing Hawaii, followed by a silver shell for Porto Rico, and finishing with a number of smaller shells for the Philippines."[131] A bomb filled with shells representing American empire sounds about right to me. Of course, it was accompanied by a "pyrotechnic cuttlefish, produced by the electrical discharge of 100 30-inch repeating bombs, filling the sky with long, radiating, tentacles," so perhaps it isn't entirely fair to editorialize about the tools of war transformed into crowd-pleasing spectacle in the service of American empire.[132]

Alongside the parades and the fireworks, visitors to the fair's Dedication Ceremonies were able to see the progress made on the fair's construction, and to get a first sense of the overall structure of the exposition. As the Director of Exhibits explained, "A modern universal exposition is a collection of the wisdom and achievements of the world, for the inspection of the world—for the study of its experts, by which they may make comparisons and deductions and develop plans for future improvements and progress." He continued, "Such a universal exposition might well be called an encyclopedia of society, and it contains, in highly specialized array, society's words and works. It constitutes a classified, compact, indexed compendium (available for ready reference) of the achievements and ideas of society, in all phases of its activity, extending to the most material as well as the most refined."[133] Of course, in reality, it wasn't as balanced as that. While the exposition aimed at and promoted its displays as representative of all the world had to offer, in practice, what was actually at St. Louis represented a complex back and forth between potential exhibitors, Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company

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[131] "Official Program of the Great Dedication," *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 4, no. 7 1902/03, p. 7.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Frederick J. V. Skiff, Director of Exhibits, "The Universal Exposition: An Encyclopedia of Society," *World's Fair Bulletin*, v. 5, no. 2, 1903/04. p. 2.

directors, foreign nations, domestic states, and federal institutions, all attempting to participate in this "encyclopedia of society" while highlighting their own place in it. Thus, world's fairs tell us much more about ourselves than about the range of people, places, and products on display. And this particular fair, with its focus on the American West and the unique (and outsized) Philippines Exposition, can tell us quite a bit about the interplay among American frontiers, and the intersection of ideas about nature and empire. Indeed, Director Skiff highlighted that St. Louis, itself a gateway to American frontiers, was home to the exposition "because at this point on the firing line of Western progress the forces of civilization found their most potent expression and greatest climax."[134] And now the "firing line," the edge of civilization, had effectively become its center, at least for the seven months of the fair, when the world would come to St. Louis.

Almost Opening Day

The Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company kept extensive photographic (and stereoscopic) records of the fair. It wasn't until I looked through boxes and albums filled with photographs that I began to get a sense for what it might have been like to go inside the palaces, to experience these spaces at scale. For example, these Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company photographs documented the long, open pathways that ran lengthwise through the Palace of Forestry, Fish, and Game. The exhibit of the state of Washington is filled with taxidermied animals; moose, elk and deer stand behind a railing, with a raccoon, a swan, and maybe a grouse positioned between them, nearer to the palace floor. The palace has large windows and high ceilings; my eye is drawn further down the walkway to the next exhibit—what are those, down there—tree trunks? And further down, drawings, or maybe maps?

[134] Ibid., 3.

Figure 36. Exhibit of the State of Washington, Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.[135]

Not to be outdone, the Forestry, Fish, and Game exhibit from the state of Colorado displayed its taxidermied game on a replica of a mountainside. It looks like visitors could walk through this exhibit, entering the "mountain" beneath the stuffed black bear.

[135] "Exhibit of the State of Washington," Box 00793, folder labeled "Forestry," Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

Figure 37. Colorado Wild Life Exhibit. Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.[136]

The U. S. Bureau of Forestry (under the leadership of Gifford Pinchot), went in a different direction: less taxidermy, more pictures. They put together a display of illuminated transparencies depicting new conservation management techniques.

[136] "Colorado Wild Life Exhibit," Box 00793, folder labeled "Forestry," Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

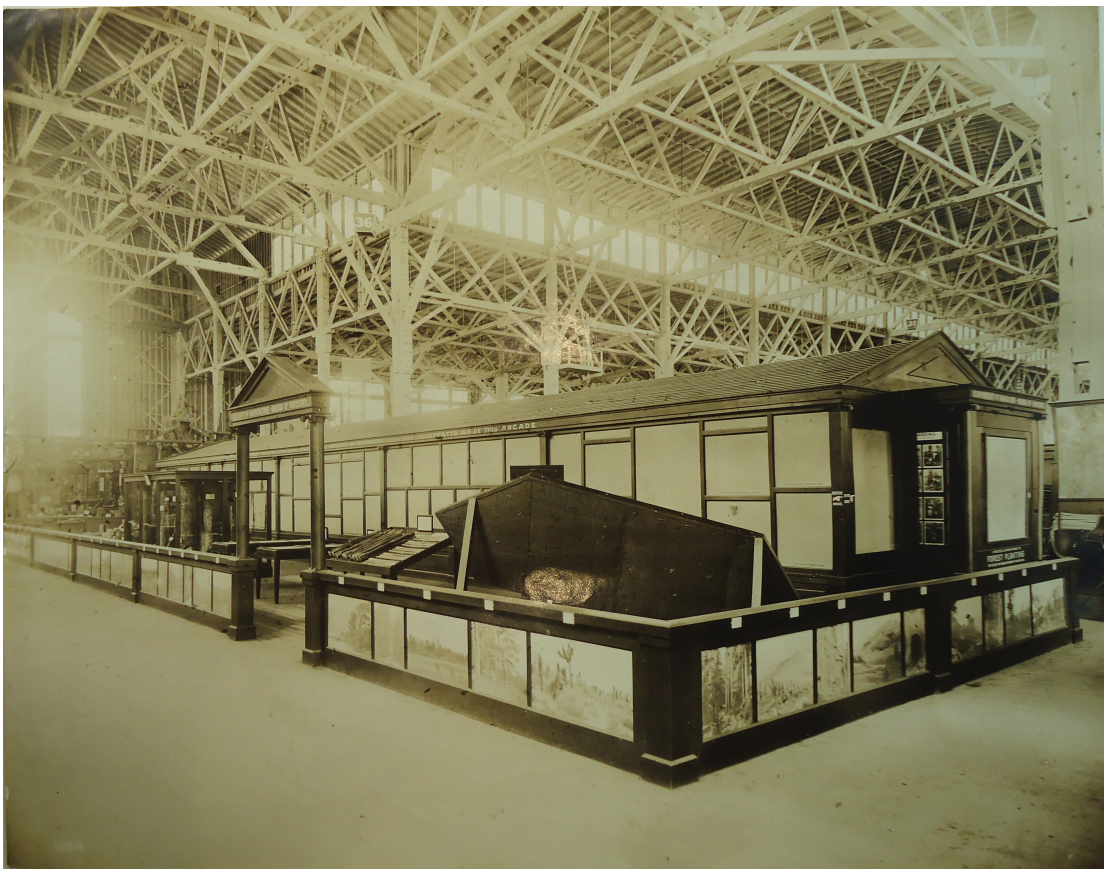

Figure 38. U.S. Bureau of Forestry Exhibit. Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.[137]

The exhibit sought "to teach the timely lesson of the conservation of the forest for future use, and in co-operation with the states to teach how to protect forests necessary to conserve the water supply; how to restore the devastated land, and how to make the treeless lands produce useful woods."[138] David Francis called this "the whole story of forest life."[139] In some ways, this attention to the life cycle of an American forest is both perfectly sited and strangely out of place in the sea of extraordinary specimens surrounding the federal forestry exhibit. Spaces crowded with impressive animals, some stuffed, some swimming (there was even a pool of live beavers)

[137] "U.S. Bureau of Forestry Exhibit," Box 00793, folder labeled "Forestry," Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.
[138] Francis, *The Universal Exposition of 1904*, 489.
[139] Ibid.

filled the hallways of the Palace of Forestry, Fish, and Game. But as one of the outcomes of the process of remaking Forest Park—a process described as the settling of the frontier in miniature—it managed to offer another way, a story of forests that was a cycle instead of an ever onward, upward progress narrative of the American West. Francis highlighted its message as important for the future, but of course, down another passageway, we see an almost endless number of mounted butterflies, and beyond them, birds.

Figure 39. View down aisle of Palace of Forestry, Fish, and Game. Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.[140]

[140] "Mounted Butterflies, Birds, and Creosoted Woods," Box 00793, folder labeled "Forestry," Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

While these images offer a sense of the scale of these staff structures, a sense of the enormity of the undertaking, even for individual exhibitors at the fair, what strikes me most about these Publicity Department photographs is their emptiness. These are not pictures of the fair in motion; they are pictures of the exhibits. So while the palaces were photographed empty—the better to see the details of each display—the photographs of the different sections of the Philippines Exposition do contain people; they were part of the exhibits. And while some of these photographs focus on the people in them, in others, the people seem almost incidental; just part of the scenery.

Figure 40. Igorrote Village, Dept. Anthropology. Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company, Photographs and Prints, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.[141]

[141] "Igorrote Village," Dept. Anthropology, Box 00797, folder labeled "Igorrotes," Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

There are numbers on the back of these images: sometimes one number, with a label; sometimes several—slide numbers, old box numbers, and also numbers that seem to represent particular exhibits. Multiple photographs of Moro boats contain the same number, #1316, while the Moro village is labeled #1314.

Figure 41. Moro boats. Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Photographs and Prints, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.[142]

But these exhibit numbers seem to have been used to label more than sections of ethnographic villages, and discrete portions of displays, like Moro boats or houses. Notable individuals on display also received exhibit numbers. These files contain portraits of Geronimo at the fair. He stands, in hat and jacket, holding a bow and an arrow, both likely his own

[142] "Moro boats," Box 00797, folder labeled "Moros," Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

handiwork. In one image, he looks straight at the camera. In a second photograph, he looks to his right. Both images are labeled "#1302—Chief Geronimo From Arizona, Dept. Anthropology."

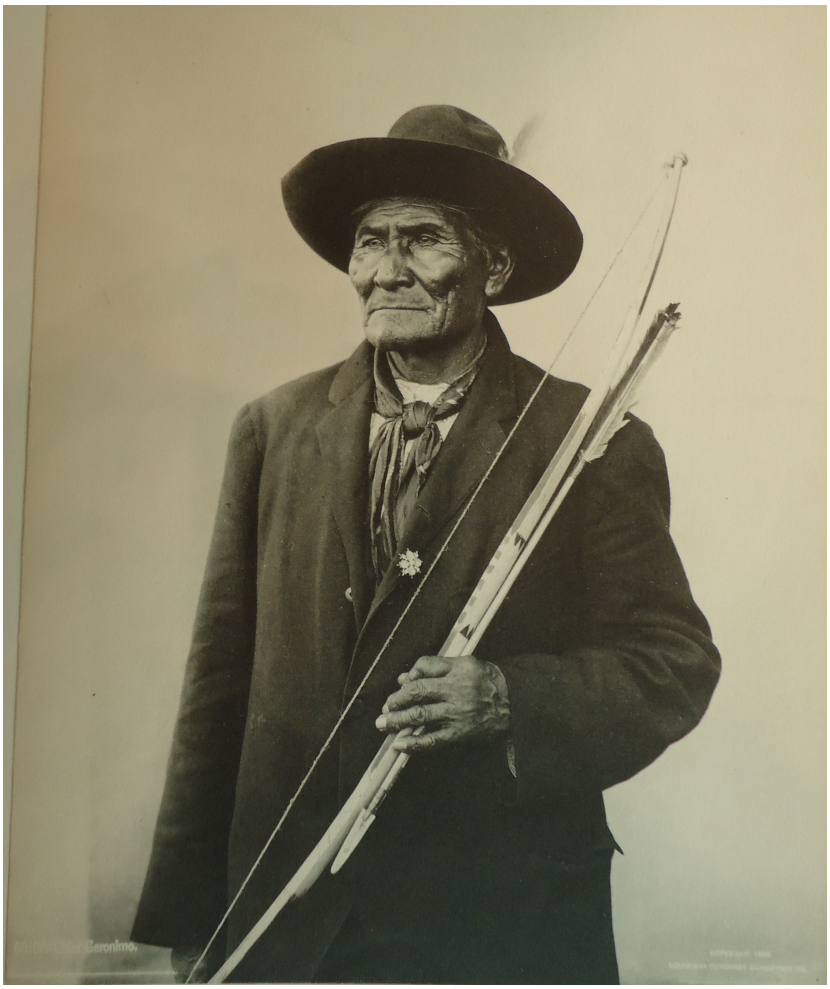

Figure 42. Geronimo. Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Photographs and Prints, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.[143]

The exhibit numbers assigned to Geronimo and to Filipinos living in the Philippine Exposition hint at their relative physical proximity at the fair. The Philippines Exposition was separated from the rest of the fairgrounds by Arrowhead Lake; the ethnographic display of Native American people, Geronimo among them, were positioned on the other side of this

[143] "Geronimo," Box 00796, folder labeled "Apache 1302 Geronimo," Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company Records, Prints and Photographs, Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

constructed reservoir in the Anthropology exhibit. The story being told at the fair was clear; visitors could experience remnants of the old West before walking across the "bridge of Spain" to a replica of the walled city of Manila and the living exhibits containing Filipinos, residents of the new Pacific frontier.

But what stories did visitors to the fair take away? In the transformation of Forest Park, in the selection of exhibitors, in the solicitation of participation from around the world—and in the decision to provide significant financial support to the Philippines for a forty-seven acre fair-within-a-fair—the Louisiana Purchase Exposition worked to construct a coherent narrative of American expansion and American progress. But did fairgoers see this story when they came to St. Louis? Or rather, did they see only this story on display at the fair?

On April 30, 1904, Edward Schneiderhahn, a St. Louis law clerk, along with scores of other local and out-of-town visitors, made his way to Forest Park for the opening day festivities of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. He'd been here before; his diary describes picnicking in Forest Park as a younger man; this terrain would have been familiar to him. But now Forest Park contained a world's fair, and Schneiderhahn struggled to describe the scene before him. Marveling at the scale of the display and the brilliance of the lights (as well as at the indecency of the women, both live on the Pike and frozen in sculpture), Schneiderhahn wrote, "We are so accustomed to the superlatives that it is difficult to select adequate terms."[144]

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[144] Schneiderhahn Diary, 1904 April 30, as quoted in Clevenger, *Indescribably Grand,* 41. Schneiderhahn describes Forest Park in the first volume of his diary. See Edward Schneiderhahn, Schneiderhahn Diaries, Vol 1., Missouri History Museum Archives, St. Louis.

Epilogue

On September 15, 1904, Major Edgar Alexander Mearns boarded a navy transport vessel bound for San Francisco. He'd been granted sick leave, and he was headed back to the United States to continue recovering.

Mearns kept detailed notes about his journey back across the Pacific, just as I've come to expect, beginning with how he got from the hospital in Manila to the *Logan*. True to form, he spent two hours at Jesuit College in Manila looking at specimens in their museum collection before boarding the boat. The *Logan* left Manila harbor, and Mearns watched for birds. At first, he saw only fish. But then he began to see boobies and terns, kites, and later, an albatross. Mearns wrote down that the *Logan's* first officer told him that birds sometimes came on board, but not always, when crossing the Pacific.

And then, in early October, a large petrel landed on deck, and the next thing Mearns wrote down were measurements. He collected it, prepared it, and gave it the number 13737.[1] And then a shearwater alighted on the deck and Mearns skinned and stuffed it, too. The soldiers saw white terns as they approached Honolulu, and as they sailed toward California, a Golden Plover flew with them, following, circling, whistling. As the ship neared San Francisco, it was escorted by "about a dozen black-footed albatrosses."[2]

Mearns followed birds first across the West, and then across the Pacific, and now they were following him home. They appeared at different moments of the journey back, helping him to mark his place in the ocean; certain birds were visible closer to or further from land, and so

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[1] There is a note here that Mearns gave this bird to the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco; it was lost in the earthquake of 1906. (When Mearns added this note, it seems that he couldn't remember offhand the year of earthquake; he wrote that it was "destroyed as a result of the earthquake of 190?") Edgar Mearns, Box 21, folder 25, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[2] Ibid.

Mearns's focus on the sky served also to track his progress across the sea. He did far more watching than collecting, but even from the deck of a military transport vessel, he still collected and prepared what he could.

Once back on land, Mearns spent a month in San Francisco, and then with an extension of his sick leave approved, he began traveling eastward to his family, and to his friends—and his specimens—at the Smithsonian. But first, he visited St. Louis. Or at least, I think he did.

Edgar Mearns boarded an eastbound train on November 19, 1904. Again, his notes describe what he saw out the window: prairie dogs, a hawk, Long-Crested Jays, "magpies and nests on both sides of [the] Rocky Mtn. divide."[3]

His entry for November 24 reads, "Crossed Missouri from Kansas City to St. Louis. Saw a shrike, Bobwhites, Bluebirds, Juncos, Crows, English Sparrows, Red-tailed Hawk." And then there's an address. And then the next indication of a date and a place suggests that Mearns was in Ohio, where his wife's family is from: "At Circleville, Ohio, Nov. 30 to Dec 5, 1904."[4]

So where was he between November 24th and November 30th?

I know where I think he was. I think Edgar Mearns went to the Fair.

I can't prove it, of course. I haven't found a ticket stub (like I did for one soldier serving in the American West who managed to make it to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago). And I haven't found anyone else who says anything about him being there. But that address, listed under the entry about crossing Missouri, intrigued me, so I looked it up. I can't really make out the name of the place he was going to — or could it be the name of the person

[3] Edgar Mearns, Field book Oct-Dec 1904, Box 17, folder 14, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.
[4] Ibid.

who lived there? It looks like it might be a hotel name, but even though I've spent years reading Mearns's handwriting, I really can't make it out.

But the address? Perfectly legible. It's an intersection, "McPherson Ave. + King's Highway."[5] Mearns's field book doesn't include city and state information, but Kingshighway is a street I know, a street I remember from my own research in St. Louis. It runs along the eastern boundary of today's Forest Park. And it does intersect with a McPherson Ave, about half a mile north of Lindell Boulevard, Forest Park's northern boundary.

Today, in the spring of 2015, at the intersection of McPherson Avenue and Kingshighway, you'll find Reliance Automotive Inc., but in 1904, whatever it was, it was also an easy walk from the Louisiana Purchase Exposition.

It makes sense that he would go. There are references to other fairs in his letters (a mention of visiting Philadelphia in 1876; an acknowledgment that his wife, Ella, was headed to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 while he was away working on the Boundary Survey); even a mention of the St. Louis Exposition in a letter he wrote from the Philippines in July of 1904 to his daughter Lillian.[6]

And perhaps more significant than a history of interest in world's fairs was the exposition involvement of men who had become important correspondents and colleagues for Mearns throughout his military service. His Smithsonian contacts were deeply involved in planning the federal government's displays at the fair, and Mearns had been sending material to the museum

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[5] Ibid.

[6] See October 8, 1876 entry in Field Book, Box 8, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH; Edgar Mearns to Ella Mearns, October 15, 1893, Box 1, folder 18, Family Correspondence-1893, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Edgar Mearns to Lillian Mearns, July 22, 1904, Box 21, folder 1, Edgar Alexander Mearns Papers, Record Unit 7083, NMNH.

for decades. Perhaps he wanted to see how the museum might represent the landscapes of his service.

So if he did walk through the gates of Forest Park in November of 1904, what would Mearns have seen?[7] He might have come through the gates at the Agricultural Entrance; it would have been the most convenient entrance if he was coming from the address at McPherson Avenue and Kingshighway. This looks like the back way in; rather than beginning with the main picture—the Grand Basin and its surrounding lagoons, the palaces fanned out around the fair's central feature—visitors entering here would find themselves close to the Horticulture and Agriculture buildings, which bordered Arrowhead Lake and the Philippines Exposition. To get into the Philippines Exposition, Mearns would have paid the entrance fee and walked over the bridge of Spain—or rather, a replica of the bridge of Spain, a bridge he'd certainly encountered in Manila. The bridge led into a replica of Manila's Walled City, or *intramuros*, the inner core of the capital city. It would have been strange—even amusing, maybe—to see a place he'd experienced so recently in real-life replicated here for fairgoers willing to pay the fee to enter.

The *Official Catalogue* of the Philippine section of the fair described the "Archipelago" as "practically a new country" despite the "nearly four hundred years since the flag of Spain was

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[7] Other fairgoers documented their experiences of the fair, and though Mearns would have seen these things differently, shaped by his own knowledge and experiences of these places and products, their perspectives offer a place to start. Fair history isn't usually told from the perspective of the fairgoers; rather (much like my own chapter 5), it examines the process of an exposition's planning, construction, and impact. See, for example, Robert Rydell, *All the World's A Fair*. In *Whose Fair?* James Gilbert pays more attention to fairgoers, but he focuses more on memory than on how fairgoers made sense of what they encountered in the moment. Even when discussing individual displays or exhibits, the emphasis is on what was there for visitors to see, what planners intended for them to see, rather than on what visitors saw or understood when they encountered the narratives of these grand expositions. My book project will include a sixth chapter focused on how fairgoers experienced American and Philippine nature on display at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair.

first raised over Philippine territory and its metes and bounds have been traced upon the map of the world." It was a land of opportunity, "practically a new country," "practically a *terra incognita*," its island interiors "never seen by white men."[8] Mearns, of course, had traveled far more throughout the southern part of the archipelago than most. He'd seen the archipelago's possibilities, described here at the fair as opportunities for American investment. Before "the occupation of the islands by the forces of the United States," the guide explained, "definite information [about the Philippines] was not obtainable, nor did the people of the Philippines have any information as to the rest of the world."[9] Now all that had changed—and Mearns had been part of it, part of the work being done "to acquaint the world with the resources, both actual and potential, of the islands."[10] One outcome of that work was this partnership at the fair, this effort to "promote a closer sympathy and union between these two peoples," and for "the people of the United States—in fact, the world—" to "become acquainted with the Philippines and the Philippines with the United States."[11]

To do this, the Philippine Exposition contained several exhibits that mirrored the broader categories of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition as a whole: sections on education, art, liberal arts, manufactures, machinery, transportation, agriculture, mines and metallurgy, forestry, fish and game, social economy, ethnology, physical culture. And there was a war exhibit, accompanied by representatives of the Philippine Constabulary, which included weapons used by soldiers on both sides. The *Official Catalogue* editorialized that the artifacts on display, which included "many interesting specimens of war weapons of the wild people," told "a varied and

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[8] W. P. Wilson, "Introduction," *Official Catalogue, Philippine Exhibits*, 7.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., 8.

interesting story of the peculiarly misdirected and undirected struggle against America—as yet frequently distrusted and very little understood."[12]

How might Mearns have seen this overall project of representing the Philippines? The picture of the islands on display was peaceful, but just a few months earlier he'd been using his collecting shotgun to fire at hostile Moros, been tending to wounded colleagues, been preparing dead soldiers for their journey home. Did he wonder at an exhibit that affirmed that the Philippines were won, the war over? I wonder if these scenes felt true to him, or if he found them unsettling. Photographs of the fair, especially those taken by Jesse Tarbox Beals, emphasize the domestic, ordinary ways of life on display, and, as Laura Wexler has argued, make Beals "complicit in keeping offstage any vision of the violence of the pacification of a people."[13] Did Mearns recognize those fair scenes? Did he agree with the depiction of the Philippines as a new Eden, an opportunity for American investment, a place filled with people in need of civilizing? Or was he mostly interested in what the islands could contribute to science, to identifying and ordering the natural world? (And could he separate the work of science from the American imperial project? Did he even want to?)[14]

The highlight of the Philippines Exposition, most visitors and official histories seem to agree, were the living exhibits, the "villages" depicting the so-called daily life of different Filipino groups.[15] Newspaper coverage focused on concerns about whether the Igorots were wearing enough clothes, and on the barbarity of eating dogs. And the interest some lady fairgoers

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[12] *Official Catalogue, Philippine Exhibits,* 293.
[13] Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence,* 282.
[14] Of the Philippines Exposition, Robert Rydell has written, "No exhibit at any exposition better fulfilled the imperial aspirations of its sponsors.' See Rydell, *All the World's A Fair,* 170.
[15] For photographs—and wonderfully insightful commentary on the place of photography, anthropology, subjects, and objects at the fair, see Eric Breitbart, *A World on Display: Photographs from the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

took in members of the Philippine Scouts and Constabulary heightened anxieties about race, class, and masculinity—and led to actual violence, with Marines and guards scuffling with Filipino soldiers and threatening "the Gu-Gus."[16] So the "utopian vision of American imperialism" on display at the Fair was a tenuous one, even in exhibit form.[17]

These encounters with Filipinos were new for most fairgoers, and they seem to have been at times intrigued, at times appalled, and certainly entertained by the practices of people that the fair presented as savage, as primitive, but also as worthy of—and capable of—being "civilized."[18] But Mearns wouldn't have seen them only in that way. Many of his Philippine field books contain vocabulary lists, words for birds and plants and weapons in the many languages of the people he encountered during his service. Would he have attempted to interact, to use these words to communicate with the Filipino people living on display at the fair? Or would he have simply looked, watched, marveled at their handwork and their crafts and customs, together with all of the other visitors to the fair?

Maybe when he crossed back over Arrowhead Lake, he wandered toward the Indian School, or the Anthropology Department, toward where the native peoples of the American West, along with indigenous peoples from all over the world, were assigned space to live and work as exhibits. Did he visit Geronimo, a man he would have remembered from his very first military assignment in Arizona Territory?[19] It's possible that they'd met before, on one or more

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[16] Ibid, 177.
[17] Ibid, 183.
[18] See Kramer, *The Blood of Government*, especially chapter 4, "Tensions of Exposition: Mixed Messages at the St. Louis World's Fair."
[19] On the representation of Indian people at world's fairs, and in particular, on the range of arguments about empire conveyed through these representations ("living" exhibits, staged battles, an Indian Congress, etc.) at the Omaha Trans-Mississippi and International Expositions in 1898 and 1899, see Bonnie M. Miller, "The Incoherencies of Empire: The 'Imperial' Image of the Indian at the Omaha World's Fairs of 1898-99," *American Studies* No. 3/4 (Fall/Winter

of the trips Mearns had taken with General Crook to reservation lands under his management. Did encountering Geronimo in 1904, twenty years later, call up visions of himself as a younger man, a new soldier on an American frontier? Did he see the connections between the West and the Philippines, American frontiers on both sides of the Pacific? I wonder if he recognized that he—and men like him—served to link these landscapes, these projects of expansion and empire.

The planners and curators crafting the narratives on display worked very hard to naturalize the relationship between the Louisiana Purchase and the acquisition of the Philippines, to tell a story that made one follow, almost inevitably, from the other. But Mearns—and Ovenshine, Bowen, Steele, Lawton, and so many others—had lived these linkages, had crossed from the American West to the Philippine Islands, and returned home again after laboring on both frontiers. American soldiers, through their words and their work, constructed and collected American frontiers. They performed the work of empire ably, but sometimes also critiqued it, or expressed uncertainty, ambivalence, anxiety about this work and its implications. And everywhere—on the Plains, in the desert, on the Philippine coast, in the Mindanao forests and mountains—the natural world astounded, challenged, and sometimes even rewarded soldiers as they labored. Mearns, in particular, drew from the landscapes of his service an incredible record, an archive not just of nature on American frontiers, but of the tangled work of American empire and environmental knowledge production.

If Mearns did indeed attend the fair between November 24 and November 30, 1904, he would have arrived just in time. The fair's final day was December 1, 1904. The final day of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition was decreed "David Francis Day," in honor of Francis's efforts

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2008), pp. 39-62. I look forward to examining the different arguments about nature and empire on display at St. Louis in the book project's sixth chapter.

both to bring the Fair to St. Louis and orchestrate such a spectacular event. Edward Schneiderhahn, writing to himself in his diary, described the final moments of the fair this way:

> There were many about you but your thoughts were your own, and you hardly know whether you could give them aptly and accurately…At promptly 12 o'clock President Francis turned the switch that controlled the power and the light. The flood of light grew fainter and fainter and of a sudden all was darkness. The Cascades were silent. The scene was dead. Passed into history forever."[20]

Schneiderhahn wasn't wrong; the scale, the spectacle, the scenery—this particular combination of artifacts, specimens, people, palaces would never again be illuminated in quite this way. But although the Fair "was dead," "passed into history forever," the ideas on display were very much alive. And the landscapes of the West and the Philippines, with their natural and human histories, their unknown futures, were very real. Edgar Mearns knew that as well as anybody. And a few months after the close of the fair, he would make his way back through the West and across the Pacific to report for another tour of duty in Mindanao, drawing another line, building another link between frontiers West and further West, between nature and empire, between the varied landscapes where he labored in the service of both the United States and natural history.

[20] Edward Schneiderhahn, Schneiderhahn Diaries, Reprinted in Clevenger, *Indescribably Grand*, 50.

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