

AGENTS OF EMPIRE:
THE FRONTIER U.S. ARMY AND THE TRANSITION FROM THE WAR WITH SPAIN TO
THE OCCUPATION OF CUBA

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ABSTRACT

John R. Rhodes: Agents of Empire: The Frontier U.S. Army and the Transition from the War with Spain to the Occupation of Cuba
(Under the direction of Joseph T. Glatthaar)

This dissertation examines how the U.S. Army conducted a successful initial occupation of Santiago, Cuba, after the Spanish surrender of eastern Cuba to General William R. Shafter's Fifth Corps on July 17, 1898. U.S. Army officers replicated and adapted lessons learned from their frontier and Reconstruction experiences to evacuate Spanish prisoners, relieve humanitarian crises, discover the causes of tropical fevers, control the Cuban population, establish a logistical infrastructure, and create a military government. Their actions during the occupation of Santiago became the model for how the U.S. Army conducted the remainder of its occupation of Cuba. Based on both published government records, newspapers, and memoirs; and unpublished personal papers, letters, diaries, and official correspondence collected from three archives, this study shows how the U.S. Army used a blend of coercion and conciliation during the occupation to disband the Cuban Liberation Army and delegitimize the Cuban revolutionary government. With firm control over the Cuban population and the creation of a loyal constabulary, and with no serious political or military challenger, the U.S. Army gave government officials in Washington the time to determine unilaterally the future relationship between Cuba and the United States.

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

When General José Toral surrendered the Spanish army defending the city of Santiago de Cuba and the surrounding province to the United States on July 17, 1898, the U.S. Army encountered a host of problems. The veteran Fifth Corps, composed of the Army's regulars and a few of its best volunteer units, had done all the fighting in Santiago, but had become paralyzed as a sizable portion of it fell victim to fevers and dysentery. The War Department needed to evacuate the entire corps to a healthier climate, leaving behind a small cadre of regular officers to administer the province, aided by a few regiments of newly recruited volunteers. Simultaneously, the Army assumed responsibility for the care and safeguarding of 24,000 Spanish prisoners from potentially vengeful Cubans until the War Department could transport them back to Spain. The biggest problem that the U.S. Army faced, however, was occupying much of eastern Cuba, an area ravaged by three years of civil war. Not only were hundreds of Cubans dying each day from disease and starvation, but the fighting had also destroyed the island's infrastructure, farms, and livestock, preventing any hope of a rapid economic recovery. Because neither the McKinley administration nor the War Department provided satisfactory long-term policy directives during the initial occupation, the U.S. Army's officers relied on both their past experiences as a constabulary on the American frontier and familiar institutional norms to improvise the occupation of Santiago without a long-term understanding of the future relationship between Cuba and the United States.

This dissertation will examine the conduct of the U.S. Army during the initial occupation of Santiago until the beginning of the complete occupation of Cuba on January 1, 1899. It is primarily a study of how the U.S. Army transitioned out of a conventional war to become an army of occupation charged with conducting what we would call “nation building” today, and of the challenges the officers and soldiers faced in the process of making that transition. This work also attempts to reveal the complex array of experiential, institutional, and practical military factors that interacted to shape the U.S. Army’s behavior in Cuba.

This work argues that the Department of Santiago was effectively a testing ground. During the initial occupation, American officers employed methods that became the model for how the U.S. Army conducted the remainder of its occupation of Cuba. After thirty years of acting as the “multipurpose army” for the federal government, U.S. Army officers had the skills and experience necessary to deal with the Cuban population and enforce American policy.¹ Drawing upon past practices on the frontier, they instinctively improvised an effective occupation strategy that consisted of disbanding the Cuban Army, establishing a monopoly of military force, controlling the Cubans by garrisoning forces in Cuban population centers, administering the island’s revenues, and creating a functioning military government. Besides President William McKinley’s limited guidance and accepted norms of international law, the Army’s decisions and actions in Santiago reflected the institution’s cultural norms, the past experiences of its soldiers and officers, and the influence of social and political trends—including humanitarianism, ethnocentric prejudices, and progressive government.

Other scholars who have examined the U.S. occupation of Cuba have emphasized racial ideology and imperialistic motivations as the main forces influencing the occupation. There is no

¹ A term first used by Michael L. Tate in a 1980 article. Later Tate used the term extensively in *The Frontier Army*

question that strongly held ethnocentric beliefs influenced the daily thoughts and actions of the American soldiers in Cuba. It is ironic, however, that at the very moment the practice of American overseas imperialism was being pioneered for the first time, all but the highest-ranking officers in Santiago did not concern themselves with notions of American hegemony and geopolitical interests. Instead, these agents of empire, who on a daily basis translated American power into action, acted pragmatically to resolve the numerous problems inherent to occupation and nation building. I contend that critical humanitarian and military problems, the U.S. Army's institutional culture, and American progressive reform movements played a significant role in determining the actions and decisions of the U.S. Army's officers during the initial occupation. Understandably, contemporary American values and their previous military experiences influenced the U.S. Army officers. Almost all of them firmly believed in the progressive goals of efficient and "modern" administration and economic, administrative, and social reforms. Not only were these reform impulses in Santiago comparable to the various organizational reform programs being promoted in American civil society, but the officers also shared many of the same humanitarian concerns and ethnocentric beliefs as their civilian associates. Most unfortunately, these strongly nationalistic U.S. Army officers never doubted that every perceived ill in Cuban society could be remedied by adopting "superior" American practices and institutions.

Just as contemporary reform movements and American values influenced the Army's officers, their experience as a constabulary on the American frontier strongly influenced their actions during the initial occupation of Cuba. The logistical debacle that occurred while transporting and supplying the Fifth Corps during the fighting around Santiago clearly demonstrated that the U.S. Army was institutionally unprepared for overseas expeditions and

conventional warfare on a large scale. However, the post-Civil War Army did have a long tradition of controlling Native Americans, settlers, and strikers; dealing with humanitarian emergencies; and sustaining small garrisons on the North American continent. Generations of Army officers formed, molded, and internalized a pacification doctrine that blended coercion with conciliation.² The U.S. Army's method of conquest passed to each new generation of officers through experience, and they brought these tried and true methods of occupation to guide them through the Cuban experience. In essence, the U.S. Army's career officers had spent most of their time in service implementing imperialistic U.S. government policies on civilian populations in North America. The occupations of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, Hawaii, and the Philippines were just their first experiences doing it overseas. Nor was it their first foray into occupying people of different culture, language, and skin color. Relying on their many past experiences, the U.S. Army instinctively set about disbanding the Cuban Liberation Army to monopolize military force, gaining control of government revenue, and garrisoning the towns in Santiago province to control the Cuban population and implement the McKinley administration's policies.

After Spain surrendered the last remnants of its once mighty overseas empire, the United States faced new crises in managing these unstable peripheries that were populated by what they considered to be racial minorities. Racial prejudices prevented white Americans from perceiving the people of Spain's former island colonies as being compatible with the republican ideology of the United States. It took over two years before the United States found a solution to this dilemma by abandoning the concept of assimilating Spain's island colonies in favor of new strategy of hegemonic control and limited interventions. While the McKinley administration,

² Brain McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 9.

Congress, and the American people debated, as Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton have stated, the “distinctly American dilemma” of how to “exercise a coercive national power and maintain the commitment to universal freedom” in Spain’s former colonies, the U.S. Army maintained order, as it had done for decades, not knowing the outcome of the debate.³

The few scholars who have studied the U.S. occupation of Cuba from 1898 to 1902 have focused largely on the policy debates and decisions that contributed to the creation and the implementation of the Platt Amendment, which stripped Cuba of much of its sovereignty, as a precondition for the withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Cuba. But why did the Cubans allow the hated amendment to be added to their constitution? By establishing a monopoly over government finances and military force and by ending the immediate humanitarian crises, the U.S. Army gave officials in Washington time to decide on a foreign policy for future bilateral relations with Cuba. Examining how the U.S. Army forcefully asserted control over the Cuban population can produce a greater understanding of how a successful post-conflict military occupation allowed the occupier to dictate future policy.

Historiography

At noon on July 17, 1898, U.S. soldiers raised the American flag over the Governor’s Palace in Santiago de Cuba. In the plaza below, the 9th Infantry, along with General William Rufus Shafter and his staff, presented arms. As the colors rose, wrote Secretary of War Russell A. Alger, “a salute of twenty-one guns was fired, and our bands played the ‘Star Spangled

³ Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton, *The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500-2000* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 424 and xix.

Banner.’ The campaign in Cuba was at an end.’⁴ In Alger’s memoir, *The Spanish-American War*, the ceremony served as a picture-perfect conclusion to the fighting in Cuba before the author shifted the focus of his narrative on the War with Spain to the military campaigns in Puerto Rico and the Philippines. Alger gives only cursory accounts of the onset of yellow and malarial fever within the ranks of the victorious U.S. Army’s Fifth Corps and their subsequent evacuation to Montauk Point, New York, to recover from their tropical ailments. Ten years later, the former Commanding General of the Army, Nelson A. Miles, released his memoirs *Serving the Republic* for many of the same reasons as Alger.⁵ The two heads of the War Department had faced harsh criticisms from the press for their inadequate preparation and planning for the war, their immature enmity towards one another, and their poor handling of the Santiago campaign. Although primarily motivated to defend their authors from allegations of gross mismanagement by their rivals and the press, these memoirs also provided idealistic and nationalistic narrative accounts of the entire War with Spain. Unfortunately, neither memoir provides information on the Army’s subsequent occupation of Santiago Province.

For more than fifty years after the first narrative histories of the War with Spain were released, English-language academic studies on the War with Spain, including Walter Millis’s *The Martial Spirit* (1931) and Frank Freidel’s *The Splendid Little War* (1958), still gave only cursory accounts of the evacuation of the disease-ridden Fifth Corps after the surrender of the Spanish garrison and provided no account of the subsequent occupation.⁶ In the liberal

⁴ Russell A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 220.

⁵ Nelson A. Miles, *Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson A. Miles, Lieutenant-General, United States Army* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911).

⁶ Frank Freidel, *The Splendid Little War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1958). Walter Millis, *The Martial Spirit: A Study of Our War with Spain* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931).

muckraking tradition of the time, Millis and Freidel worked to scandalize the War Department's performance during the war. These authors highlighted the dysfunctional command relationship between Alger and Miles, the logistical debacle that was the Santiago campaign, and the near destruction of the Fifth Corps by disease. Despite their criticisms of the U.S. Army's execution of the campaign, they still did little to expose the less-than-selfless causes of the conflict. Traces of the persistent imperialist myth of the Americans intervening in Cuba to take up the "White Man's Burden" by saving the helpless Cubans from the tyrannical oppression of the Spaniards in order to civilize them in American democracy remain in these two works.⁷

In *An Army for Empire* (1971), Graham A. Cosmas, an official Army historian, wrote a somewhat defensive account of the war in response to Millis and Freidel's narratives. Relying primarily on War Department records and personal memoirs, Cosmas explains the causes behind the U.S. Army's logistical and organizational difficulties during the war. Furthermore, he demonstrates how America's domestic politics and military strategy and the War Department's archaic organizational structure account for why the U.S. Army entered the War with Spain unprepared for foreign conquest and occupation. Despite these difficulties, Cosmas concludes that by 1899 the War Department had overcome its pre-war deficiencies through a process of "improvisation, trial, and error" to become an army capable of administering an empire.⁸

In 1981, David F. Trask published what most historians consider the definitive history of the conflict from the perspective of the United States.⁹ In *The War with Spain in 1898*, Trask

⁷ Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden," *McClure's Magazine* 12 (February 1899).

⁸ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), 326.

⁹ Anne Cipriano Venzon, *America's War with Spain: A Selected Biography* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 50.

provides a detailed and impeccably researched account of the war from its origins to the Senate's ratification of the Treaty of Paris. Given the length and scope of Trask's monograph, it is understandable that he did not analyze the subsequent occupation of Spain's former colonies. Trask does, however, provide the most comprehensive account of the immediate aftermath of the fighting in Santiago de Cuba.¹⁰ Trask fully acknowledges that the War with Spain created an American empire, but refutes the notion that President William McKinley wanted a war with Spain or had any intention acquiring overseas possessions. Instead, Trask believes that McKinley did everything possible to avoid the war, "and was most reluctant to support annexation of the Philippine Islands" or to violate the Teller Amendment and acquire Cuba.¹¹

American military historians have focused their investigations of the War with Spain on an analysis of the U.S. military's performance during the war and examined the causal factors that explain the Army's poor performance compared to the U.S. Navy. Most of these military historians see McKinley as being reluctant to go to war and pragmatic when dealing with Spain's former overseas possessions. Historians outside the field, however, have used the construct of imperialism as the causal determinant to explain United States motives for going to war in 1898, as well as to explain the actions of American politicians, civilians, and soldiers towards the people in Spain's former colonies after the war ended. Influenced by the works of Charles and Mary Beard, Julius W. Pratt, William Appleman Williams, and Walter La Feber, revisionist historians see economic interests and expansionist ideology driving American imperialism. These historians blame United States overseas expansion in 1898 on business interests that wanted to open new markets in China and Latin America to sell the excess goods produced by

¹⁰ David F. Trask, *The War With Spain in 1898* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996).

¹¹ *Ibid.*

American farms and factories, and a powerful clique of navalists who advocated for a “large policy” of American overseas expansion. Later, “New Left” historians accepted the economic motivations for overseas expansion, but they argued that race was also an important factor in explaining United States imperialist expansion, disenfranchisement, and oppression.¹²

The economic, expansionist, and ideological variables assumed under the construct of imperialism remain the standard scholarly tools to analyze United States foreign policy at the twilight of the nineteenth century. When applied to specific case studies, however, imperialism is usually inadequate to account for the complex domestic factors involved in specific American foreign policy decision-making. For example, David Trask and Gerald F. Linderman both give very specific evidence to support the argument that McKinley continuously sought a peaceful resolution with Spain over the Cuban crises until political pressure generated by the American public, Congress, and the press finally compelled him to intervene, demonstrating the limits of presidential power. Furthermore, many historians rule out economic motives for going to war against Spain and argue that the majority of influential businessmen were actually against waging a costly war.¹³ Leftist historians simply counter these assertions by arguing that deep-

¹² Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The Rise of American Civilization*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), 2:369-382; Julius William Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898; the Acquisition of Hawaii and the Spanish Islands* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1936); William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1959); and Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1963). Also see Ernest R. May, *American Imperialism: A Speculative Essay* (New York: Atheneum, 1968); Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); and Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002). Julius Pratt introduced the U.S. Foreign policy concept known as the “large policy” in his article “The ‘Large Policy’ of 1898,” *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 19, no. 2 (September 1932): 219-42.

¹³ David F. Trask, *The War With Spain in 1898* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 508-509; Gerald F. Linderman, *The Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974), 24-36; Tom E. Terrill “An Economic Aspect of the Spanish-American War,” *Ohio History* 76 (Winter-Spring, 1967): 73-75; David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963); and Lars Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic: The United States and the Cuban Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,

seated imperial impulses within American society overwhelmed McKinley's better judgment. A detailed study of why the United States went to war with Spain is outside the scope of this dissertation. Moreover, historians who are firmly entrenched on either side of the ideological divide over the nature of U.S. foreign policy are unlikely to change their views without compelling new evidence.

Racial views varied among the members of the U.S. Army occupying Santiago. The majority of Americans held strong prejudices against Cubans, especially those of African descent, but a minority of soldiers held progressive views favoring racial equality. By comparison, a belief in America's cultural superiority among the U.S. Army's soldiers over the Cubans was ubiquitous. Even African-American officers and soldiers, who composed nearly half of the troops occupying Santiago, felt that the customs and culture of the United States were superior to those of the Spanish and Cubans. Army officers also believed that United States institutions were superior to those of Western European countries, perhaps with the exception of Britain, and that the Cubans were not ready for self-government. The exceptionalist beliefs of the American soldiers in Cuba gives credence to William Appleman Williams's thesis that Americans typically intervene in foreign countries for perceived humanitarian motives and believe in the right of each nation's people to self-determination, but that foreign "people cannot *really* solve their problems and improve their lives unless they go about it in the same way as the United States."¹⁴ Such beliefs strongly influenced the actions of the U.S. Army officers in Santiago.

2009); James L. Abrahamson, *American Arms for a New Century: The Making of a Great Military Power* (New York: Free Press, 1981).

¹⁴ Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 13-14.

Although the Army's officers had gained experience in occupation duty and controlling civilian populations in the thirty years before the occupation, they had not been asked to administer a military government since Reconstruction. The wide range of proposed government, business, and social reforms in the United States gave the Army's officers in Santiago many options for organizing their military government and reforming Spanish institutions and laws. Unfortunately, while implementing these American-style reforms, the Army's officers generally disregarded Cuban cultural norms, which made many of their changes unpopular and short lived.

Besides ethnocentrism and nationalism, U.S. Army officers shared other contemporary values with the larger American society. The occupation of Cuba coincided with the Progressive Era. Military historians examining the late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth century have argued that the bureaucratic reforms and professionalization in the U.S. Army during these decades were directly influenced by the larger reform impulses occurring across the United States.¹⁵ In *America Arms for an New Century*, James L. Abrahamson contends that the reform-minded officers who fought for organizational reforms, institutional modernization, and professionalization in the U.S. Army from 1880-1920 came from the same social class and maintained close intellectual and social ties to the middle-class professionals who Richard Hofstadter and Robert Wiebe contend drove the search for order in the turn of the century.¹⁶ Abrahamson's middle-class reforming officers shared many of the characteristics with Wiebe's

¹⁵ John M. Gates, "The Alleged Isolation of US Army Officers in the late 19th Century," *Parameters* 10 (Spring 1980): 33-37, 40-42; Edward M. Coffman, "The Long Shadow of *The Soldier and the State*" *The Journal of Military History* 55, no. 1 (January 1991): 69-82; Jack C. Lane *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael: Presidio Press, 1977); Abrahamson, *American Arms for a New Century*; and Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Leavenworth Schools and the Old Army: Education, Professionalism, and the Officer Corps of the United States Army, 1881-1918* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1978).

¹⁶ Abrahamson, *American Arms for a New Century*, xiii-xv.

Progressives, who tried to apply their professional expertise and scientific management techniques to the problems created by modern industrialization.¹⁷

Although an increasing number of historians no longer view Progressive Era reformers as a homogeneous group, scholars continue to discern underlying impulses common to the era's diverse reform campaigns. Peter Filene's 1970 article, "Obituary for the 'Progressive Movement'" convincingly refutes the Hofstadter-Wiebe notion of a homogeneous group of Progressives or a unified reform movement.¹⁸ Twelve years later, Daniel T. Rodgers agreed with Filene's arguments, but offered an alternative explanation. Rodgers viewed the progressive reformers as a pluralistic array of politically active interest groups, each attempting to rally a coalition to support their varied interests in a period that saw American society rapidly changing in response to industrialization and the decay of the old party patronage system.¹⁹

Rodgers's pluralistic model of the Progressive Era's reform impulses actually strengthens Abrahamson's thesis in some ways. Rogers's notion of a wide variety of distinct reform movements obviates the need to insist that reform-minded Army officers originated from the middle class and formed close ideological ties to the other middle-class reformers with whom they frequently associated. Instead, Rodgers's emphasis on clusters of reformers bolsters Abrahamson's central thesis that the military reformers sought popular support for intra-service technological, professional, and organizational reforms that the officers thought necessary to

¹⁷ Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F. D. R.* (New York: Knopf, 1955), 5-10; Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 111-113.

¹⁸ Peter G. Filene, "An Obituary for 'The Progressive Movement'," *American Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1970): 20-34.

¹⁹ Daniel T. Rodgers, "In Search of Progressivism" *Reviews in American History* 10, no. 4 (December 1982): 113-32.

modernize their services to face the challenges of industrial warfare.²⁰ His pluralistic model explains why the officers in the Department of Santiago, and later, the rest of Cuba, adopted some reform ideas but remained disinterested in others. For example, the Army's officers sought to institute the civil service, education, tariff, anti-monopoly, railroad, and judicial reforms proposed by various interest groups in the United States. They did not, however, adopt other initiatives being proposed in the United States, such as those advocating a more participatory democracy, temperance, or support for labor unions.

The current scholarly debate on the War with Spain among diplomatic and Latin American historians centers on the reasons and motivations for the United States's entry into the conflict. Scholarship by military historians tends to examine the competence of the senior leaders, the role of new technologies, or the modernity of the struggle. Regardless of the sub-discipline of the historian, scholars have generally failed to cover the U.S. Army's occupation after the war. Typically, authors either end their narrative after the capture of Santiago de Cuba and the evacuation of the diseased army to Long Island, or they continue their narratives with the fighting in Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

There are only three major English-language monographs that cover the Army's occupation of Cuba from 1898 to 1902. All these works focus on the dynamics of policy formulation in the United States and Cuba that resulted in the Platt Amendment. In *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902*, David F. Healy avoids making overt associations with the contemporary Cuban Missile Crisis, but it is clear that he sees the origins of the Cuban Revolution and the deterioration in U.S.-Cuban relations in the implementation of the Platt

²⁰ Abrahamson, *American Arms for a New Century*, xiv. Also see Peter Karsten, "Armed Progressives: The Military Reorganizes for the American Century," in *Building the Organizational Society: Essays on Associational Activities in Modern America*, ed. Jerry Israel (New York: The Free Press, 1972), 197-232

Amendment. He argues that in 1898 the United States went to war with Spain over Cuba burdened by an internal disagreement on the purposes of the intervention and no policy concerning what to do with Spain's former colonies. As a result of this contentious debate, American legislators, War Department officials, and Army generals all implemented separate and often conflicting policies toward Cuba. The compromise that ensued with the creation of the Cuban constitution, Platt Amendment, and Reciprocity Treaty of 1902 gave Cuba domestic self-rule and a reduced sugar tariff in return for limited national sovereignty and the granting of a naval station at Guantanamo Bay. The compromise agreement failed to satisfy the annexationists, anti-imperialists, War Department, or the Cubans, but all were mollified temporarily.²¹

Soon after Healy published his work, the Vietnam War brought a cultural and academic backlash against American foreign wars and U.S. imperialism. Historians began reexamining the United States' first overseas occupations within the framework of racism, economic interests, class, and American hubris. In *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*, Philip S. Foner applied a Marxist economic and class-based interpretation of history to the U.S. occupation of Cuba. He contended that racist statements by War Department officials, which included the argument that Cubans were incapable of self-government, were made to support moneyed interests that were lobbying for Cuba's annexation to exploit the island and to ensure continued dominance by the wealthy white ruling class. These American interests acceded to limited self-rule by the Cuban plutocracy, but only after the Platt

²¹ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963).

Amendment and discriminatory voting laws guaranteed American economic and political hegemony.²²

Seeing similar economic and racist motives for American intervention in the Cuban War of Independence, Louis A. Pérez Jr., argues in *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* that the large majority of American politicians and generals who were responsible for administering the Cuban interim government believed in the unfitness of Cubans, as racial inferiors, for self-government. Pérez also asserts that century-old desires to annex the island, exploit its economic resources, and prevent Cuban independence motivated the U.S. intervention far more than the American desire to assist the Cubans in gaining independence from Spain.²³ While Trask and Gerald F. Linderman make good arguments against Foner's and Pérez's assertion that McKinley went to war for the explicit purpose of acquiring an overseas empire, Pérez is still right to maintain that at no point in American history would United States policymakers allow Cuba to be transferred to or controlled by another world power other than the United States. Moreover, his assertion that almost all American policymakers and officers maintained "doubts about Cuban fitness for self-government" still holds true after a careful examination of primary sources.²⁴ Most recently, John Lawrence Tone, in *War and Genocide in Cuba*, challenged Foner's and Pérez's arguments that Spain's army in Cuba was essentially defeated before the U.S. intervened militarily in the war. Despite these challenges to some of Pérez's assertions, *Cuba Between Empires* still

²² Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972).

²³ Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 271.

provides the best narrative account of the Cuban War for Independence, the subsequent U.S. occupation, and the Cuban perspective of U.S. imperialism.²⁵

Revisionist historians and non-specialists of these conflicts writing in the years following the Vietnam War focus on the savagery of American overseas conquest and occupation after the War with Spain, especially in the Philippines. Recent scholarship on the Philippine War and subsequent insurrection by Brian McAllister Linn and other specialists of the conflict has challenged this myth. While all admit that many atrocities occurred in the Philippines, Linn meticulously documented how the U.S. Army carefully balanced conciliation and government programs with both violent and non-violent coercion of the insurgents to win over the Filipino population.²⁶ The U.S. occupation of Cuba provides a more compelling case against the revisionist image of the American soldier as a brutal occupier. Throughout the four-year occupation, there are very few instances of U.S. soldiers fighting or violently repressing Cubans outside of ordinary criminal acts by both Americans and Cubans. The revisionist history of American imperialistic foreign policy that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s successfully destroyed the absurd notion of selfless American soldiers arriving to liberate the Cubans from their tyrannical Spanish oppressors and to guide the local inhabitants, unfit for self-government,

²⁵ John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Tone convincingly argues that the Cubans were far from defeating the Spanish at the time of the U.S. intervention, and that the War had reached a sort of stalemate with both armies severely weakened from three years of fighting. Gerald F. Linderman *The Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974). Linderman portrays President McKinley as being seriously committed to avoiding a war with Spain, and he argues that the war was a reaction to domestic tensions rechanneled into a populist moral crusade to liberate Cuba. Trask, *The War With Spain in 1898*. Trask also downplays the importance of imperial motivations for the United States's War with Spain. He asserts that President William McKinley attempted to avoid starting a war with Spain until at the last moment he gave into overwhelming political pressures at home. Cosmas and Healy echo Trask's portrayals of President McKinley's motives for going to war.

²⁶ Brian McAllister Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000). Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

on their path to emulate American democracy and civilization. However, the admirable moral outrage over U.S. overseas imperialism has, in many cases, unfairly stereotyped the U.S. Army and its soldiers as brutal and racist killers.²⁷ The truth is far more complex than either of these simplistic interpretations suggest. The U.S. Army and its heterogeneous soldiers were neither completely violent oppressors nor entirely selfless humanitarians.

None of these published works adequately investigate the five months that the Army was in Santiago before the formal occupation of the entire island began. The gap in the historical coverage is troublesome because the initial occupation campaign by the U.S. Army to establish civil and military control over the Province of Santiago significantly shaped how the U.S. Army later occupied the rest of the island. The methods established by the Army in Santiago to monopolize military force, control revenue, and govern gave the War Department and the McKinley administration the necessary time to formulate a policy. Without already having the military power to control the Cuban population, the United States would not have been in the position of power necessary to impose the Platt Amendment on Cuba in 1902. By ignoring the operational history of the initial occupation of Santiago by the U.S. Army in favor of investigations on the formulation and imposition of U.S. imperial policy, historians have neglected essential questions as to how the Army occupied and controlled Cuba.

The lack of an operational history on how the U.S. Army occupied Cuba highlights a glaring deficiency in the field of military history. Historians in this field naturally focus their studies on wars and conflicts in which armies engage in combat. For example, there are hundreds of English-language military histories on the relatively short hundred-day War with Spain but

²⁷ Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000). Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

only three books on the subsequent four-year occupation of Cuba; of those, none is written by authors who would identify themselves as specialists in military history. Likewise, there have been hundreds of books and articles written on the U.S. Army counterinsurgency operations in the Philippines, which occurred simultaneously with the U.S. Army's occupation of Cuba. The lack of an operational study of the Army's role during the occupation of Cuba has led historians to ignore the role that all but the top generals played or simply to assume that the Army's officers and soldiers were motivated by the same economic and political interests as leading policymakers and executives in the United States.

Although military historians continue to focus their studies on investigations of wars, and more recently counterinsurgency operations, they have produced only a relatively small body of quality monographs on the U.S. Army's overseas occupations and operations on the American frontier. In 1975, Earl F. Ziemke published an excellent work for the Army Historical Series on the U.S. Army's planning and execution of the occupation of Germany from 1944-1946.²⁸ The two best works describing the problems the U.S. Army faced occupying the South during Reconstruction are Mark L. Bradley's *Bluecoats and Tar Heels* and James E. Sefton's *The United States Army and Reconstruction*.²⁹ Brian Linn's *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army in the Pacific, 1902-1940* provides the best example of a historian combining a cultural history of

²⁸ Earl F. Ziemke, *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany, 1944-1946* (Washington D.C.: Center for Military History, United States Army, 1975).

²⁹ Mark L. Bradley, *Bluecoats and Tar Heels: Soldiers and Civilians in Reconstruction North Carolina* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 2011). James E. Sefton, *The United States Army and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967).

the U.S. Army's soldiers and officers with a strategic study of national defense and occupation policy.³⁰

For the second occupation of Cuba by the U.S. Army, which lasted from 1906 to 1909, Allan Millett produced an excellent study demonstrating that the decision to intervene into Cuba's domestic political turmoil was unpopular with President Theodore Roosevelt and his advisors. Millett examines how the Army's officers effectively established order, thwarted Cuban annexationists, and maintained an efficient administration. While Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge were eager to implement the minimum reforms and stability necessary to withdraw before the elections, the Army officers wanted to stay much longer to root out the culture of corruption and anarchy that they believed was at the heart of Cuba's domestic problems. Millett's *The Politics of Intervention* shows how problematic it is for scholars to assume that the U.S. Army's officers share the same ideological motivations as U.S. policymakers, or that ardent imperialists like Roosevelt were always driven toward expansion or annexation.³¹

There are no studies equivalent to those done by Millett, Linn, or Cosmas that specifically investigate the operational history of the U.S. Army's role during the initial occupation of Cuba. Consequently, a host of important questions remain unanswered. How did the Army deal with the humanitarian and security crises it inherited in and around Santiago de Cuba? What, if any, guidance did the Army receive from the War Department and the McKinley Administration? If there was no long-term American policy for the initial occupation, what factors determined how the Army dealt with the Cubans and the Spanish in Santiago Province?

³⁰ Brian McAllister Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

³¹ Allan R. Millett, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1968).

The constructs of race and imperialism alone are insufficient to answer these questions. An operational study of the occupation will reveal that the Army's officers and soldiers were also working within the framework of their unique institutional norms as well as contemporary American societal values.

To understand the U.S. Army's institutional culture during the occupation, I will depend on the historical studies of the Army's culture and experiences in the thirty years preceding the War with Spain. The most commonly referenced works providing insight into the U.S. Army's interaction with Native Americans are Robert M. Utley's *Frontier Regulars* and Robert Wooster's *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903*.³² Both authors provide excellent accounts of the U.S. Army's "peacetime" experience living among, and sometimes fighting, the Indians in the American West during the thirty years following the Civil War. In his social history, *The Old Army*, Edward M. Coffman provides a comprehensive analysis of the U.S. Army's institutional culture from the founding of the Republic to the eve of the War with Spain.³³

Expanding on the work of Coffman and Utley, Michael L. Tate's *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West*, explores the wide range of other activities the U.S. Army performed that helped settle the American West besides their traditional role as an Indian-fighting constabulary.³⁴ One of the many roles of the multipurpose army that Tate examines is the U.S.

³² Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974).

³³ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). Also, see Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963). The best study of the Navy's institutional culture before the War with Spain is Peter Karsten's *The Naval Aristocracy: The Golden Age of Annapolis and the Emergence of Modern American Navalism* (New York: Free Press, 1972).

³⁴ Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999).

Army's work as the first managers and protectors of the United States' fledgling national parks. In *Nature's Army*, Harvey Meyerson provides a more detailed study of how the cavalry of the United States acted as stewards of Yosemite by protecting it from herders and land prospectors alike.³⁵ In the process of administering the national parks, the U.S. army built roads, mapped the country, and set the precedent for the National Park Service. Utilization of the works by these scholars to understand the how the U.S. Army's institutional culture developed before 1898 provides the best contextual framework to understand the decisions and choices made by the U.S. Army's officers and soldiers during the occupation.

Most of the regular Army officers who conducted the occupation of Cuba spent years, if not decades, in the Army serving on the frontier as a constabulary force. The U.S. Army established the regulations, behavioral norms, and organizational and administrative structures for garrisoning territory and self-administration throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. To a large degree, the institutional culture that the U.S. Army developed in the decades following the American Civil War patterned its behavior during the occupation of Cuba.

In *Absolute Destruction*, Isabel V. Hull examines the imperial German military from 1870 to 1918 to understand why it developed a military culture of extremism with genocidal tendencies. Hull defines military culture as the "habitual practices, default programs, hidden assumptions, and unreflected cognitive frames" that drive a military's practices.³⁶ Wayne E. Lee clarifies how Hull's definition of military culture allows for change and individual agency by explaining that "military behavior is strongly patterned by culture, but culture leaves room for

³⁵ Harvey Meyerson, *Nature's Army: When Soldiers Fought for Yosemite* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001).

³⁶ Isabel V. Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 2.

improvisation.”³⁷ Using Hull’s and Lee’s definitions of military culture, it logically follows that to understand the decisions of the U.S. Army’s officers and soldiers, one must first understand the doctrine, training, shared experiences, and other basic organizational assumptions for appropriate behavior that the Army brought to Cuba in 1898 and used as its framework to administer its internal affairs and execute its assigned mission.³⁸

Methodology

This work is an operational military history of the U.S. Army’s initial occupation in Cuba. It examines the U.S. Army’s operations and policies at the provincial level and provides an analysis of the factors that influenced the Army’s officers’ and soldiers’ actions in Santiago. Fortunately, many of the American soldiers who participated in the initial occupation of Cuba documented their experiences in memoirs, diaries, and letters. Most of the high-ranking officers and civilian officials wrote memoirs and many collections of their personal papers and official correspondence are located at the Library of Congress. The U.S. Army Military History Institute (MHI) in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, is an invaluable repository of papers, diaries, and rare published memoirs of a number of subordinate officers and soldiers who either fought with the Fifth Corps or conducted the subsequent occupation of the Department of Santiago. In the 1950s, MHI sent out questionnaires to surviving veterans of the Spanish-American War and Philippine Insurrection. The archivists at MHI filed the responses to these surveys by regiment and attached additional correspondence or records that the veterans sent in with their questionnaires. MHI also holds the most extensive collection of records of published orders, circulars, and annual reports

³⁷ Lee, “Mind and Matter,” 1119.

³⁸ Hull, *Absolute Destruction*, 94-95.

concerning the Spanish-American War and subsequent occupation. Finally, the unpublished records of the War Department and U.S. Army forces in the Department of Santiago are located in Record Group 395 at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. The official correspondence in this record group provides an extensive and detailed look into the occupation of Santiago.

Even though this work primarily focuses on the initial occupation from the U.S. Army's perspective, it is still necessary to understand how Cubans viewed the American occupation. Unfortunately, there are very few published contemporary Cuban accounts of the initial occupation of Santiago. My status as an active-duty U.S. Army officer still prevents me from traveling to Cuba on an ordinary student visa to search archives, despite recent improvements in U.S.-Cuban diplomatic relations. Most scholars studying the occupation rely on two Havana newspapers, *El Diario de la Marina* and *El Mundo*, to gain insight into the Cuban discourse over the American occupation. The issues available in the United States are outside the scope of the dissertation because *El Mundo* did not start publishing until 1901 and no library in the United States has issues of *El Diario de la Marina* before September 1, 1899. To give at least some insight into the Cuban perspective of the U.S. Army and its actions, I used the newspaper *La Lucha* from Havana, and located the few surviving issues of *The Times of Cuba* and *The Santiago Herald* found in the Library of Congress. Due to my minimum access to Cuban sources, I have relied heavily on the excellent work of American scholars of the U.S. Army's occupation, such as Louis A. Pérez, who have thoroughly researched Cuban sources.

Any time an author works with sources in two languages, he must make decisions on what spellings to use for proper nouns with conflicting spellings. In an effort to avoid confusion, I have referred to Cuban organizations and terms by their English names, which appear in the majority of contemporary American sources. In an exception to this rule, I use the Spanish

spelling for personal names and towns in Cuba, with the exception of Havana. Hopefully, this will help the reader to locate the city names on modern maps and eliminate confusion caused by the multiple spellings of geographic locations and personal names that appear in contemporary American accounts. Readers should note, however, that while this dissertation focuses on the initial occupation of *Oriente* Province, the U.S. Army referred to both the province and the military department they created to administer it as Santiago. As the analysis in this dissertation is from the U.S. Army's perspective, I will refer to it as the Department of Santiago or Santiago Province unless I am quoting directly from a Cuban or Spanish source.

Similarly, I refer to the war between the United States and Spain from April 25, 1898, to August 12, 1898, as the War with Spain, the contemporary name used by the U.S. Army. By using this name for the war, I avoid the more familiar, but increasingly unpopular Spanish-American War. Latin American scholars are right to point out that the Cubans and Filipinos had fought the Spanish for years before the United States entered these wars for independence. The Cuban War for Independence (1895-1898) is the best name to describe the conflict from the Cuban and Spanish perspective; however, to the members of the United States armed forces who went to war with Spain across the globe in order to punish them for their alleged sinking of the *Maine* and the atrocities the Spanish army committed against Cuban civilians, the War with Spain remains appropriate. Using the contemporary American name for the conflict is also more preferable than using the most inclusive, but far too cumbersome, Spanish-Cuban-Filipino-American War. I have, however, elected to deviate from using some contemporary U.S. Army terms that are clearly derogatory toward Cubans. For example, I call the Cuban military force that the U.S. government refused to recognize the Cuban Liberation Army or simply the Cuban

army, and I call the members of this army *mambises* or soldiers, instead of insurgents or *insurrectos*.

Examining the occupation of Santiago through the lens of a traditional operational military history is the most coherent way to explain sequentially the process of how the U.S. Army physically occupied and controlled the province of Santiago after the Spanish surrender, ended the humanitarian crises, dealt with the Cuban Liberation Army, and established a military government. To explain why, and not just how, the U.S. Army conducted the occupation in the manner that it did, I will blend traditional military history methods with the approaches used by social, cultural, and political historians to understand the motivations, values, and philosophies of the members of the U.S. Army.³⁹ American officers and soldiers made crucial choices every day in Cuba that determined the nature of the occupation. Their decisions did not occur within a vacuum. Instead, individual officers and soldiers acted sometimes within and sometimes outside the accepted norms of the U.S. Army's institutional culture, their experience of constabulary duty on the American frontier, American foreign policy, domestic politics, the material conditions on the ground in Cuba, and the social predispositions of Army officers and soldiers. Only by blending several different historical forms of analysis can I begin to understand how these complex factors interacted during the occupation.

In writing on a topic as controversial as American empire, I am mindful of my own perspective and background. As an army officer who served two tours in Iraq, I understand how the paradoxical humanitarian and self-interested agendas of American foreign policy only indirectly influence the actions of all but the most senior officers sent overseas to occupy foreign

³⁹ For a concise historiography on the field of military history and explanations on the adoption of social and cultural historical methods into the field, see Wayne E. Lee, "Mind and Matter: Cultural Analysis in American Military History, A Look at the State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 93 (2007): 1116-1162.

countries. It is perfectly reasonable for soldiers who are improvising an occupation and conducting nation-building operations after the termination of conventional fighting to act with little or no consideration of the imperialistic motivations of policymakers, even while acting as agents of empire. It is quite likely that my own experiences, and my heavy reliance on the U.S. Army records and the personal recollections of American soldiers, have influenced my perceptions. Nonetheless, I have found little evidence that the majority of officers and soldiers conducting the initial occupation of Santiago were driven primarily by an imperialistic agenda. Just as today, the American occupation forces in Cuba were motivated to neutralize possible military threats quickly in order to ensure their own safety, establish an efficient logistical system to make their day-to-day living tolerable, and stabilize the occupied nation so they could return home as soon as possible. Although this work argues that the U.S. Army responded to the difficulties inherent to an occupation by acting on limited policy directives and with respect to its own legal, experiential, and institutional norms, this dissertation should not be interpreted as a justification for the Platt Amendment, which severely infringed on Cuban sovereignty and subjugated the fledgling country to a neo-colonial relationship with the United States. Nor should this work be taken as justification for the paternalistic and ethnocentric decisions of many U.S. Army officers, or their almost complete disregard for Cuban cultural norms and rightful claims for real sovereignty.

Finally, in the aftermath of the U.S. military's recent invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, it became evident to both the military and the American public that there was not an adequate or comprehensive plan to occupy the countries once the invading forces defeated the opposing combatants. The administration's and the military planners' failure to think past the conventional fighting had obvious long-term political and strategic consequences. An examination of Cuba

after the fall of Santiago should provide significant insight into how, in the absence of clear post-conflict objectives, occupying soldiers and an occupied people will shape future events and policy through their own daily interactions, sometimes with serious lasting consequences.

Organization

The first chapter begins with a survey of the Cuban War for Independence and a brief examination of the complex reasons why the United States decided to intervene in the war. Spanish diplomatic insults and their alleged sinking of the *Maine* combined with genuine humanitarian concerns over harsh Spanish policies and reprisals against Cubans to provide the catalyst for the American people to push a reluctant president to war. Yet that is not to say that imperialist ambitions and long-term machinations to annex Cuba did not also play a role in the desire to go to war with Spain—a diverse array of causes pushed a people with a diverse array of values and viewpoints to agree upon the need for war. The chapter concludes with an examination of the reasons for the U.S. Army's poor performance during the Santiago Campaign. During the decades preceding the War with Spain, the Army's planning and thinking about possible future conventional conflicts focused on the threat of an invasion of the United States by a European power. This defensive mindset, combined with both a dysfunctional command structure and the lack of a planning staff, hindered the Army's preparation for and prosecution of the War with Spain. The consequences of the War Department's institutional weaknesses and its faulty strategic assumptions about the nature of its future wars with European powers were evident in the Army's weak performance during the war. Strong commanders, like Major Generals Wesley Merritt and Nelson A. Miles, overcame the War Department's deficiencies to wage efficient campaigns in the Philippines and Puerto Rico. Major General

William R. Shafter, on the other hand, had neither the presence nor the health to overcome the War Department's inefficiencies to manage the Santiago campaign effectively, and he deserves most of the blame for its poor execution.

The second chapter begins to examine the difficult military situation in which the U.S. Army found itself in the immediate aftermath of the fighting. The surrender terms charged the Army with securing and caring for 24,000 Spanish prisoners. Because of the War Department's slowly improving staff work and the cordial treatment of its prisoners, the U.S. Army successfully transported the Spanish prisoners back to Spain without incident. All the while, the U.S. Army's relationship with the Cuban Liberation Army was tenuous at best, mostly because of Major General William R. Shafter's disrespectful behavior toward the Cubans, McKinley's refusal to recognize the Cuban Liberation Army or the Cuban government, and uncertainty over what McKinley's long-term policy toward Cuba would be.

The third chapter examines why, despite its best efforts, the U.S. Army failed to check the malaria and yellow fever epidemics that decimated Shafter's Fifth Corps in Santiago de Cuba. Medical science had not yet confirmed the causes of these two diseases, and the Army's preventative measures provided no relief to the suffering soldiers. In the end, the War Department had to evacuate the over 19,000 soldiers in the Fifth Corps back to the United States to prevent their decimation from disease.

The next chapter examines how the U.S. Army dealt with the severe humanitarian crises in the department of Santiago after the Spanish surrender. With little guidance from the War Department and no long-term policy directives from the McKinley administration, the U.S. Army's soldiers diligently worked to assist the tens of thousands sick and starving Cuban and Spanish civilians and soldiers under their care. The U.S. Army and the American Red Cross

acted primarily in response to humanitarian necessity during this crisis to provide for the needy in Santiago, even while they worked to return prisoners of war to Spain. Meanwhile, most of the U.S. Army's own soldiers and officers were suffering from disease.

The Fifth chapter begins after the humanitarian crises had subsided and examines how the U.S. Army began to establish garrisons in the villages and towns in the Department of Santiago to control the Cuban population. Furthermore, it investigates how the Army's officers incentivized jobs and rations to disband the Cuban Liberation Army peacefully and establish a monopoly of force within Cuba. Without a long-term directive from the War Department or McKinley, officers in Santiago patterned their decisions and actions after the organizational structures and institutional culture that defined the U.S. Army at that time. They relied on the same methods for controlling civilian populations that they had learned acting as a constabulary on the American frontier.

One of the methods of control the U.S. Army imported from their experience in the West was the use of local auxiliary forces to self-police native populations. The sixth chapter examines how the U.S. Army worked with its conservative Cuban allies to hire former Cuban soldiers to police Santiago in a manner that would support the military government and the propertied class. Cubans offered several advantages over American soldiers when it came to policing the department. The Cuban police understood the culture and customs, spoke the language, and were generally resistant to the tropical fevers that devastated American soldiers. The Cuban police could use harsh or extra-legal methods to capture alleged criminals that, if used by Americans, would lead to outrage in the United States and possibly insurrection in Cuba. Most importantly, by leaving American forces in their garrisons to drill unless needed to support the local police in

an emergency, the U.S. Army was not seen often enough to be a constant reminder of the unpopular occupation.

Chapter seven looks at how U.S. Army officers created the necessary logistical infrastructure to support their dispersed garrisons. The fiscally conservative McKinley administration had no intention of financing the entire occupation with American taxpayer money and quickly reestablished and modified the former Spanish tariff schedule to finance the infrastructure required to support the Army's garrisons controlling the Cuban population, and to pay the salaries of the Cubans and Americans working for the provisional military government. McKinley's economic policies indicate that, at least in 1898, his administration had no intention of creating a mercantile colony of Cuba.

The eighth chapter investigates how the U.S. Army established a military government in the Department of Santiago after its garrisons established control and the Cuban Liberation Army was disbanded. An interesting dichotomy existed within the U.S. military government in Santiago. On one hand, the military officers maintained absolute authority over the government, acting in a dictatorial fashion in enforcing federal policy and their discretionary laws and regulations. On the other hand, the military officers were deeply influenced by the various progressive reform movements occurring in the United States. While maintaining ultimate authority, Army officers simultaneously sought to establish mechanisms of efficient government administration, reform the civil service, create a social welfare system, and, when convenient, break the control of existing special interests over the Cuban economy and politics. Unfortunately, the ethnocentrism of the American officers led them to conclude that the American institutions of governance were always superior to Latin American models. Instead of

trying to make small reforms to the existing government structure, they too often tried to transform Cuban society into a replica of the United States.

CHAPTER 1: THE WAR WITH SPAIN AND THE SANTIAGO CAMPAIGN

Introduction

The U.S. Army was unprepared when President McKinley decided to intervene in the Cuban War for Independence. Before the War with Spain in 1898, the U.S. Army was a small, constabulary force of 25,000 soldiers distributed among small garrisons across the United States. The War Department had a dysfunctional command structure and an archaic organization without a general staff for planning. War and Navy Department officials envisioned that the U.S. Army's primary purpose in a war against a European power would be to defend the coast of the United States against attack in order to allow state militias time to mobilize and repel an invasion. American military leaders did not envision sending a large expeditionary force overseas. Furthermore, War Department officials assumed that if the President ordered the Army to deploy forces beyond the North American continent, they would be limited to small auxiliary commands supporting naval actions. When Congress declared war on Spain April 25, 1898, the War Department's organizational structure and its pre-war strategic planning assumptions left it ill prepared to react effectively to President William McKinley's decision to mobilize a large volunteer Army and send an expeditionary force to Cuba before the fall of 1898.

The U.S. Army performed much worse than the U.S. Navy during the campaign to capture Santiago de Cuba, thoroughly botching the logistical aspects of the campaign and struggling to defeat a demoralized and inferior Spanish Army. The rapid mobilization of the U.S.

Army, the influx of volunteers, and poor and changing guidance from the McKinley administration partly explain the poor performance of the U.S. Army during the Santiago campaign. However, much of the blame falls to the commander of the expedition, Major General William R. Shafter, who poorly led and terribly mismanaged the campaign. Perhaps the War Department could have saved Shafter from himself had the War Department not misread the political run-up to American intervention, getting caught flat-footed when the war began.

The Cuban War for Independence

The long build up to the American intervention into the already three-year-old Cuban revolution should have given the War Department ample time to at least develop a strategy for how it would intervene in Cuba if asked. Seventeen years after the first Cuban war for independence, known as the Ten Years' War (1868 – 1878), ended, fighting again erupted in Eastern Cuba. In the interlude between the two wars, political authorities in Spain implemented few of the political reforms they had promised in the negotiated peace. Then in 1894, the Cuban economy collapsed and the Cuban Revolutionary Party's (PRC) leadership under José Martí decided the conditions were right for the struggle for independence to begin anew. On February 24, 1895, the "Grito de Baire" announced the opening of the Cuban War for Independence. Spanish authorities, under Captain General Emilio Calleja Isasi, quickly arrested the instigators in Havana and in the western provinces of the island. Only in the rural eastern provinces of Matanzas and Oriente (Santiago) provinces did the armed insurrection gain momentum.

The Spanish further escalated the conflict in March after an attempt by conservative military officers to silence the liberal press in Madrid escalated into a political movement that forced Spain's Liberal government to relinquish power to the Conservatives. The new

Conservative government replaced the conciliatory Calleja Isasi in Cuba with General Arsenio Martínez Campos, the Spanish military hero of the Ten Years' War. Determined to uphold Spain's honor and prestige and not to lose the crown jewel of its once mighty empire, the new government ordered Martínez Campos to consider no reforms until the Spanish army in Cuba, which quickly grew from 14,000 to 140,000 soldiers, defeated the rebels. Just as the new Spanish government brought back its former champion to end the new conflict, so too did the Cuban Revolutionary Party's (PRC). In April Martí and the other exiled Cuban military leaders from the Ten Years' War, including Generals Máximo Gómez and Antonio Maceo, landed in eastern Cuba to join the separatists. After a heated conference at La Mejorana, the leaders agreed to establish a revolutionary government under Salvador Cisneros and gave command of the newly formed Cuban Liberation Army to Gómez, with Maceo, the "Bronze Titan," as his second in command.¹

Short of rifles and ammunition, and with very few heavy weapons, the Cuban Liberation Army generally avoided large battles with Spanish troops, unless under extremely favorable circumstances.² Instead, Maceo and Gómez relied on guerilla tactics and the destruction of plantations in order to weaken Spanish authority by degrading the Cuban economy.³ A pillar of Gómez's strategy was to deny the Spanish treasury the duties from Cuban sugar and hurt Spanish

¹ Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 44-47, 99-100. John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 48-56.

² For examples of how short the Cuban Liberation Army was on rifles and ammunition, and how the need to capture or secure war material drove Cuban operations and tactics, see Ricardo Batrell, *A Black Soldier's Story: The Narrative of Ricardo Batrell and the Cuban War of Independence*, trans. and ed. Mark A. Sanders (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 3-118.

³ The Cuban Liberation Army did receive five medium and light artillery pieces, and a dynamite gun from the Junta in the U.S. and used them to help capture, but not hold, the towns of Victoria de las Tunas and Guaimaro. For information on the Cuban use of artillery and their tactics, see Frederick Funston, *Memories of Two Wars: Cuban and Philippine Experiences* (London: Constable & Co., 1912), 59-97, 116-139, 142-45. Even The Cuban victory at the Battle of Peralejo, was really just a large-scale ambush. See Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 75-80.

merchants, since Cuban planters would not have the money to purchase their goods. But Gómez hoped to do more than deny the Spanish government the riches of its empire; he also wanted to demonstrate that the Spanish government could not protect property or feed the refugees created by his strategy of economic devastation. Besides discrediting the government in Madrid, his plan forced neutral *pacíficos* to choose sides. With their property destroyed and agricultural jobs no longer available, thousands of Cubans either fled to the cities or joined the revolution.⁴

In December of 1895, Gómez and Maceo left the security of Oriente Province in a campaign designed to bring economic devastation to the entire island and demonstrate the inability of the Spanish army to protect its supporters or their property. After ambushing and then defeating a Spanish column of 1,500 soldiers at the Battle of Mal Tiempo, the Cuban Liberation Army began to devastate the sugar and tobacco industry in the provinces of Havana, Matanzas, and Pinar del Río. General Martínez Campos set out in pursuit of the Cuban Liberation Army and inflicted a heavy defeat on Maceo's column at Colesio. After the battle, Gómez and Maceo feigned a retreat toward the security of Oriente Province only to counter march once Martínez Campos rushed his forces east to block the Cuban army's escape. Martínez Campos took the bait, and the path to the three western provinces of Cuba lay open. Unopposed for a time, Maceo and Gómez devastated the countryside and small towns and attacked small garrisons that could be taken without a prolonged siege. Martínez Campos could never move quickly enough and with sufficient secrecy to catch the rampaging Cuban Army. The Spanish general returned to Spain in disgrace.⁵

⁴ Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 126-37. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 57-68.

⁵ Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 1:52-73. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 49-53, 116-119. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 123-126, 137. Batrell, *A Black Soldier's Story*, 54-55.

The Conservative government in Madrid sent Valeriano Weyler y Nicolau's to replace Martínez Campos as Governor General in February 1896. The five foot tall Weyler, known as "the butcher," had earned a brutal reputation for the heavy-handed tactics he used during the Ten Years' War, as well as against anti-Spanish uprisings in the Dominican Republic, Mindanao, and Catalonia. On arrival in Havana, Weyler implemented a new strategy. First, he ended Martínez Campos's policy of protecting small towns and large plantation with vulnerable garrisons, thus enabling him to create large field armies to pursue the rebels vigorously. Second, to prevent insurgents from exacting protection taxes from wealthy plantation owners and supplying tobacco to the cigar makers in Florida whose generous donations filled the PRC's coffers, Weyler ordered an end to the production of sugar and the export of tobacco. His policy has the unintended consequence of forcing many once loyal landowners to favor intervention by the United States. Third, Weyler started clearing the Cuban provinces one at a time from west to east in the hopes of isolating the Cuban Liberation Army in Oriente Province behind a rebuilt trocha—a continuous line of fortifications running across eastern Cuba from Móron to Júcaro. By June 1896, Weyler had succeeded. In the westernmost province of Pinar del Río, Weyler vigorously pursued the remnants of Maceo's command and isolated them behind a newly built western trocha, running from Mariel to Majana. Low on supplies, what was left of Maceo's army fought its way to the Spanish Mariel-Majana defensive line. Maceo found the trocha impregnable and had to take small boats around it. Soon after he landed, however, Spanish forces caught up with Maceo's survivors and killed the Cuban general.⁶

⁶ Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*, 1:73-97. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 53-55. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 153-185.

The most controversial and sinister portion of Weyler's strategy to end the rebellion was his effort to deny the insurgents support from civilians in the countryside by relocating around 500,000 people into large defensible towns. At least 100,000 Cuban civilians died of malnourishment and diseases in these "reconcentration" camps. Weyler had intended for the relocated Cubans to produce enough food to feed themselves. In practice, however, the women and children had neither the necessary tools nor the experience to cultivate the land. The Cuban Liberation Army exacerbated the problem by blockading the towns and preventing much-needed supplies from entering, and by stealing from the cultivation zones to feed the Cuban soldiers. Even after the Spanish government bowed to international pressure and ended the practice of reconcentration in November 1897, Cuban civilians could not return to the countryside devastated by both the Spanish Army and by the Cuban Liberation Army, as both tried to deny the countryside's people and resources to the other. Most Cubans, especially women and children, remained in the garrisoned towns and continued to perish by the hundreds each week.⁷

Although Weyler's reconcentration policy succeeded in separating the rebels from the Cuban population, the inhumane policy fueled a public relations campaign in the United States. Members of the Cuban Junta either wrote their own stories for the American press or fed reporters stories of Spanish slaughtering Cuban women and children. Some of these reports were genuine; some were exaggerations or fabrications. Regardless of veracity, the stories reached a wide readership within the United States. Weyler did little to counter the propaganda. While he had much to hide from foreign reporters, he did little to refute some of the more outlandish claims by the PRC. By refusing to talk to reporters and placing stringent restrictions on the

⁷ Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*, 1:76-77, 110-118. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 55-56, 124-25. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 193-216. Batrell, *A Black Soldier's Story*, 54-65.

foreign press, Weyler left journalists to get their information from the Cuban rebels. Very few American reporters traveled to Cuba to verify the PRC information campaign. Those who did, like Henry Sylvester Scovel and James Creelman, marched with the Cuban Liberation Army and wrote gruesome accounts of Spanish atrocities for the “yellow press,” already known for publishing sensational stories with little fact checking.” The editors of the *New York World* and *New York Journal* capitalized on the grizzly accounts of human suffering in the reconcentration camps and lowered paper prices to more than double the circulation of their papers during the three year Cuban War for Independence. By 1898 the PRC’s representatives and the yellow press had convinced the majority of Americans of the virtue of the Cuban cause and the barbarism of the Spanish Army. American support came just in time for the floundering Cuban Liberation Army.⁸ A stalemate had developed in 1897 between Gómez’s Cuban Liberation Army and Weyler’s Spanish Army, and Gómez desperately needed American assistance.⁹

The Cuban Liberation Army controlled only the countryside of Cuba’s eastern two provinces and was capable of little more than small guerilla attacks in the rest of the island. The Spanish army had generally pacified western Cuba, but held the only large towns and cities in Oriente and Puerto Príncipe Provinces. Even with 140,000 soldiers in Cuba, Spain struggled to mount a major offensive against the remnants of the Cuban Liberation Army. In the rainy season, more than half of the Spanish soldiers became incapacitated with tropical diseases. Twenty-two

⁸ Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*, 1:163-76. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 193-216.

⁹ While Tone believes that the Cubans both desired and needed U.S. intervention to achieve military victory, Foner and Pérez both dismiss the idea. They believe instead that the U.S. intervened to rob the Cubans of their imminent victory and independence. Foner believes that the U.S. intervened primarily for economic and imperialist reasons, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*, 1:229, 248-253, 280-310. Pérez believes the PRC in the U.S. thought that American intervention was the only way for Cuba to achieve independence, but that the Cuban military leaders questioned the intentions and necessity of U.S. intervention, *Cuba Between Empires*, 111-114.

percent of Spanish soldiers died of malaria, yellow fever, dysentery, and other diseases. Those lucky Spanish soldiers healthy enough to remain on duty quickly became overworked and more susceptible to illness. Even seemingly easy tasks, like foraging for firewood and fresh water, had to be conducted by large units because of constant harassment by Cuban guerillas. Frederick Funston, an American volunteer fighting with the Cubans who later became a U.S. Army general, recalled how the Spanish soldier “ceased to leave the protection of his forts and blockhouses in columns of less than three or four thousand men.”¹⁰ When the Spanish army did mount offensive campaigns, “large convoys escorted by formidable bodies of Spanish troops moved slowly along the main roads ... and were harassed and fought from the time of starting until their return” to their garrisons.¹¹ The excellent Cuban intelligence network, the cumbersome Spanish marching columns, the poor road conditions, and the insufferable heat prevented the Spanish from catching the more mobile Cuban forces.¹²

The Cuban Liberation Army suffered from its own problems. Gómez and his new second-in-command in the east, General Calixto García, could not adequately feed or supply the remnants of their army. Funston remembered how he and the other members of Gómez’s army were “barefooted and clothed in rags and tatters, and were always hungry.”¹³ Some starving soldiers buried their weapons and deserted to scavenge for food, while others fell ill to disease.¹⁴ By 1897, Gómez had only a few thousand men under arms in all of Cuba. There was an ample supply of willing recruits, but only a very limited supply of ammunition, food, and clothing.

¹⁰ Funston, *Memories of Two Wars*, 116.

¹¹ Funston, *Memories of Two Wars*, 98.

¹² Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 74-82. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 9-10, 72.

¹³ Funston, *Memories of Two Wars*, 99.

¹⁴ Batrell, *A Black Soldier's Story*, 82-4, 117.

Furthermore, without heavy weapons and ammunition, or the ability to manufacture them, the Cuban Liberation Army could not hold large towns and had to rely on supplies being delivered by undependable filibustering expeditions from the United States.¹⁵ Increasingly, American intervention seemed the only way for the revolutionaries to gain independence.¹⁶

The United States Intervenes in Cuba

The United States intervened in the Cuban War for Independence for complex reasons that are still hotly debated among historians. The immediate context of the decision for war lies in events in Cuba and perceptions in the United States. Harsh policies and reprisals against Cubans as the Spanish suppressed insurrections on the island produced genuine and widely held humanitarian concerns across broad segments of American society. Popular support in the United States in favor of intervention into the Cuban War of Independence grew over the course of the three-year conflict largely due to the news stories placed in the “yellow press” by the Cuban Revolutionary Party’s (PRC) New York junta, led by Tomás Estrada Palma. Even though Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst’s *New York Journal* often embellished or even made up the stories, there were enough actual atrocities committed in Cuba to justify public outrage. The high death toll and widespread human suffering caused by Weyler’s policy of “reconcentrating” rural populations in urban zones to deny the revolutionaries the support of the Cuban people especially enraged the concerned American public. American

¹⁵ Funston, *Memories of Two Wars*, 13-26, 117. Batrell, *A Black Soldier’s Story*, 77-80, 88-89, 95, 103-4, 110.

¹⁶ Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 81-87. See note 9 for a list of authors who do not believe that the Cuban army wanted or needed U.S. intervention.

popular opinion grew strongly in favor of intervening to end the suffering of the Cuban people, and, to a lesser degree, to help Cuba gain independence from Spain.¹⁷

The *USS Maine* exploded and sank in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898. The explosion probably occurred when a coal fire ignited the ammunition magazine. Americans assumed Spanish culpability. Widespread moral concern, fueled by a provocative yellow press, quickly turned into nearly universal nationalist outrage. This was the spark that ignited the war.

But the kindling that allowed the spark to catch had been laid earlier. Popular humanitarian concern about Spanish policies to suppress indigenous discontent in Cuba and furor over the sinking of the *USS Maine* may not have led to war in the absence of expansionist ambitions, long-term American machinations to annex Cuba, widespread feelings of racial and ethnic superiority in the United States, and a desire in some quarters for expanded overseas markets.¹⁸ Expansionist tendencies within the United States were fueled by fears of increasing European imperialism in both the Far East and the Western Hemisphere, which many believed could threaten the ability of American manufacturers and farmers to sell their surpluses in these potentially growing markets.¹⁹ Fervently nationalistic, many people in both Europe and the

¹⁷ Frank Freidel, *The Splendid Little War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1958), 3. Gerald F. Linderman, *The Mirror of War: American Society and the Spanish-American War* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974), 25, 28, 153-173. Lars Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic: The United States and the Cuban Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 16-17. David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 30-1. For an exceptional study on Weyler's policy of reconcentration, see Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 193-224.

¹⁸ Louis A. Pérez argues that the United States had coveted Cuba for over a hundred years and that the United States' ultimate goal for intervention in 1898 was eventual annexation. See Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 57-72. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba in the American Imagination: Metaphor and the Imperial Ethos* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 24-42. Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, 18-19. In contrast, Frank Freidel argues that the United States went to war as part of a "popular crusade to stop a seemingly endless which was shattering Cuba." See Frank Freidel, *The Splendid Little War* (Boston: Little Brown, 1958), 3.

¹⁹ Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 15-49, emphasizes how many nineteenth-century Americans perceived that opening foreign markets in the Far East and Latin America would ease the surplus of industrial and agricultural goods created by overproduction in the United States. Jacobson also argues that the American quest for

United States were driven by a Social Darwinian worldview, believing that their nations' institutions, race, and cultures were inherently superior to all others and that it was their duty to "civilize" and "uplift" the rest of the world by converting them to Western values and institutions.²⁰ American advocates for an expansionist "large policy" coveted several strategic locations across the globe. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and his fellow expansionists, including Alfred Thayer Mahan and Theodore Roosevelt, eyed potential routes in Central America for a isthmian canal, sought overseas coaling stations to project American naval power across the Pacific, and viewed with concern any European designs on Latin America that could threaten American hegemony in the region and compromise the approaches to a future canal.²¹ As anger over Spanish conduct towards the Cuban population spread among the American populace, expansionists within the United States saw an opportunity to seize control of Cuba and increase American hegemony in the Caribbean and Pacific.²²

Although President McKinley had close and frequent contact with Lodge, Roosevelt, and other expansionists and business advocates in the Republican Party, it is unclear how much their

new markets drove the creation of American Empire. Also see, Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, 19-20.

²⁰ Alfred Thayer Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, 10th ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1895), 58. Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*, 47-55, 139-172. Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, 20-21.

²¹ Philip A. Crowl "Alfred Thayer Mahan: The Naval Historian," in *Makers of Modern Strategy from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986) 460-68. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, 34. Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, 19-20.

²² For an excellent analysis of the economic and cultural influences that influenced American expansion in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, see Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982). Although she argues that the end of American westward expansion on the North American continent influenced the creation of an overseas American empire at the conclusion of the War with Spain (pg. 14), Frederick Jackson Turner's thesis or the idea that America needed a new frontier across the Pacific probably had little to no influence on McKinley's decision to go to war. Frederick Jackson Turner introduced his frontier thesis only in 1893 at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and it is unlikely that the thesis had the same influence on the American public's desire to go to war in 1898 as it later had on historians of American westward expansion and U.S. imperialism. Turner, Frederick Jackson Turner, *Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner: The Significance of the Frontier in American History, and Other Essays* (New York, N.Y.: H. Holt, 1994).

ideas influenced him. He was above all a cautious, opportunistic, and pragmatic president. At times Lodge and Roosevelt seemed extremely frustrated by the President's opposition to a war with Spain. McKinley tended to confide in no one, keeping his own counsel. To outside observers, he frequently seemed to agree with all his advisors and visitors before carefully plotting his own political course. The president's personal correspondence gives sparingly little insight into his thought process, and his untimely assassination in 1901 ensured that historians would never know with certainty whether or not McKinley intended to create an American empire.²³ Most evidence suggests that he did not. McKinley, a veteran of the Civil War, knew that war was a bloody and nasty affair, which he approached with great caution and reluctance. McKinley's decision to go to war was primarily motivated by political pressure. Popular humanitarianism, the sinking of the *Maine*, expansionism, and economic opportunism could not independently push McKinley to war. When they combined in 1898, however, he finally became convinced that a large majority of Americans, and consequently Congress, demanded immediate action against Spain. Ever the pragmatic politician, McKinley chose to heed their call.²⁴

²³ Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 104-5.

²⁴ Russell A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 1-5. Funston, *Memories of Two Wars*, 149. Nelson A. Miles, *Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson A. Miles, Lieutenant-General, United States Army* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911), 268-69. Linderman, *The Mirror of War*, 17, 24-36. Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 3-6. Ephriam K. Smith, "William McKinley's Enduring Legacy: The Historiographical Debate on the Taking of the Philippine Islands," in *Crucible of Empire: The Spanish-American War and Its Aftermath*, ed. James Bradford (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 1993), 205-37. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 53-58, 168-69, 439-40, 469-70. Louis A. Pérez agrees with Trask, Smith, Linderman, and Linn on many of President McKinley's characteristics, but he insists that McKinley went to war with Spain with the intention of annexing Cuba and creating an American empire. See Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 140-47, 170-72. For a good attempt to deconstruct the notion that the U.S. entered the Spanish-American war with an imperialist agenda, see James A. Field, "American Imperialism: The 'Worst Chapter' in Almost Any Book," *American Historical Review* 83 (June 1978): 644-68.

It would take more than humanitarian concerns and sympathy for the Cuban cause to convince the American people, Congress, and President McKinley to intervene. Political affairs in Spain and Cuba provided the necessary catalyst. After the anarchist Michele Angiolillo assassinated Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, Spain's Conservative Party leader, the Liberal Party under Praxedes Sagasta took power in October 1897. Sagasta immediately relieved Weyler, ended reconcentration, and granted limited autonomy to Cuba. Estrada Palma and the PRC reacted vigorously against autonomy, which weakened support for independence among some of the more conservative members of the Cuban Liberation Army and officials in the McKinley Administration. However, Sagasta's liberal reforms also infuriated loyalist Cubans and Spanish army officers in Cuba. Conservative Cubans formed militias, threatened violence, and protested the arrival of the new, liberal governor-general of Cuba, Ramón Blanco. Fitzhugh Lee, the U.S. counsel in Havana, became concerned by the growing unrest in the city and requested a naval vessel be sent to Havana harbor to ensure the safety of American citizens and their property. The *U.S.S. Maine* arrived in Havana with Blanco's permission on January 25, 1898. Three weeks later the battleship exploded. In the United States, the yellow press helped to convince the American people that Spanish saboteurs were responsible for the loss of the ship and 266 of its sailors. Political meddling by Secretary of the Navy John D. Long and a superficial investigation ensured that the official investigation blamed an external explosion, implying that a Spanish mine had been placed against the ship.²⁵

As late as April 1898, two months after the explosion of the *U.S.S. Maine*, McKinley still hoped either to purchase Cuba from Spain, or to resolve the conflict by intervening as a neutral

²⁵ Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*, 1:225-31, 237-48. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 143-63. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 225-243. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 239-43.

arbiter. Secretary of War Russell A. Alger wrote that despite the “growing opposition of public sentiment throughout the country” to the President’s position of neutrality, he and his advisors were “profoundly adverse to war.”²⁶ Even General Nelson A. Miles, the irascible commanding general of the U.S. Army, who viewed the Secretary of War more as a rival than as a superior or a partner, agreed with his assessment. Reflecting on the cabinet’s pre-war sentiments, Miles wrote later that among “President McKinley and his Cabinet” only “one of the latter was in favor of war” and that “Secretary of State John Sherman . . . was decidedly opposed to it.”²⁷ But the calming voices in the cabinet were drowned out by an American public still outraged by a message from the Spanish Minister to the United States, Enrique Dupuy de Lôme, which had been leaked to the press on 9 February. De Lome made disparaging and humiliating remarks about President McKinley and admitted that the Spanish were not negotiating in good faith for the sale of Cuba.²⁸ The De Lôme Letter and the sinking of the *Maine* generated a loud clamor for war with Spain among a majority of American people, congressmen, and newspapers. For liberal proponents of war, its purpose would be to assist the Cubans in gaining their independence and to end needless human suffering. For expansionists, the reason for going to war was to gain access to lucrative markets and to create an American empire. Regardless of their motives and political orientation, almost all Americans were eager to defend the honor of the United States from perceived Spanish aggression and treachery. Under mounting political pressure, the

²⁶ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 1. Linderman, *The Mirror of War*, 26-27.

²⁷ Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 268-69.

²⁸ Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*, 1:232-36.

pragmatic and cautious McKinley anticipated possible action against Spain, but still tried to resolve the crisis peacefully.²⁹

On March 27, 1898, McKinley instructed William R. Day to have American Ambassador Stewart Woodford give Spain new terms in a last ditch effort to avoid conflict. Meanwhile, the President tried to keep the people calm. In a speech delivered in Pittsburg in March, he reminded his audience that “we are not a warlike people,” and that the American people should “never permit themselves to be carried away by the tempest of feeling or the torrent of menace.”³⁰ On the diplomatic front, McKinley asked that Spain agree to an “armistice until October 1” to allow negotiators time to find a final peace between the Cuban insurgents and the Spanish government, providing the Spanish immediately revoke the *reconcentrado* order and that the United States be allowed to distribute relief supplies.³¹ If the negotiators did not reach an agreement by October 1, Woodford was to have the Spanish accept “the President of the United States” as “the final arbiter.”³² With the public and Congress demanding war, the President was relieved when, on April 10, Spain accepted the ultimatum and ceased combat operations in Cuba. McKinley’s hopes were quickly dashed when he realized that Spain would grant only autonomy, not

²⁹ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 17-21. Linderman, *The Mirror of War*, 26. Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 269. James H. Wilson, *Under the Old Flag: Recollections of Military Operations in the War for the Union, the Spanish War, the Boxer Rebellion, Etc.* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1912), 2:145. Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*, 19-20. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 243.

³⁰ From the Pittsburg Dispatch, March 20, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³¹ William R. Day to Stewart L. Woodford, March 27, Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, with the Annual Message of the President, Transmitted to Congress December 5, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1901), 711-12.

³² William R. Day to Stewart L. Woodford, March 27, Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 711-12.

independence.³³ No Spanish government could politically survive if it gave up the jewel of the Spanish empire. The United States had also promised Spain that it would convince the Cubans to honor the ceasefire. Horatio S. Rubens, the Cuban revolutionary government's representative in Washington, refused to agree to a ceasefire, arguing that it could only benefit the beleaguered Spanish army during the approaching rainy season. With McKinley's diplomatic attempts frustrated by the Cubans and the Spanish, the President reluctantly asked Congress for a war resolution. McKinley's efforts to negotiate a peaceful compromise left him little time to develop an alternative policy on Cuba.³⁴

McKinley's message to Congress on April 11, 1898, set limited goals for a war with Spain. The President asked Congress to declare war in order to end the suffering of the Cuban people, protect the lives and property rights of all who lived or owned property on the island, and reestablish American commerce with Cuba. McKinley was reluctant to go to war. His principal motivations for committing his administration to these limited goals were to satiate congressional demands for action, to end the suffering of the Cuban people, and to satisfy the business interests that demanded intervention to protect their property and investments. Nowhere in the message did the President address the future of Cuban sovereignty. Additionally, he shrewdly asked Congress for authorization to intervene as a neutral and refused to recognize the weak Cuban revolutionary government. This caveat not only gave McKinley more time to develop a long-term Cuban policy, but also gave him maximum latitude to craft a Cuban policy on his own terms—relatively free from the pressures that pushed him to decide for war. Clearly, the

³³ William R. Day to Stewart L. Woodford, March 28, Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*, 713.

³⁴ Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 170-178. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 243. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 38-54.

President wanted his administration alone to determine the fate of the island, not the Cuban people.³⁵

In the days that followed, both houses debated a war resolution. In the Senate, the Republican majority was divided on the future of Cuban independence and the goal of the proposed intervention. Enough Republicans sided with the anti-imperialist Democrats to pass the Turpie Amendment to the war resolution, which disclaimed any intention by the United States to annex Cuba. During debate on the amendment, Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado introduced an additional article. This fourth article, commonly called the Teller Amendment, reinforced the language of the first three articles by overtly guaranteeing Cuban independence. The article stated “that the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island except for pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people.”³⁶ Pro-annexation Republicans in the House rallied in the joint committee to delete this provision, but the Senate did not back down. On April 20, a joint war resolution that included the Teller Amendment became law.³⁷

Several interests combined to ensure the passage of the Teller Amendment. First, most congressmen rightly perceived that the majority of their constituents believed that the only

³⁵ Healy, *The United States in Cuba*, 21-22. Trask argues that McKinley wanted maximum flexibility and did not recognize the government to allow him to plot his own political course. See Trask, *The War with Spain*, 52-4. Tone argues that the President had good reason not to work through the Cuban Republic revolutionary government because they were no more than an illegitimate government and not a government of the republic. He supports this assertion by showing how Máximo Gómez held similar views and supported McKinley’s choice. See Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 243-44. Pérez and Foner both believe that McKinley decision to not recognize the Cuban revolutionary government demonstrated that he had designs to annex Cuba. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*, 1:xi, 208-9, 217, 260. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 180-84.

³⁶ *Cong. Rec.*, 55th Cong., 2d sess., 1898, 31, 3988.

³⁷ Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War*, 2:388. Healy, *The United States in Cuba*, 24-25. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 185-186. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 55-56.

justification for going to war was to assist the Cubans in their fight for independence. Many of these same congressmen and their voters were repulsed by the idea of annexing and considering for statehood a Catholic territory with blacks or mulattos comprising more than half the population. Many other congressmen were persuaded by the fledgling sugar beet industry, which feared cheap Cuban sugar being imported without a tariff.³⁸ Also, Estrada Palma, leader of the Cuban Junta, passed out several million dollars in Cuban bonds to “persons of influence” redeemable only when Cuba gained its independence.³⁹ Regardless of the various motivations driving its members’ decisions, Congress had shaped the direction of America’s foreign policy toward Cuba. The Teller Amendment emboldened Cubans to insist on independence and forced the annexationists and business interests to pursue their goals in Cuba using means short of outright annexation.

The War Department’s Strategy during the War with Spain

Well before the war, senior leaders in the War Department and the Department of the Navy both agreed that the Army’s role in future conflicts with European powers would be limited to the defense of the United States home territory and support of naval operations. With every change in the naval situation during the war, the McKinley Administration also altered the Army’s mission and operational objectives. This put the War Department into a reactive mode, and precluded any attempt at long-range planning. Only after the fall of Santiago de Cuba, on July 17, 1898, would the Army realize it had to plan for and then conduct an occupation.

³⁸ Wilson, *Under the Old Flag*, 2:406-413.

³⁹ Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires*, 186-87.

On June 1, 1896, the Naval War College had completed its first plan for a possible War with Spain. Still operating under the influence naval theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan, the Navy planners understood that their three major objectives were to destroy Spain's fleet, then to destroy its merchant ships, and finally to harass and bombard its coastline and foreign colonies. In planning, the Navy assumed that neither Spain nor the United States would attempt to invade the opposing nation's mainland and that the U.S. war effort would focus primarily on assisting the Cuban insurgents to defeat the Spanish Army and thereby gain independence. These were both accurate planning assumptions, but they did not account for the expansion of the war to Spain's other colonies. The Naval War College's plans called first for a blockade of Cuba to draw out Spain's Atlantic fleet and then a naval attack on Manila Harbor to destroy Spain's Pacific fleet. Once Spain's Atlantic fleet arrived in the Caribbean, the U.S. Navy's Atlantic Squadron would destroy it. After the destruction of the Spanish fleets, the U.S. Navy's blockade of Cuba would quickly force the Spanish to ask for an armistice and to submit to American demands. The Navy's plan did not change much over the course of the next two years and was executed almost exactly as it was originally envisioned.⁴⁰

After the mysterious destruction of the *USS Maine*, war with Spain seemed certain. In early March, Secretary of War Russell A. Alger and Secretary of the Navy John D. Long created a joint board to coordinate Army and Navy strategies for the looming conflict. The board accepted that the war would be primarily a naval conflict and agreed upon the Navy War College's 1896 plan. Commanding General Miles agreed with the service secretaries and joint

⁴⁰ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 67-75. John A. S. Grenville and George B. Young, *Politics, Strategy, and American Diplomacy; Studies in Foreign Policy, 1873-1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 272-76.

board, arguing, “The war was strictly a naval problem at first.”⁴¹ He then went on to practically parrot Mahanian dictums about naval power: “Should the Spanish navy prove superior to ours it would sweep the seas, thus rendering it impossible for us to move” to Cuba, and if our Navy had proven “superior, the withdrawal of the Spanish forces from those islands would have been impossible.”⁴² Alger and Miles, on the recommendation of both the joint Army-Navy board and the spokesmen for the Cuban rebels, suggested that in the pending conflict with Spain, the Army could seize a port in eastern Cuba in order to supply weapons and ammunition to the Cuban rebels. The joint board, the commanding general, and the Secretary of War all discouraged any invasion of Cuba during the “rainy, or ‘sickly,’ season,” since the increased risk of yellow fever and malaria made any campaign in Cuba next to impossible.⁴³

The War Department received little guidance from McKinley during its initial strategy deliberations. Shrewd, cautious, and pragmatic, McKinley never rushed into a major policy decision. He initially allowed the service secretaries to develop joint strategy with minimal input, and he refused to formulate a wartime strategy or to consider a long-term policy on the possible fate of the Spanish colonies until he fully understood the political ramifications for each of his policy decisions.⁴⁴

Since the War Department was certain that in the imminent war with Spain its function would be to protect the eastern seaboard of the United States, it spent the majority of its pre-war congressional funding on coastal defenses. On March 9, 1898, the Senate unanimously passed a House bill known as the Fifty Million Bill, which appropriated \$50 million for the President to

⁴¹ Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 273.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 273.

⁴³ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 41-42.

⁴⁴ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 67-75.

spend at his discretion in order to prepare for the impending war. The Navy spent its portion of these funds purchasing additional capital ships from foreign navies and hiring additional support ships.⁴⁵ The War Department rushed to arm and complete the coastal defenses recommended by a joint Board of Fortification in 1886, commonly known as the Endicott Board, which had remained incomplete due to a lack of congressional funding.⁴⁶ As Secretary Alger explained, “out of the 2,362 pieces of ordnance contemplated in the project of 1885, only 151 were in position April 1, 1898. In thirteen years Congress had appropriated for this great national work less than one-fourth of the sum required for its completion.”⁴⁷ Secretary Alger did not spend any money preparing to field a large volunteer army because he did not anticipate the need to deploy one, and under his “interpretation of the act,” he did not believe that any “part of the sum was available for offensive preparation.”⁴⁸ Of course, the Navy spent much of its share of the Fifty Million Bill on offensive capital ships, suggesting that they did not interpret the bill to put any restrictions on purchasing ships for offensive operations. Alger may have concocted this explanation after the War with Spain to defend himself against criticisms for not properly

⁴⁵ Trask, *The War with Spain*, 82-86.

⁴⁶ Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 269. Schofield, *Forty-Six Years in the Army*, 435.

⁴⁷ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 10. Congress had good reason not to complete all the recommendations made by the Endicott Board. The price tag was astronomical, and there was no clear military threat in 1885. Part of the Endicott Board recommendations involved weapon technology that did not actually exist until the mid-late 1890's. Also, the manning system of fortifications recommended by the Endicott Board would have needed three times as many soldiers as were in the entire Army. See Robert S. Browning III, *Two if by Sea: The Development of American Coastal Defense Policy* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1983), 167-178; and David A. Clary, *Fortress America: The Corps of Engineers, Hampton Roads, and United States Coastal Defense* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1990), 130-138.

⁴⁸ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 8.

preparing the War Department to receive thousands of volunteers and then transport them overseas.⁴⁹

The full extent of the War Department's pre-war operational planning was to send a small expeditionary force to northeastern Cuba to secure a port where ammunition, weapons, and food could be sent to the Cuban armies under Máximo Gómez and Calixto García.⁵⁰ However, when Rear Admiral William T. Sampson, commander of the United States Naval Squadron in the Caribbean, persuaded McKinley and Alger two weeks before Congress formally declared war on Spain that his battleships and cruisers could destroy the harbor defenses guarding Havana with only minimal risk to his own ships, Alger ordered the War Department to send all available regiments immediately to ports along the Gulf of Mexico because they were closer to Cuba and to prepare an expedition to storm the fortifications protecting Havana's harbor. This was just the first of four times when naval developments convinced the McKinley Administration to significantly alter the operational objectives of the Army.⁵¹

Commanding General Miles opposed any major invasion of Cuba during the summer rainy season and was fiercely resistant to the cabinet's plan to seize Havana. He was convinced that either yellow fever and malaria or the large Spanish army in Havana would destroy an army sent in the summer. Miles had at most 25,000 soldiers trained and equipped in April and he explained "that there were within a short distance of Havana 125,000 Spanish troops with over 100 field guns, besides the 125 heavy guns in strong, fortified positions" and "that the policy of

⁴⁹ Graham Cosmas has suggested that Alger concocted this argument in his memoirs about the illegality of spending the appropriated funds on equipping a large expeditionary force, in order to defend his negligence in administrating the Spanish-American War and to pardon the War Department for failing to anticipate the need to equip a large army and transport it overseas. See Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 66-82. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 145, 149.

⁵⁰ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 1-5.

⁵¹ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 95-98.

storming heavily fortified positions had long since become obsolete.”⁵² Miles fumed over Alger’s foray into campaign planning. He believed that the direction of the Army in theater fell under his purview, not the Secretary’s.

Later, writing that the President had been “misinformed” of the “real military conditions” by the Secretary of War, Miles argued for reverting back to the original strategy of supporting the Cuban insurgents, while the Navy continued its blockade and attempted to destroy the Spanish fleet.⁵³ Miles thought that these actions would likely compel Spain to surrender. If not, he proposed that in the fall a large invasion force, reinforced by the 125,000 volunteers that McKinley had asked the states to provide on April 23, could land and secure Havana.⁵⁴ A joint Army-Navy committee agreed with Miles’s proposed course of action and convinced McKinley to reverse his decision to attack Havana. On April 29, four days after Congress formally declared war on Spain, Miles ordered Brigadier General William R. Shafter to assemble in Tampa a force of 6,000 regulars. The Navy planned to drop them off at Cape Tunas, a port city on Cuba’s southern coast, for a few days, where Shafter and his expedition would conduct “a reconnaissance in force” by linking-up with General Máximo Gómez’s forces in order to “to send arms and supplies to the insurgents,” so that the Cubans could “render the Spanish forces as much injury as possible.”⁵⁵ In a letter to Generals García and Gómez delivered by Lieutenant

⁵² Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 272-73.

⁵³ Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 272-73.

⁵⁴ William McKinley to Secretary of State, April 23, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 7, 17-19. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 98.

⁵⁵ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 45. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 1-5.

Andrew S. Rowan, Miles communicated his operational plan to supply the Cuban Revolutionary Army at Cape Tunas.⁵⁶

Only a day after Miles ordered Shafter to Tampa, news reached the War Department that Admiral Pascual Cerverá y Topete's Caribbean squadron had departed the Cape Verde Islands. The squadron's departure undermined Shafter's plan.⁵⁷ As the War Department waited for the naval situation to unfold in the Caribbean before resuming its expedition to Cape Tunas, it floundered in attempting to supply and equip the 125,000 volunteers flooding into mobilization camps around the United States. While the War Department waited and dithered, Commodore George Dewey, commanding the U.S. Navy's Asiatic Squadron, defeated the entire Spanish Pacific Squadron in Manila Bay on May 1, 1898. The city of Manila was not Dewey's objective; it was the Spanish fleet. On the same day that Spain declared war on the United States, Secretary of the Navy Long ordered Commodore Dewey's squadron in Hong Kong to "proceed at once to [the] Philippine Islands" to "commence operations ... against the Spanish fleet."⁵⁸ Dewey steered a course not for Manila, but for the Spanish fleet's anchorage at Subic Bay on the west coast of Luzon. It was only after Admiral Patricio Montojo withdrew to Manila, where he could use the harbor's coastal batteries to fight "under less unfavorable conditions," that Dewey altered his course for Manila.⁵⁹ After the defeat of the Spanish fleet, Dewey cabled that he could "reduce the defenses [of Manila] without difficulty, but that he considered it useless to do so until the

⁵⁶ Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War*, 2:344. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 174-75.

⁵⁷ Alger, *Spanish-American War*, 44-46. Cosmas, *An Army For Empire*, 103-104, 184-86.

⁵⁸ Long to Dewey, April 24, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁵⁹ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 319.

arrival of land forces sufficient to retain permanent possession.”⁶⁰ Miles endorsed Dewey’s plan to secure a naval station in the Philippines, but wrote later that he “did not suppose we would ever assume to acquire territory against the will of the people thereof.”⁶¹ A U.S. Army expedition to the Philippines became an unexpected possibility.⁶²

After pondering his options following Dewey’s victory, McKinley surprised the War Department when he decided to send a U.S. Army expedition to seize Manila. The United States had been at war with Spain for only a week for the professed purpose of liberating Cuba from Spanish tyranny. While the Joint Army and Navy Board’s war plan always envisioned the destruction of the Spanish fleet in the Pacific, it never considered an Army expedition to seize and occupy the Philippines. Before the war, the War Department had anticipated sending only a small expedition to Cuba, but now it found itself preparing for a major invasion of Cuba, the capture of Manila, and possibly the occupation of the entire Philippine archipelago.⁶³ McKinley’s emerging strategy was to exert as much pressure as possible on Spain to bring about a quick peace settlement favorable to the United States.⁶⁴ To accomplish McKinley’s directive, the War Department created the Eighth Army Corps in San Francisco and assigned it 20,000 soldiers.⁶⁵ On May 12, 1898, Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin cabled the second highest-

⁶⁰ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 326.

⁶¹ Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 270-71.

⁶² Long to Dewey, May 7, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Dewey to Long, May 9, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 95-105, 369-70.

⁶³ Cosmas, *An Army For Empire*, 110-113, 121. Linn, *The Philippine War*, 3. Trask *The War with Spain*, 105-06, 370-71.

⁶⁴ Trask, *The War with Spain*, 105-06, 389-90.

⁶⁵ H. C. Corbin to Major-General Merritt, May 29, 1898, U.S. Department of War, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain: Including the Insurrection in the Philippine Islands and the China Relief Expedition and Conditions Growing out of the Same, Including the Insurrection in the Philippine Islands and the China Relief Expedition, between the Adjutant General of the Army and Military Commanders in the United States, Cuba, Porto*

ranking officer in the Regular Army, Major General Wesley Merritt, that President McKinley had assigned him to command the “expedition being sent to the Philippine Islands.”⁶⁶ That same day Merritt met with McKinley to discuss the operation. Four days later, Merritt cabled McKinley for clarification of his instructions. Was it the President’s “desire to subdue and hold all the Spanish territory in the islands, or merely to seize and hold the capital?”⁶⁷ Merritt added astutely, “It seems more than probable that we will have the so-called insurgents to fight as well as the Spaniards.”⁶⁸ McKinley did not provide Merritt immediate clarification on the purpose of his expedition.

McKinley’s failure to articulate his strategy plagued the War Department’s planning throughout the war and in its post-war military occupations. Three full days passed before Merritt received any clarification on the purpose of his expedition. Finally, on May 19, only six days before the Eighth Corps began steaming for the Philippines, McKinley gave Merritt specific instructions to guide his actions in the Philippines. He gave Merritt two missions, “completing the reduction of the Spanish power in that quarter and...giving order and security to the islands while in possession of the United States.”⁶⁹ The War Department, which started the war believing it would only defend the American coastline and possibly conduct small incursions into Cuba to assist the insurgents, now found itself fielding a large volunteer force and preparing for operations on opposite sides of the globe.

Rico, China, and the Philippine Islands, from April 15, 1898, to July 30, 1902 [Hereafter Department of War, *Correspondence*]. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1902), 2:680.

⁶⁶ H. C. Corbin to Maj. Gen. Wesley Merritt, May 12, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 2:637.

⁶⁷ W. Merritt to William McKinley, May 15, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 2:646,

⁶⁸ W. Merritt to William McKinley, May 15, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 2:646.

⁶⁹ William McKinley to the Secretary of War, May 19, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 2:676-678.

At the May 2, White House conference in which the President announced his decision to send troops to the Philippines, he also ordered the Army to seize the port of Mariel, near Havana.⁷⁰ Secretary of War Alger, Secretary of the Navy Long, and his chief uniformed advisor, Rear Admiral Montgomery Sicard, again convinced McKinley to begin the investment of Havana. The Navy demanded that the War Department seize Mariel, so that the Navy's ships could resupply, take refuge from storms, and fix damage without returning to the United States.⁷¹ Only General Miles stubbornly disagreed with this plan, asking that it be postponed until the rainy season passed and more of the new volunteers could be equipped and trained. Secretary Alger overruled Miles and ordered Shafter, still in Tampa, to prepare to support the Navy's plan.⁷² While Shafter's Fifth Corps was still in the early stages of preparation for the capture of Mariel, the Spanish squadron was sighted "off the island of Martinique, a few hundred miles southeast of Cuba. This suggested an attempt to relieve Havana."⁷³ As the Navy consolidated all of its warships to meet this new threat, the War Department suspended the assault of Havana. For the second time, the Spanish navy postponed Shafter's departure.⁷⁴

The arrival of Cerverá's squadron in Santiago de Cuba, and not Havana as supposed, on May 19, 1898, changed the War Department's planning and preparations for the invasion of Cuba for a third time. Sampson, commanding the U.S. Navy's North Atlantic Squadron,

⁷⁰ Gilmore to Wade, May 9, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁷¹ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 46-47. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 7.

⁷² Alger to President, May 26, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁷³ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 47.

⁷⁴ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 46-48. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 114-121, 132. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 8. Smith to Day, May 14, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

determined that the Spanish squadron's position, protected by robust defenses and a narrow mouth leading into Santiago Bay, was unassailable by sea. He cabled Secretary Long to ask for 10,000 soldiers, arguing that the city of Santiago de Cuba and the Spanish fleet "would be ours within forty-eight hours" if he was supported by an Army ground force.⁷⁵

Another joint Army-Navy council of war met with McKinley on May 26 to discuss Sampson's request. Attending were members of the Naval War Board, including Captain Mahan, and both Secretary Alger and General Miles. The council decided to abandon the proposed attack on Havana in favor of two Army campaigns to weaken control the sea lanes into the Caribbean, the first against Santiago de Cuba and the second against Puerto Rico.⁷⁶ Based on McKinley's decisions made at the White House meeting, the War Department ordered Shafter on May 31 to

take your command on transports, proceed under convoy of the Navy to the vicinity of Santiago de Cuba, land your force at such place east or west of that point as your judgment may dictate, under the protection of the Navy, and move it onto the high ground and bluffs overlooking the harbor or the interior, as shall best enable you to capture or destroy the garrison there; or with the aid of the Navy capture or destroy the Spanish fleet now reported to be in Santiago.⁷⁷

Evidently, the prospect of destroying the Spanish squadron in Santiago caused the board to overrule or ignore Miles's earlier admonitions to avoid large incursions during the rainy, "sickly" season.

Despite giving Shafter specific operational objectives, the War Department did not provide him with any long-term, strategic guidance. It is unlikely that Miles or anyone, including

⁷⁵ Joseph Wheeler, *The Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Boston: Lamson, Wolfe, and Company, 1898), 7. Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 276.

⁷⁶ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat press, 1971), 45-6. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 173-175.

⁷⁷ H. C. Corbin to Maj. Gen. William R. Shafter, May 30, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:18-19. Also see Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 64.

the President, knew exactly what the United States' policy toward the Cuban army or people would be if the Spanish were defeated. Miles allowed Shafter to utilize "any insurgent forces," but "cautioned against putting too much confidence" in them.⁷⁸ Additionally, Miles did not expect the Santiago Campaign to be the terminal operation in Cuba, since he advised Shafter that, if possible, he should "reembark [his] troops and proceed to the harbor of Port de Banes."⁷⁹ This final order to move Shafter's corps to a Cuban-held port on the northeastern coast of Cuba demonstrates that the War Department had decided to revert to its original plan to aid the Cuban insurgents once the Spanish fleet was destroyed and Santiago de Cuba captured.

The Spanish squadron's arrival in Santiago de Cuba created a situation in which Miles was able to convince McKinley to adopt his strategy of attacking eastern Cuba and Puerto Rico before the 200,000 volunteers summoned by the president in his two recruitments could be equipped and readied to capture Havana.⁸⁰ Not only did Miles's new strategy support the Navy's desire for a naval base on Puerto Rico to control the approaches to a future isthmian canal, but Miles argued that it followed the "well known" Jominian "principle of cutting the enemy's force in two and overpowering the weaker wing first."⁸¹ Most importantly for Miles, it delayed a direct attack during the summer season.

But the administration was not inclined to listen to Miles. His constant disagreements with the President on strategy and his service secretaries considerably eroded his authority within

⁷⁸ H. C. Corbin to Maj. Gen. William R. Shafter, May 30, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:19. See Also Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 64, 86.

⁷⁹ H. C. Corbin to Maj. Gen. William R. Shafter, May 30, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:19. See Also Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 65.

⁸⁰ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 7. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 120. Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 274.

⁸¹ Quote from Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 276. Also, see Crowl "Alfred Thayer Mahan," 467. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, 87.

the administration and the War Department, so much so that when he “telegraphed for authority to go with the expedition” his request went unanswered.⁸² Later, Alger defended his silence, noting that “Miles had been explicitly informed by the President, as well as by myself, before he went to Tampa, that he was at liberty to go in command of the Santiago expedition, or to organize the force for the invasion of Puerto Rico.”⁸³ The official correspondence suggests that telegraphic requests were always answered. Alger’s silence in this case does appear deliberate, likely meant to prevent his hated rival from participating in the decisive campaign of the conflict. Alger also wanted Shafter, his close friend and fellow Michigander, to lead the expedition. Shafter was also a close friend of Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin, and the adjutant disliked Miles. The Secretary of War and the Adjutant General were even willing to overlook Shafter’s obesity and gout, which ultimately prevented him from leaving his headquarters during most of the Santiago Campaign.⁸⁴ For the remainder of the war and subsequent occupation, the civilian and military chiefs were barely on speaking terms. After the war, Alger devoted fourteen pages of his memoir to ridiculing General Miles’s Puerto Rico strategy and giving examples of Miles’s incompetence.⁸⁵ While the two petulant chiefs feuded, the War Department’s outdated and inadequate supply systems and staff organizations buckled under the constantly changing war plans.

McKinley grew wary of the senior leadership in the War Department. Anxiety over its feuding chiefs’ apparent inability to manage the Army’s war effort led him to intervene in the

⁸² Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 276.

⁸³ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 69.

⁸⁴ Paul H. Carlson, “Pecos Bill:” *A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 162-3, 119-20.

⁸⁵ Alger, *The Spanish-American War*, 48-61.

War Department's day-to-day operations. For help, he increasingly relied on the advice and abilities of Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin. Acting in a manner that anticipated the post-war establishment of a Chief of Staff in lieu of the Commanding General, Corbin's professionalism and ability to coordinate the disjointed staff bureaus kept the War Department functioning under the stress of mobilization and campaigns on opposite sides of the world.⁸⁶

Despite the poor behavior of the Secretary of War and the Commanding General, much of the blame for the War Department's difficulties lay with the inability of its underdeveloped staff to adjust to the changing military developments and McKinley's shifting strategic directives. Before the war, it was widely understood in the War Department that the Army's role in any conflict with a European power would be a limited one, based largely on the conjecture that the United States would not seize and hold territory in any such conflict. In the absence of clear guidance from the President, the War Department and the Army formulated their initial plans based on these pre-war assumptions. Moreover, the War Department did not yet have a general staff to coordinate the different staff bureaus. Because McKinley failed to communicate well-defined strategic objectives clearly until after the war began, the War Department found itself reacting to military developments in real time.

McKinley's faults do not absolve the War Department's leadership of its own shortcomings. The department willingly subordinated itself to the both the naval situation and the Navy's planning. This, when combined with the President's fluctuating and poorly articulated objectives, led to a reactionary strategy that unintentionally compelled the Army to wage three major campaigns rather than the one supporting campaign for which it had anticipated and planned. Overcoming such a sharp change in course required skilled leadership and coordinated

⁸⁶ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 94, 133-140.

staff work. Unfortunately, neither Secretary of War Alger nor Commanding General Miles provided that leadership, opting instead to engage in petty, distracting, and destructive political maneuvering. Leadership failures at the highest levels of the War Department and the McKinley Administration, and a dysfunctional staff system, left the U.S. Army in disarray as Shafter and his Fifth Corps boarded transports for Santiago.

The Santiago Campaign

The decision to go to Santiago began when an informant in the Havana telegraph office secretly notified the U.S. Army's Signal Corps that Cerverá's squadron had arrived in Santiago de Cuba on May 19, 1898. Sampson ordered Commodore Winfield Scott Schley—then searching for the Spanish fleet around Cienfuegos, Cuba—to rush his Flying Squadron to Santiago to prevent Cerverá's squadron from escaping. Schley disregarded his superior's orders and did not leave Cienfuegos for days after convincing himself that Cerverá's fleet was in that harbor, despite much evidence to the contrary. Four days passed before Schley arrived at Santiago and then he decided to leave for Key West for coal without searching the harbor for the Spanish fleet. After Secretary Long and Admiral Sampson implored their wayward subordinate to return to Santiago as ordered, Schley finally confirmed that Cerverá's fleet was in the Bay of Santiago de Cuba on May 29. Schley's ten days of vacillation and delay nearly cost the U.S. navy the chance to bottle up Cerverá's squadron, causing a controversy that embarrassed the Navy for years. Sampson soon arrived off Santiago with the rest of the U.S. Navy's North Atlantic Squadron. In order to maintain a constant, close blockade of the harbor entrance, Sampson sent U.S. Marines to secure Guantánamo Bay for use as a coaling station and as an emergency shelter from any approaching tropical storms. After combining his fleet with Schley's squadron at Santiago,

Sampson elected not to run his squadron through the narrow straits guarded by a floating minefield because he overestimated the strength of the Spanish fortifications in and around Moro Castle and the batteries or artillery defending the entrance of the bay. With no mechanism to force the Spanish fleet out of Santiago de Cuba to do battle, Long asked Alger to send an expeditionary ground force to Santiago, but the two secretaries did not clearly define its mission. The Navy believed the Army's force should take the Spanish forts protecting the entrance of the harbor, so Sampson's fleet could enter the bay unimpeded and defeat the smaller Spanish fleet. The War Department planned on capturing the city and the Spanish force inside.⁸⁷

Over the next week, Shafter received a series of orders giving him leeway on how the Fifth Corps should attack Santiago de Cuba. On May 30, the War Department told Shafter to land west of Santiago de Cuba "under the protection of the Navy" and to move his command "onto the high ground and bluffs overlooking the harbor or the interior, as shall best enable you to capture or destroy the garrison there ... or with the aid of the Navy capture or destroy the Spanish fleet now reported to be in Santiago Harbor."⁸⁸ The War Department clearly intended Shafter to cooperate with Sampson but did not specify if the Fifth Corps' primary objective was Cerverá's squadron or the Spanish garrison, a lapse that caused confusion between the two services for the rest of the campaign. Meanwhile, Miles ordered the other regular Army units in Mobile, Alabama, and the most prepared volunteer regiments mobilizing at Camp Thomas on the old Chickamauga battlefield in Tennessee to join Shafter's expedition.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 173-174. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 69-75. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 111-141.

⁸⁸ H. C. Corbin to Maj. Gen. William R. Shafter, May 30, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:18-19.

⁸⁹ Alger, *Spanish-American War*, 48, 52-57, 63-65. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 175-77. Miles to Maj. Gen. J. J. Coppinger, May 30, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:17-18. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 172-77. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 15-19.

Although he had over thirty-seven years of experience, Shafter was a poor choice to command the Fifth Corps during the expedition against Santiago de Cuba. He began his Army career as lieutenant in the 7th Michigan Volunteers during the Civil War. During that conflict, he earned the Medal of Honor for heroism at the Battle of Fair Oaks. By the end of the war, he had risen to the rank of brigadier general of volunteers and commanded the 17th Regiment of U.S. Colored Troops. Despite being reduced to his regular army rank of lieutenant colonel, Shafter decided to remain in federal service after the Civil War. He proved to be an effective commander at the battalion level in another segregated unit, the 24th Infantry Regiment, and at the regimental level in the 1st Infantry Regiment during campaigns in Texas against the Cheyenne, Comanche, Apache, and other southern plains Indians. Through his seniority and exemplary record, he earned command of the Department of California and the rank of brigadier general in 1897. But the 66-year-old Shafter was not in good shape for a rigorous campaign in the tropics. Weighing over 300 pounds and suffering from gout, the general was essentially immobile and would have to exercise command from the confines of his headquarters. When he did leave his headquarters he often traveled, as a private remembered, “in a buckboard that bent beneath the weight of its single passenger, for he drove it himself. Nor was there room for another beside him on the seat.”⁹⁰ With poor health and an obvious lack of experience commanding large formations, Shafter most likely received command of the Cuban expedition over Miles and Merritt because of his close professional ties with Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin. Of course, McKinley may have favored the appointment in part because Shafter’s physical appearance made him an

⁹⁰ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999, 112.

unlikely presidential challenger if success in Cuba were to tempt him to enter the political arena.⁹¹

In contrast to Shafter, Miles had courageously and successfully commanded a regiment, brigade, division, and briefly a corps during the Civil War. Due to his outstanding reputation, Miles received the reduced rank of colonel in the downsized postwar regular U.S. Army. Miles outshone his peers in almost every one of the Army's campaigns against the plains Indians. His talents were particularly on display when he led the 5th Infantry Regiment on a forced march of 140 miles to capture Chief Joseph's Nez Percé and his band in the winter of 1877, as well as in 1886 when he oversaw an expedition that pursued Geronimo's Chiricahua Apaches over 3,000 miles, eventually forcing their surrender. Most impressively, Miles deployed and maneuvered half of the Regular Army to put down the Ghost Dance in the winter of 1890-91.⁹²

Similarly, Merritt, who commanded a cavalry division in the Civil War under Philip Sheridan, ably leveraged years of operational and administrative experience both during and after the Civil War to wage a brilliant campaign as commander of Eighth Corps in the Philippines. Upon receiving the mission to take Manila, the veteran commander spent days consulting with Alger, Miles, and McKinley to ensure he understood their intent and coordinating myriad administrative and logistical arrangements with the War Department's byzantine bureaucracy. Merritt quickly assembled an experienced team of excellent staff officers, hand-picked from across the Army. He and his staff cooperated extensively with their counterparts in Major General Henry C. Merriam's Department of California in order to

⁹¹ Bradford, *Crucible of Empire*, 49, 54, 61. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 188-89. Carlson, "Pecos Bill," 162-3. Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 212. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 180-81.

⁹² Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 53-56. Miles, *Serving the Republic*, 47-80, 107-232.

efficiently supply, train, and embark the regiments arriving in San Francisco for the Manila expedition. Merritt assigned Major General Elwell S. Otis the mission of chartering and outfitting troop transports to ferry the Eighth Corps across the Pacific, a task at which Otis and his robust staff excelled. As regiments were trained and equipped and transports outfitted, Merritt shipped brigade-sized contingents across to Dewey's fleet. The well-planned movement, training, and equipping of the Eighth Corps demonstrated that an experienced commander and staff could transport an expedition across the globe, despite some of the War Department's inefficiencies.⁹³

Shafter's inexperience in planning or leading large military operations quickly became apparent as the Fifth Corps scrambled to embark for Cuba. The War Department did not yet have a general staff to coordinate its staff bureaus' overlapping efforts to sustain Shafter's corps in Tampa. Each individual bureau chief in Washington sent his own independent staff officers and whatever supplies they believed necessary to arm and equip the 25,000-man expedition leaving from Tampa. Neither the War Department nor Shafter's staff produced a master plan for coordinating the plethora of details, orders, and movements required to marshal, organize, and equip the Fifth Corps in Tampa. Shafter and his miniscule personal staff proved unable to handle the chaotic situation and provided next to no guidance to synchronize and supervise the efforts and operations of the different units and staff agencies joining and supporting his command. To make matters worse, the port of Tampa was not capable of handling the arriving men and material. Just one rail line ran to the port, and the small harbor allowed only a few ships to be loaded at any one time. With over a thousand railroad cars jammed into the city in no particular order, no facilities to store the unloaded supplies, and still more trains waiting further down the

⁹³ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 53-55, 194-96.

line to unload, the confusion and congestion quickly overwhelmed Colonel Charles F. Humphrey, Shafter's chief quartermaster officer. With an ineffective commander and staff, poor port facilities, and little help from the War Department, the process of supplying and embarking the Santiago expedition was chaotic, inefficient, and incomplete.⁹⁴

Shafter's poor physical condition, lack of energy, and inexperience in large-scale maneuvers and operations also prevented him from preparing his corps to fight as an integrated unit. Because Shafter had never trained or led a unit above the regimental level, he had no experience conducting a brigade attack with multiple regiments, let alone coordinating the simultaneous movements of the three divisions in his corps.⁹⁵ Before and after arriving in Tampa, the U.S. Army regulars trained daily at company and regimental drill, perfecting the Army's recently adopted, open-order tactics, which attempted to magnify the effects of rifle fire on attacking units by having one squad of soldiers lay prone and fire rapidly "to cover the alternate squad in its forward rush."⁹⁶ But the training never progressed beyond this relatively elementary foundation. Shafter did not have his subordinate commanders conduct any training at the brigade or division level. Captain John Bigelow observed that after arriving in Florida, "the regiments were not united for a single parade, review, drill, inspection, field-exercise, or

⁹⁴ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 190-191. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 48-51. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 9-11, 22-24, 27. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 178-84.

⁹⁵ Shafter did conduct "brigade drills" in Monterrey, CA in 1889, but they only consisted of ten companies and two batteries. The equivalent of a full strength regiment. See Carlson, "*Pecos Bill*," 140-42.

⁹⁶ John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1899), 24-25. Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 64.

anything else.”⁹⁷ The regiments of his brigade “never formed into the same line of battle until they came under the fire of Spanish rifles.”⁹⁸

Shafter and his few inexperienced staff officers had neither the requisite knowledge nor experience to transform their collection of trained regiments into a cohesive and efficient expeditionary fighting force. The selection of Tampa as the port of embarkation and the uncoordinated movement of soldiers and supplies to the town were to a large degree beyond Shafter’s control, but his command’s combat effectiveness was not. At a minimum, he should have trained his regiments to work with artillery and other regiments as part of a combined-arms team.⁹⁹

Shafter even failed to load the ships properly. His staff officers and sailors carried out an unsystematic embarkation, burying equipment that would be needed immediately after landing in Cuba deep in the hull under less important supplies. The thirty-two transports that eventually left Tampa had only enough space for 16,000 of Shafter’s 25,000 soldiers—even after much of the essential horses, wagons, and medical supplies the Fifth Corps would later need in Santiago were taken off the ships to make room for troops. Soldiers haphazardly crammed whatever equipment they deemed most important into any available space rather than carefully planning to maximize the limited space on the freighters. Bigelow of the 10th Cavalry lamented how “no one seemed to be in charge” during the loading. He could find no words to describe the “confusion which

⁹⁷ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 39.

⁹⁸ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 39.

⁹⁹ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 46-47. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 190-191. Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 61-64. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 48. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 184.

characterized the work of putting the stores and baggage of the sixteen troops, two bands, and brigade headquarters aboard” the *Leona*.¹⁰⁰

Moreover, there was limited space on the transports for the regiments of the Fifth Corps. Ignoring the ambiguous and loosely-enforced orders issued by the chief quartermaster, regiments raced to the port to seize space aboard transports so that they would not be left behind.

Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt’s Rough Riders twice waited by the railroad, but to no avail, for their assigned train to take them to the Port of Tampa. After finding that “nobody knew anything” about the plan to get troops to the harbor, the Rough Riders seized a train carrying coal and arrived at the port “covered with coal-dust, but with all [their] belongings.”¹⁰¹ It took Roosevelt and his commander, Colonel Leonard Wood, an hour to sort through “the swarming ant-heap of humanity” to find Colonel Humphrey and receive word that they were assigned to sail on the transport *Yucatan*. Since the overwhelmed quartermaster officer had assigned three regiments to a ship that could carry only one, the Rough Riders raced off their coal train to seize the ship first. The Fifth Corps resembled a mob more than an orderly army. Even before his departure from Tampa, Shafter had lost control over his commanders and corps.¹⁰²

The problems in Tampa did not end once the troops were aboard their troop transports. Those of Shafter’s regiments that raced to be the first to load the ships had expected immediate departure to Cuba. But the soldiers had to endure six days idling in port aboard the cramped and poorly ventilated ships while the Navy investigated false rumors that Cerverá’s ships had

¹⁰⁰ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 52. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 49-51.

¹⁰¹ Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 50.

¹⁰² Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 191-92. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 49-51. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 43-44. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 50-52. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 184-86.

escaped from Santiago or that another Spanish squadron was in the Caribbean.¹⁰³ On June 14, the Fifth Corps finally departed Tampa to join Sampson at Santiago de Cuba.¹⁰⁴

The U.S. Army's amphibious landings and subsequent campaign were as muddled as their departure from Tampa. After the Fifth Corps and its naval escorts arrived off Santiago de Cuba on June 20, Sampson asked Shafter to capture the forts at the entrance to the bay, so his fleet could enter and destroy Admiral Cerverá's Spanish fleet. Sampson considered the city of the Santiago de Cuba of little importance, and believed that the destruction of the Spanish ships would prove decisive in bringing American victory over Spain in the Atlantic theater. The habitually self-promoting Shafter pursued a different course. Carrying vague orders from the War Department that allowed him to determine his own course of action, Shafter decided not to support the Navy by storming the heavily defended Spanish harbor defenses and instead moved his corps inland to capture Santiago and General Arsenio Linares y Pombo's 12,000-man garrison from the weaker eastern flank.¹⁰⁵

Shafter's plan to attack Santiago de Cuba from the east was sound in theory, but was predicated upon resources that he did not have. He required robust transportation assets to unload his cargo ships and move supplies, ammunition, and heavy guns inland. The War Department sent only three small steam lighters and a tug with two barges to move the Fifth Corps ashore. One lighter suffered from mechanical difficulties before leaving Tampa; the tug deserted the convoy on the first night of the voyage; one barge sank en route; and one of the two remaining

¹⁰³ Remey to Secnav, June 8, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁴ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 56-70. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 191-97. Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:31-34, 37-44. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 33-40. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 54-55. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 184-86. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 184-90.

¹⁰⁵ R. A. Alger to President, July 5, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 202-06. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 203-208.

lighters was damaged soon after arrival. Despite Shafter's unwillingness to help the Navy reduce the forts defending the entrance to Santiago Bay, Sampson still willingly ordered all of his large ships to "send all their steam-cutters and all their pulling-boats, with the exception of one retained on board each ship, to assist in the landing."¹⁰⁶ Without Sampson's fleet of small boats unloading over three-quarters of the invasion force, Shafter's one remaining lighter, the *Laura* would have proven utterly unequal to the task.¹⁰⁷ Clearly, neither Shafter nor the War Department had put adequate thought into carrying out an amphibious landing and conducting ship-to-shore sustainment operations at Santiago until after the Fifth Corps arrived in Cuba.¹⁰⁸

Despite the slow progress in unloading poorly-stowed transports, a backlog of supplies built up on the landing beaches due to a lack of transport from the beaches to the front lines. In the rush to leave Tampa and cram all available troops on the transports, many mules, horses, and wagons had been left behind. In most transports, the few wagons brought to Cuba were buried deep inside ships' hulls under other supplies. To compound Shafter's logistical problems, the wagons that did make it ashore could not move down the narrow trails without engineers widening the path before them. Only the overworked mule trains could move material in these conditions, slowing the pace of distribution of critical supplies. Over the course of the entire campaign, the Fifth Corps never found a way to move enough provisions and ammunition to keep their soldiers adequately fed and supplied, or to bring their heavy siege guns up to the front

¹⁰⁶ Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 64.

¹⁰⁷ The last remaining lighter broke away during the voyage to Cuba but was recovered. The loss of the *Laura* would have made it impossible to sustain Shafter's corps once ashore; Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 71.

¹⁰⁸ Shafter to Adjutant-General, July 7, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:104. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 45-6. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 43, 78-79. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 192, 207. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 79. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 204, 213.

lines. Shafter's unfortunate decision to attack the city of Santiago de Cuba instead of the forts at the mouth of the harbor ensured that the Fifth Corps would fight hungry and lacking heavy artillery, shelters for the soldiers, cooking gear, and adequate hospital facilities.¹⁰⁹

In consultation with Cuban General Calixito García and with the assistance of his troops, Shafter decided to land at the small town of Daiquirí on June 22.¹¹⁰ Fire from García's Cuban soldiers drove the 300 Spanish soldiers from their defenses, preventing them from placing a devastating fire on the exposed soldiers of the Fifth Corps during their poorly-coordinated landings. The naval bombardment commenced with more "noise and fury" than effectiveness after the Cubans had already captured the town, wounding two Cuban soldiers.¹¹¹ Daiquirí had a small dock extending from the shore that the Army's remaining lighter and the Navy's steam-launches used to offload troops and equipment. Since horses and mules could not be loaded on these small boats, they were pushed off the transports to swim ashore, "where buglers were blowing the calls to which the horses had been trained."¹¹² Many horses and mules drowned in the process. About 6,000 soldiers came ashore on the first day. Within hours of landing, a Cuban force under Brigadier General Demetrio Castillo Duany led the 2nd Division of the Fifth Corps under Brigadier General Henry Lawton to the small port of Siboney, eight miles closer to Santiago, which the Spanish gave up without a fight. With the landing beach at Daiquirí and the small port of Siboney secure, Shafter ordered his lead elements to hold their positions. The

¹⁰⁹ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 94-95. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 206-08, 220-21. Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 137. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 215, 229. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 39-40, 48-9.

¹¹⁰ García to Miles, May, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹¹¹ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 44.

¹¹² Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 110.

commanding general wanted to wait for more soldiers to land and to stockpile supplies before advancing towards the heights east of Santiago.¹¹³

Disregarding Shafter's specific order not to advance, Major General Joseph Wheeler's cavalry division launched a successful but costly attack against the Spanish rearguard entrenched at Las Guásimas. Despite Wheeler's 61 years of age, McKinley asked the Ex-Confederate cavalry commander and Democratic congressman to accept a commission as a major general of volunteers in order to unite the political parties and the country in common cause for the war against Spain.¹¹⁴ Castillo's Cuban scouts informed Wheeler of approximately 2,000 Spanish soldiers digging in at Las Guásimas, a point along the trail to Santiago de Cuba. Despite the fact that the scouts reported that the Spanish planned to abandon the position the next day, Wheeler ordered Brigadier General Samuel B. M. Young to bypass Lawton's division and reconnoiter Las Guásimas in force on the morning of June 24. Lawton recognized that in the rush to be the first to fight the Spanish, Wheeler was directly violating Shafter's order. He tried to notify Shafter of Wheeler's planned attack, but in another display of Shafter's physical incapacity to command, the obese and immobile corps commander was still ensconced aboard the *Segurança* and did not

¹¹³ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 202-04. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 54-71. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 104-06. Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 109-16. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 50-52. Trask, *The War With Spain*, 63, 212-14, 217, 226. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 41-6. Wheeler, *The Santiago Campaign*, 13-18.

¹¹⁴ Wheeler, *The Santiago Campaign*, 3-5. Wheeler to President, May 3, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. McKinley very carefully selected officers from all political factions and states to ensure national unity for the war effort; "Appointments of Commissioned Officers Made by the President in the Regular and Volunteer Army, from the following Southern States," April 22, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; and "Appointments of General Officers of the General Staff, U.S. Volunteers, as apportioned among the States and the Regular Army," June 10, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. He even gave a commission to his Democratic Rival, William Jennings Bryan; McKinley to Bryan, May 7, 1898, Series 1, Reel 3, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

get the message in time.¹¹⁵

The next morning, Young deployed the dismounted troopers of the 1st and 10th Cavalry Regiments along the main road to Santiago while the third regiment of his brigade, Wood's Rough Riders, protected the eastern flank by advancing along a small trail through the jungle one mile east of the main road. The two columns converged toward the Spanish rifle pits hidden in thick undergrowth and protected by barbed wire. General Antero Rubín's 1,500 Spanish soldiers fired on the advancing troopers with several volleys from their Mauser rifles, but the same dense undergrowth that concealed the Spanish positions also obscured their fields of fire. Foliage and poor marksmanship combined to prevent the Spanish from stopping the American attack. As in the battles that followed, Young's brigade attack at Las Guásimas succeeded because of the U.S. Army's superior marksmanship, élan, and small-unit tactics, despite the demonstrated inability of inexperienced commanders above the regimental level to coordinate and support their assaults. After suffering thirty-five casualties, the Spanish executed their planned withdrawal before the dismounted cavalrymen closed on their position.¹¹⁶

The Americans suffered 16 killed and 52 wounded in their assault, most of them Rough Riders who had been pinned down by Spanish fire before the Buffalo Soldiers of the 10th Cavalry enfiladed the Spanish line and forced the defenders to retreat.¹¹⁷ Later in the campaign, the 10th Cavalry would again come to the aid of the Rough Riders on their charge up Kettle Hill. With his troops too exhausted to pursue, Wheeler halted the advance as the Spanish retreated to

¹¹⁵ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 89. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 82-83. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 65-69. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 219-23. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 53-6.

¹¹⁶ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 90-92, 101-106. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 80-82. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 69-85. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 220-23. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 51-6. Wheeler, *The Santiago Campaign*, 19-38.

¹¹⁷ Wheeler, *The Santiago Campaign*, 22.

their main line of defense running from El Caney in the North across the ridge line on San Juan Ridge down to the coastal fort of El Morro.¹¹⁸

After forcing the Spanish rear guard to retreat from Las Guásimas, and while waiting to stockpile sufficient supplies and await reinforcements to arrive across tenuous supply lines, Shafter ordered a reconnaissance of the Spanish defenses. Based on intelligence gathered by U.S. scouts and García's Cubans, Shafter decided on a plan of attack. He ordered Brigadier General Jacob Ford Kent's 1st Division and Wheeler's dismounted Cavalry Division to launch an attack against the Spanish blockhouses and trenches on the crest of San Juan Heights on July 1. By taking the heights, Shafter could either storm or besiege the city in a subsequent operation. Shafter's plan also incorporated two recently arrived regiments from Michigan in a feint down the coastal road, designed to keep the Spanish defenders' attention focused on protecting the harbor defenses. While the Michigan regiments fixed the Spanish defenders, Shafter intended Brigadier General Henry W. Lawton to storm the Spanish defenses at El Caney. After taking the small town, Shafter hoped Lawton's Division could quickly envelop the exposed flank of the Spanish defenses on San Juan and Kettle Hills at the same time as the main assault.¹¹⁹

Shafter's physical limitations prevented him from being present on the battlefield, coordinating the two sequential attacks, and ensuring that the two available light field artillery batteries properly supported the assault. He did not issue a written order to clarify this complicated tactical plan, preferring instead to attempt to command from his sickbed through his

¹¹⁸ Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 84. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 83-84. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 209-24.

¹¹⁹ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 116-17. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 209-210. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 118-19. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 92-95. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 225-27, 231-34. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 69-72.

aides, Lieutenant Colonel Edward J. McClernand and Lieutenant John D. Miley.¹²⁰ As at Las Guásimas, the attack was uncoordinated and confused, and it lacked proper artillery support. Only the initiative of regimental officers and the courage of the soldiers who were well trained in open-order tactics and individual marksmanship overcame the dismal command and control problems endemic in Shafter's brigade, division, and corps headquarters.¹²¹

The 2nd Division's attack at El Caney suffered from the same command-and-control issues that plagued the Fifth Corps throughout the Santiago Campaign. First, Lawton placed his four 3.2-inch Model 1885 field guns too far back from the front and did not provide instruction where he wanted the battery to concentrate its fire.¹²² He deployed his division poorly, believing it could easily overwhelm the 500 defenders in El Caney in two hours or less. He underestimated the amount of damage a few hundred defenders firing with modern breech-loading bolt-action rifles from the protection of blockhouses and slit trenches could inflict on troops attacking across open ground. Only after fighting for most for most of the day did Lawton's 5,400-man division eventually take the defenses at El Caney by finally launching a well-coordinated infantry-and-artillery, combined-arms assault against the *El Viso* blockhouse, the centerpiece of the Spanish defenses. Lawton's failure to take the town quickly prevented his division from flanking the Spanish defenses on the San Juan Heights before the main assault began.¹²³

Like Lawton's attack at El Caney, the assault on the San Juan Heights suffered from both ineffective artillery support and poor command and control. The two senior officers responsible

¹²⁰ Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 107-108.

¹²¹ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 46-47, 101-102. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 209-215. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 234-34.

¹²² Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 73.

¹²³ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 215-16. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 119-23. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 235-38. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign*, 77, 105-11.

for the assault, Shafter and Wheeler, both suffered from fever, and neither was physically present to direct the attack. McClernand, Shafter's adjutant general, did the best he could to keep Shafter informed of the progress of the battle and to coordinate the different assaulting elements. Realizing that Lawton would take more time than expected to take El Caney, McClernand received permission from Shafter to begin moving Wheeler's Cavalry Division, now commanded by Colonel Samuel S. Sumner, and Brigadier General Jacob Ford Kent's 1st Division to their assault positions at the base of the heights. The artillery battery at El Pozo was too far away to provide effective fire on the Spanish positions, and the smoke from its black powder charges made it an easy target for counter-battery fire. As the two divisions approached the heights, a Signal Corps observation balloon reconnoitered the Spanish position. Unfortunately, as an infantryman watching from below remarked, "it was a beautiful range marker for the Spanish artillery and infantry, and they promptly used it as such."¹²⁴ The Spanish shot the balloon down to the "infinite satisfaction of everyone, except perhaps the officers occupying it."¹²⁵ Before falling to Earth, the balloon did discover a trail that allowed Kent's Regiments to deploy efficiently. While moving down this trail in column of fours the 71st New York Volunteer Regiment crossed the San Juan River at what became known as the Bloody Ford. The regiment became the focus of Spanish fire. Private Charles J. Post of this regiment hunched close to the ground as his comrades all around him "just sank down, crumpled and wilted, and lay still if dead, or crawled to one side" of the road if wounded.¹²⁶ The Spanish fire killed or wounded over four-hundred men in the vicinity of the ford, the New Yorkers "became demoralized and refused

¹²⁴ Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 169-70.

¹²⁵ Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign*, 81.

¹²⁶ Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 175.

to move forward,” as the rest of Kent’s Division passed them.¹²⁷

As Kent’s 1st Division and Wheeler’s Cavalry Division (dismounted) waited in vain behind the tree line below San Juan Heights for Lawton to take El Caney, they received a tremendous volume of fire from the 600 Spanish soldiers in trenches and a blockhouse on the crest of the heights. Confined to his headquarters, Shafter was in no position to adjust his plan of attack for Lawton’s delayed arrival. Meanwhile, the U.S. soldiers at the base of San Juan and Kettle Hills grew restless as they continued to suffer casualties from the effective Spanish Mauser fire. The disciplined U.S. Army regulars began to put a steadily increasing volume of accurate fire on the Spanish positions with their Krag-Jørgensen rifles. Captain John H. Parker also rushed three of his four Gatling guns to the firing line and “ensured that the Spaniards were unable to stay with their heads above the trenches to fire at the charging-line, because of the missiles of death poured in by the machine guns.”¹²⁸ After consulting Sumner and Kent, Lieutenant Miley, Shafter’s aide-de-camp, authorized the attack “in General Shafter’s name.”¹²⁹ Other regiments took the initiative and followed junior officers like First Lieutenant Jules G. Ord, attacking without direct orders. The soldiers of the Fifth Corps assaulted up the exposed heights in “a broad swarm,” with individual men stopping “to fire over the heads of men and officers in front of them.”¹³⁰ Roosevelt did great work pushing the men of his regiment and others up Kettle Hill on the American right and led part of the attack from horseback. The

¹²⁷ Quote from Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign*, 82. Also see Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 107-10. William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 129. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 123-26. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 109-10. Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 169-179. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 99-100. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 238-41. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign*, 76-82.

¹²⁸ John H. Parker, *History of the Gatling Gun Detachment Fifth Army Corps, at Santiago, With a Few Unvarnished Truths Concerning that Expedition* (Kansas City, MO: Hudson-Kimberly Publishing, 1898), 136-37.

¹²⁹ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 118.

¹³⁰ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 124.

Spanish placed their trenches on the top of the ridge, instead of the military crest, and could not place effective fire on the advancing Americans below. Suppressed by Parker's Gatling guns and unable to see the Americans charging up San Juan Hill until they were within thirty feet of their lines, the Spanish could not hold. They soon broke, and as tired American infantrymen and dismounted cavalrymen consolidated their positions atop the heights, the surviving Spanish defenders hastily retreated to their main line of defenses surrounding the city.¹³¹

From those defenses, the Spanish placed effective rifle and artillery fire on the recently captured crest of San Juan, forcing the U.S. soldiers to dig in. The Spanish increased their rifle fire and moved skirmishers forward in several halfhearted attempts to force the Americans off the ridge, but well-aimed American rifle fire and devastating fire from Parker's Gatling guns quickly checked these futile attempts. The Fifth Corps suffered 1,385 casualties in the attacks on San Juan Heights and El Caney. Shafter and his commanders were appalled by the losses and decided against any further attempts to take Spanish defenses by frontal assault. Observing that the seriously wounded General Arsenio Linares y Pombo did not have sufficient forces to break out, the Fifth Corps began digging trenches and investing the city. The siege of Santiago de Cuba had begun.¹³²

A stalemate developed as neither the Spanish nor Americans wanted to risk an attack across open ground and neither army had the firepower to reduce the enemy's defenses. Shafter and his division commanders all agreed that a frontal assault against either the land or harbor

¹³¹ Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign*, 120-29. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 216-218. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 111-13. Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba*, 127-29. Parker, *History of the Gatling Gun Detachment Fifth Army Corps*, 126-38. Post, *The Little War of Private Post*, 179-186. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 100-114. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 238-43. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign*, 83-88. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue*, 129-30.

¹³² Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 218. Parker, *History of the Gatling Gun Detachment Fifth Army Corps*, 140-46. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 117-119. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 244-46.

defenses around Santiago would be both risky and costly. Furthermore, both armies suffered from worsening logistics crises, and the exhausted soldiers on both sides increasingly fell victim to tropical diseases. Inside Santiago de Cuba, most of Linares's men were sick, and ammunition and food supplies fell critically low. Linares soon came to the realization that unless other Spanish forces lifted the siege, Santiago de Cuba either would fall to an assault or his soldiers would succumb to starvation. Feverish and consternated, Shafter considered withdrawing his exhausted soldiers "about 5 miles and taking up a new position on the high ground between the San Juan River and Siboney," so he could be closer to his supply bases along the coast.¹³³ In a council of war that met on July 2, Shafter's more resilient commanders unanimously voted to remain on the heights around Santiago de Cuba and continue to besiege the city. Indecisive, Shafter telegraphed the War Department about his desire to withdrawal towards Siboney. Minutes later, Alger replied that Shafter should, if at all possible, hold his present position because "the effect upon the country would be much better than falling back."¹³⁴ Alger promised his Corps commander immediate reinforcements.¹³⁵

The War Department immediately ordered a division from Major General John R. Brooke's First Army Corps, another brigade, and Miles to depart for Santiago.¹³⁶ Additionally, the Quartermaster Department purchased new transports to ship soldiers and supplies to the Caribbean, and contracted and dispatched a fleet of lighters and tugs, dockworkers, and engineering equipment out of New York to alleviate Shafter's unloading problems. The War

¹³³ Shafter to the Secretary of War, July 3, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:74.

¹³⁴ R. A. Alger to Major-General Shafter, July 3, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:75.

¹³⁵ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 218-19. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 124-25. Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 119. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 248-51.

¹³⁶ John R. Brooke to Adjutant-General, July 3, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:76-77.

Department reacted adequately to meet Shafter's needs, but with better initial planning and by selection of a commander who was more fit—both physically and professionally—it could have avoided most of the difficulties it faced during the Santiago Campaign.¹³⁷

The Cuban Liberation Army now helped to seal the fate of Linares's men. Most importantly, approximately 6,000 Cuban soldiers under Calixito García prevented reinforcements from reaching Santiago de Cuba. There were over 24,000 Spanish soldiers dispersed throughout eastern Cuba. If they had all marched to the city, they probably could have lifted the siege. Unfortunately for the Spanish, García's Cuban soldiers surrounded each of the Spanish garrisons in the province. Only one Spanish relief column from Manzanillo, under the command of Colonel Frederico Escario, outmaneuvered and outfought the determined Cuban blocking force to reach Santiago. But the arrival of 3,500 reinforcements on July 3 only exacerbated Linares's situation. The additional Spanish soldiers taxed the limited quantities of food and ammunition and they did not provide enough strength to alter the tactical situation. Although the Cuban Liberation Army was involved in little fighting at the battles of Las Guasimas, El Caney, and San Juan, their ability to keep the other Spanish troops in the province from lifting the siege removed any hope the Spanish army and navy had of breaking the blockade. This was a vital contribution to the campaign.¹³⁸

By July 3, Admiral Cerverá realized that remaining in Santiago Harbor meant the eventual capture or destruction of his ships in anchorage, but he also knew that he had little chance of slipping out of the narrow mouth of the harbor and outrunning the faster American ships. Under direct orders from the Governor General Ramón Blanco y Erenas to attempt an

¹³⁷ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 219-22. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 252, 296-97.

¹³⁸ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 205-06, 226. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 122. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 208-09, 255-56.

escape to Havana or Cienfuegos, the fatalistic Cerverá in the cruiser *Infanta María Teresa* led his three other armored cruisers and two destroyers out of the harbor in a single file on the morning of 3 July. The Spanish caught Sampson's fleet at a vulnerable moment. Three ships, including the battleship *Massachusetts*, were steaming to Guantanamo for coal, and three other ships, including the *New York*, with Admiral Sampson aboard, were underway to meet with Shafter at Siboney.¹³⁹

Although startled by the sudden appearance of Cerverá's fleet, the four remaining U.S. battleships and two armored cruisers sprang into action and began to fire on the *Infanta María Teresa* before it cleared the narrow channel. Cerverá's flagship headed straight for the *Brooklyn* in an attempt to ram the most westerly American ship. The *Brooklyn*, Schley's flagship, avoided the *Infanta María Teresa* by steering east, but in the process of avoiding the collision Schley created a westerly escape route for the Spanish squadron. American fire damaged the *Infanta María Teresa* and forced her to run aground. While the *Infanta María Teresa* distracted the American ships, the Spanish Cruisers *Vizcaya* and the *Cristóbal Colon* attempted to escape through the gap in the American line created by the *Brooklyn*'s maneuver. After forcing the *Infanta María Teresa* ashore, Sampson's ships again concentrated their fire on the slow-moving Spanish vessels steaming in single file out of the harbor's narrow mouth, destroying each of the remaining three Spanish ships in turn. Only the *Vizcaya* and the *Cristóbal Colon* escaped the area. The two Spanish cruisers raced to the west, but the faster U.S. Navy ships with longer ranged guns quickly caught and destroyed them. Of more than 2,000 Spanish sailors who steamed out that morning, almost 500 were killed or wounded. Only one American sailor died, one was wounded, and three American ships suffered minor damage. As at Manila, the U.S.

¹³⁹ Trask, *The War with Spain*, 257-62.

Navy performed brilliantly and annihilated the enemy forces. Unfortunately, the U.S. Navy's victory was tarnished by Schley's faulty maneuver and the lasting controversy between Schley and Sampson over who deserved the most credit for the victory.¹⁴⁰

With Cerverá's ships destroyed and his ground forces cut off from relief by the Cuban Liberation Army and the U.S. Army, Linares faced a desperate situation. He had received a severe arm wound in the fighting at San Juan Hill, forcing him to turn command over to his subordinate, General José Toral. The new Spanish commander abandoned all his exterior defensive positions and concentrated his remaining soldiers on the city's last line of inner defenses. Surrounded, low on ammunition and food, and cut off from fresh water, Toral cabled Blanco in Havana that the garrison could not hold out for long. Blanco placed little value in holding Santiago now that the Spanish squadron was no more than wreckage. Still wanting to maintain Spain's honor, he ordered Toral to defend Santiago for as long as possible before attempting to escape with his garrison.¹⁴¹

Like Toral, Shafter seemed concerned about his ability to continue to hold his positions. Shafter did not believe his force "sufficient to warrant an assault on the city" and believed his corps would suffer "a fearful loss" in another frontal assault against entrenched Spanish positions.¹⁴² He suggested the Navy force the entrance of the harbor on its own. Sampson refused to run the harbor defenses without the Army's support. Furthermore, Miles questioned the importance of continuing to press the siege against a city that held no strategic importance after the U.S. Navy destroyed Cerverá's squadron. But McKinley and the War Department were

¹⁴⁰ Trask, *The War with Spain*, 262-69. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 226.

¹⁴¹ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 227. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 287, 301-302.

¹⁴² Shafter to Adjutant-General, July 7, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:105.

adamant that the Fifth Corps capture Santiago. Such a signal victory would pressure the Spanish government to capitulate, maintain public resolve in the United States, and ensure that the United States could determine the future of Cuba in armistice negotiations. To assist Shafter's beleaguered command, the War Department continued to send additional reinforcements and supplies. Shafter used the newly arrived units to extend his lines around the city, completely encircling it with U.S. and Cuban forces on July 9. The Fifth Corps steadily improved its defenses and artillery positions in the heights surrounding Santiago and maintained a constant harassing fire on the Spanish positions below.¹⁴³

As the sniping and cannonading between the two lines continued, Shafter and Toral engaged in negotiations to end the fighting. Shafter sent his first request for Toral to surrender his army and the city soon after the destruction of the Spanish fleet. On July 8, Toral offered to give Santiago to Shafter, if Shafter allowed the Spanish commander to march his army "with arms and baggage and not to be molested until he reach[e]d Holguin," but Shafter hoped to convince Toral to surrender his army unconditionally before political pressure forced him into launching another costly frontal attack.¹⁴⁴ Shafter changed his mind later that day. Shafter informed the War Department that he and his division commander thought that the War Department should accept Toral's proposal to avoid the needless loss of further American lives. McKinley quickly refused Shafter's proposal since it did not force the Spanish to concede

¹⁴³ Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:87-90, Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 226-27, 105-07, 115. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 289.

¹⁴⁴ W. R. Shafter to R. A. Alger, July 9, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:116. W. R. Shafter to R. A. Alger, July 9, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

defeat.¹⁴⁵ Alger insisted that when the Fifth Corps was “strong enough to destroy the enemy and take Santiago that [it] do it.”¹⁴⁶ On July 10, Alger suggested to Shafter that if the Spanish surrendered the U.S. government would transport the Spanish garrison back to Spain, allowing the Spanish to avoid the humiliation of languishing in American prisons. U.S. Navy command of the Atlantic would ensure that they did not return to Cuba.¹⁴⁷ On 12 July, Toral repeated his offer to abandon Santiago on his own terms, but once again, Alger and McKinley refused the recommendation of Shafter and Miles to accept the Spanish offer.¹⁴⁸

While the negotiations were under way, both the Spanish and American armies continued to suffer from the elements, tropical diseases, and a lack of supplies. The Spanish soldiers, with access to only rice and dirty water, suffered from dysentery, fever, and trench foot. These hardships combined with a severe shortage of ammunition, robbed Toral of all hope of fighting his way through the Fifth Corps’ lines. Although initially healthier than their Spanish foes, the condition of the soldiers in the American trenches sharply deteriorated. The combination of tropical fevers, debilitating heat, afternoon monsoons, and continuing supply shortages took a harsh toll on the besiegers. Forced by the administration to break the stalemate and settle the matter quickly, Shafter, Miles, and Sampson gave Toral a final ultimatum on July 13 to surrender both the city and his army by noon of the following day. If the Spanish failed to surrender, Miles planned to land recently arrived reinforcements and storm the harbor defenses, allowing

¹⁴⁵ Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:116-120. Corbin to Shafter, July 9, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁴⁶ H. C. Corbin to Major-General Shafter, July 9, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:119.

¹⁴⁷ R. A. Alger to General Shafter, July 10, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:125.

¹⁴⁸ José Toral to Esteemed General of the American Forces, July 12, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:33. R. A. Alger to Major-General Shafter, July 13, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 34. Miles to Secretary of War, July 12, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 228-9. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 134-159. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 299-304.

Sampson's fleet to enter the harbor and bombard the Spanish positions from the rear while Shafter assaulted them from the front. Seeing the hopelessness of his situation, Toral asked and received permission from Blanco in Havana to capitulate if the Americans would honor their earlier promise to return Toral's army to Spain. After two days of further negotiations on the details of the capitulation, the Fifth Corps finally marched into Santiago and received Toral's surrender on July 17, 1898.¹⁴⁹

The Puerto Rico and Philippine Campaigns

After ensuring that Toral surrendered at Santiago, Miles left Santiago for Puerto Rico with the 3,400 soldiers still aboard the transports. The McKinley administration hoped to secure at least part of Puerto Rico with over 15,000 soldiers being sent from both the United States and Santiago to put additional pressure on the Spanish commissioners in Washington to sue for peace. Miles originally intended to land at Cape Fajardo and quickly seize San Juan. The Spanish expected the landings at Fajardo and prepared to contest the Americans there. Not wanting to face a strong Spanish force in well-prepared defensive positions, Miles diverted his transports and Navy escort to the harbor at Guánica and the large port city of Ponce on the Southern coast of Puerto Rico, seizing the lightly defended cities on the 25th and 28th of July respectively. The American expeditionary force efficiently unloaded the troops and supplies in the captured deep-water harbors and was welcomed by friendly Puerto Ricans. Four mutually-supporting and well-supplied columns marched from the southern coast of Puerto Rico toward San Juan in the north

¹⁴⁹ R. A. Alger to Major-General Miles, July 13, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Memoranda Surrender of Santiago, July, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 229-30. Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:136-52. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter*, 150-88. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 295-299, 304-17.

along good roads. When the U.S. Army met Spanish blocking positions, as it did at Aibonito, on the road to San Juan, they enveloped the positions and forced the Spanish soldiers to abandon their defenses, avoiding costly frontal attacks. Only the signing of the armistice on August 12, 1898, stopped Miles's rapid advance toward San Juan.¹⁵⁰

On the other side of the world, Merritt's Eighth Corps had begun to land on 30 June at Cavite, a small peninsula that jets out into Manila Harbor, 27 miles from the old colonial city. En route to the Philippines the cruiser *Charleston* and the troops on board captured the Spanish island of Guam without a shot being fired by its sixty-man garrison. The defenders did not even know that a war between the United States and Spain existed. Under the protection of Dewey's guns in Manila, the Eighth Corps built a camp close to the city, secured storehouses and draft animals, drilled, and consolidated supplies while it awaited the second and third convoys of troops to arrive from San Francisco. Despite arriving in the monsoon season and facing their own logistical difficulties, Merritt and his staff kept the Eighth Corps healthier and better supplied than Shafter's in Santiago through exceptional organization and by maintaining good relations with the U.S. Navy. Merritt also had to deal with a local insurgent force that was much less friendly than the Cuban army around Santiago. An indigenous, insurgent army under Emilio Aguinaldo had besieged Manila for weeks, and it wanted to capture Manila before the U.S. Army occupied the city. It obstructed the U.S. Army at every opportunity. Merritt used the Spanish fear of Aguinaldo's insurgents to his advantage. In secret negotiations with the Spanish commander of Manila, Governor-General Fermin Juadenes, Merritt arranged for the Spanish to surrender the city after putting up token resistance in exchange for Merritt not shelling the city or allowing the Aguinaldo Filipinos into the city. Following Merritt's detailed written plan, the U.S. Army

¹⁵⁰ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 232-237. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 336-369.

attacked Manila's entrenchments from the south on the morning of August 13 with carefully coordinated artillery and machine gun support after Dewey's squadron had completed its preliminary bombardment. Soon after the assault began, Juadenes raised a white flag above the citadel's walls as planned. Upon receiving the surrender signal, Merritt and his staff, with six companies of the 2nd Oregon Volunteer Infantry Regiment, landed on the city docks aboard the *Zafiro* and secured the citadel and Old City, while two brigades attacking from the south rushed to occupy the Spanish positions and keep the insurgent army out of the city. The Eighth Corps' campaign to take Manila showed that with careful planning by experienced staff officers, a competent commander, political savvy, and cooperation with the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Army could execute a competent campaign half way around the world despite the War Department's antiquated bureau system and dysfunctional leadership. Following President McKinley's December 1898 decision to annex the Philippines, fighting broke out in Manila on February 4, 1899, beginning the long and bloody Philippine Insurrection.¹⁵¹

Conclusion

Following its decisive victory in the War with Spain, the United States dictated the terms of peace, and Spain was forced to give up the last vestiges of its overseas empire, including the Philippines, Guam, Cuba, and Puerto Rico.¹⁵² The U.S. Navy performed well during the brief war, demonstrating its ability to develop an effective strategy and project power across the globe to crush two Spanish fleets. However, the Spanish had only a second-rate navy and the vastly superior U.S. Navy nearly missed its chance to blockade Cerverá's squadron at Santiago due to

¹⁵¹ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 237-243. Trask, *The War with Spain*, 409-21.

¹⁵² Day to The Duke of Almodovar del Rio, July 30, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Schley's negligence. Furthermore, Schley nearly allowed the Spanish fleet to escape during the naval Battle of Santiago by his poor tactical decisions. The U.S. Navy achieved its superiority over its sister service during the 1880s when it began to modernize itself into the "New American Navy," while the U.S. Army remained a frontier constabulary force. In contrast, the unexpected mobilization of a large volunteer army, constantly changing strategies, and a dysfunctional command and staff structure hampered the War Department throughout the War. However, there were some things the U.S. Army could be proud of. The Army performed well in combat from the regimental level down to the individual soldier. At the same time, Generals Merritt and Miles proved that exceptional operational talent and pre-war experience could be leveraged to mitigate the bureaucratic inefficiencies and structural deficiencies within the War Department and produce successful, even brilliant campaigns. Therefore, Shafter must share the blame with the War Department for the poorly executed campaign in Cuba. McKinley needed new leadership in the War Department and in Cuba for the post war occupation to succeed.

After the war, the Army occupied a new overseas empire. To control Spain's former Pacific and Caribbean colonies, the regular Army quadrupled in size by 1900. The poor performance of the U.S. Army in Cuba created a backlash that cried out for reform and marginalized Miles, Alger, and Shafter for the brief remainder of their tenures. McKinley took the first step to reform the dysfunctional War Department by replacing the largely incompetent Secretary of War Alger with Elihu Root, a corporate lawyer from New York. The cries for reform, installment of Root as Secretary of War, and new Republican majorities in both houses of Congress after the election of 1900 collectively set the conditions needed for legislators to pass the Army Reorganization Act of 1901, the General Staff Act of 1903, and the Dick Militia Act of 1903. Within a few years of defeating Spain, the United States had "an army for empire,"

capable not only of expeditionary warfare of the kind it attempted haphazardly and inefficiently during the Spanish-American War, but also—and more immediately—of conducting and sustaining the occupations of Cuba and Puerto Rico while fighting the Philippine Insurrection on the opposite side of the world.¹⁵³

But that was still over the horizon when the war ended and the not-yet-reformed War Department and Army wrestled with the problem of occupying and administering postwar Cuba. The Teller Amendment prevented outright annexation of Cuba, but McKinley did not set any timetable for American withdrawal. He simply gave Shafter specific guidance on how to administer and finance the occupation of Santiago in the near term.¹⁵⁴ The U. S. Army in Cuba, itself ravaged by tropical fevers, faced the difficult task of caring for and evacuating tens of thousands of Spanish prisoners, leading a humanitarian effort to help the many Cubans suffering from disease and starvation, reestablishing the rule of law, and trying to revitalize an economy devastated by three years of continuous conflict.

¹⁵³ Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 326. The Army Reorganization Act of February 1901 expanded the regular Army to 100,000 soldiers and enforced rotation to many staff bureau billets. However, the bureaus retained many long-serving personnel and most of their power until 1918. The General Staff Act created a 45 officer general staff and replaced the Commanding General with a Chief of Staff subordinate to the Secretary of War with coordinating, but not direct authority, over the staff bureaus. Representative Charles Dick, a general in the Ohio guard, introduced the Dick Militia Act of 1903. The act appropriated federal funds to train and equip organized state militia units. In return the Army gained control over how the state militias trained, equipped, and organized their state militias. The Act also clarified and slightly expanded when the President could activate the National Guard. Under the Dick Act, all males ages 18 to 45 maintained service obligation in emergencies. See Allan R. Millet, and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (New York: Free Press, 1994), 310, 327-330.

¹⁵⁴ William McKinley to the Secretary of War, July 18, 1898, Department of War, *Correspondence*, 1:159-161.

CHAPTER 2:
THE FIRST CRISES: THE U.S. ARMY'S CHANGING RELATIONS WITH THE SPANISH
AND CUBAN ARMIES AND THE ORDERLY RETURN OF THE SPANISH PRISONERS
BACK TO SPAIN

You have complied exactly with all the laws and usages of war as recognized by the armies of the most civilized nations of the world; have given honorable burial to the dead and vanquished; have cured their wounded with great humanity; have respected and cared for your prisoners and their comfort; and lastly, to us whose condition was terrible, you have given freely of food and of your stock of medicines, and have honored us with distinction and courtesy, for after fighting the two armies mingled with the utmost harmony.

- Pedro Lopez De Castillo, Soldier of Infantry, to the Soldiers of the American Army (August 21, 1898)

Introduction

On July 17, 1898 at 9:30 a.m. General José Toral agreed to formally surrender his soldiers and the city of Santiago de Cuba. That morning the emaciated soldiers of William R. Shafter's Fifth Corps crawled out of their trenches surrounding the city. In sweat-stained uniforms, they stumbled into regimental formations under the tropical sun. Shafter, his ten general officers, their staffs, and a squadron of one hundred mounted troopers from the U.S. 2nd Cavalry rode toward the gigantic ceiba tree where the surrender negotiations had taken place. Under the ceiba's shade, Toral and his staff waited patiently. To their rear, an honor guard of one

hundred Spanish infantrymen stood at attention in white canvas uniforms. After an exchange of salutes, Shafter presented Toral with the saber and spurs of General Joaquín Vera de Rey, who perished along with two of his sons defending El Caney from the attack by General Henry W. Lawton's division. Next, the Spanish honor guard marched to the right of their officers. "With trumpets sounding on both sides," the Spanish officers raised "their swords high, points up," while the American officers lifted their hats to return the salute.¹ The Spanish soldiers seemed "indifferent and happy" to General Adelbert Ames as they stacked arms and marched off under the guard of the 13th U.S. Infantry Regiment.² With that, Toral formally surrendered the 24,000 Spanish soldiers garrisoning the Province of Santiago.³

The Spanish and American officers then paraded to the governor's palace under the escort of the 9th U.S. Infantry. At the palace, they met the mayor, the archbishop, and other city officials. At exactly twelve noon, Captain Allyn Capron's battery fired a twenty-one-gun salute and the 9th Infantry's band played the Star-Spangled Banner while Shafter's and General Joseph Wheeler's aides slowly raised the American flag over the palace. As a crowd of several thousand civilians looked on, the U.S. infantry and cavalry were ordered to present arms to salute the flag and the officers uncovered. General Samuel B. M. Young's aid-de camp, First Lieutenant James

¹ Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 17, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

² Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 17, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 5.

³ Adelbert Ames to his mother, July 18, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2-3. Paul H. Carlson, "*Pecos Bill*:" *A Military Biography of William Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M, 1989), 181-2. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 185. Entry from July 17, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Shafter to Adjutant-General of the Army, July 24, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 177.

H. Reeves, remembered “A very impressive sight;” however, there was some tarnish on an otherwise polished ceremony.⁴

Sylvester Scovel, the bold and unprincipled reporter for the *New York World*, placed himself on the palace roof to appear in photographs of the ceremony and to take his own picture of the flag raising ceremony. With the reporter spoiling the perfect panorama, Shafter became angry after Scovel refused to leave the roof. Irrate at Scovel’s refusal, Shafter told his aid, First Lieutenant John D. Miley, to “throw him off.” Following the ceremony, an enraged Scovel took a swing at Shafter. The punch only nicked the general, so that “Shafter’s skin was scratched, and showed a streak of blood.”⁵ Soldiers quickly seized Scovel and escorted him to a prison cell. He remained there until he was deported from Cuba. General Demetrio Castillo represented the Cuban army during the ceremony, and like Scovel, he was visibly upset with Shafter. His superior, General Calixto García had already angrily departed Santiago de Cuba with his loyal soldiers after Shafter had not allowed the Cuban army to enter Santiago de Cuba and had left the city’s Spanish officials in their positions.⁶

⁴ Entry from July 17, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 186. Shafter to Adjutant-General U.S.A., July 17, 1898, U.S. Department of War, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain: Including the Insurrection in the Philippine Islands and the China Relief Expedition and Conditions Growing out of the Same, Including the Insurrection in the Philippine Islands and the China Relief Expedition, between the Adjutant General of the Army and Military Commanders in the United States, Cuba, Porto Rico, China, and the Philippine Islands, from April 15, 1898, to July 30, 1902*. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1902), 1:157.

⁵ Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 17, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 9.

⁶ Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 17, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 6-10. David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 317. Entry from July 17, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Paul H. Carlson, “Pecos Bill:” *A Military Biography of William Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M, 1989), 181-2.

Toral's surrender marked the end of hostilities for Shafter's Fifth Corps in Santiago, but the U.S. Army still faced many difficult problems. The Army's quartermasters needed to feed approximately 24,000 Spanish prisoners, 4,000 Cuban soldiers, tens of thousands of Cuban refugees, and the over 20,000 U.S. soldiers, all desperate for food.⁷ To complicate matters, dysentery, yellow fever, and malaria rapidly spread through the city, the refugee camps, and the ranks. Over the next two chapters the methods used by the U.S. Army to deal with the humanitarian crisis and epidemic of tropical diseases will be addressed. The present chapter explores the War Department's successful transportation of Toral's soldiers back to Spain without incident because of increasingly efficient staff work and because of the professional treatment of the Spanish prisoners by their sympathetic captors. In stark contrast to the treatment of their erstwhile enemies, however, U.S. Army soldiers increasingly regarded the Cubans as inferiors and potential adversaries. The Americans looked down on the Cubans because of their unprofessional appearance and the fact that the large majority of Cuban soldiers were of African descent. Most American soldiers and observers felt that the Cubans shirked from directly confronting the Spanish during the fighting to take Santiago. Likewise, the Cubans grew angry because the U.S. Army refused to recognize them officially or their significant contributions to the campaign. Shafter's unwillingness to allow armed Cubans to enter Santiago further insulted and outraged García and his Cuban soldiers.

⁷ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 230 and 232.

The Deteriorating Relationship between the Cuban and American Allies

During the fighting around Santiago de Cuba, most U.S. Army soldiers increasingly viewed the soldiers of the Cuban Liberation Army, known as *mambises*, in a disparaging manner. Romantic portrayals of Cuban soldiers by the American press led the U.S. soldiers to believe that they would encounter a conventional Cuban army composed of soldiers of European ancestry. Upon landing at Daiquirí, American soldiers were surprised to find that Cuban Liberation Army was almost entirely composed of poorly equipped black soldiers who lacked uniforms and were exhausted by three years of guerilla warfare. Racial prejudices against people of African descent were nearly ubiquitous among the white officers and soldiers of the U.S. Army and greatly contributed to their negative perception of the black *mambises*. Furthermore, American war correspondents and soldiers, without fully understanding the Cuban contribution, observed that the Cuban Liberation Army had shirked from directly confronting the Spanish army, being more concerned with pilfering American supplies.

The pro-Cuban press and expansionists within the United States used metaphorical images that Americans could relate to in order to justify intervention in the Cuban War for Independence. The American press portrayed Cuban women as pure and virtuous victims of Spanish cruelty and misrule on an island in such close proximity to the United States that honor dictated America's immediate involvement. Furthermore, Cuban men and Uncle Sam appeared as patriotic fighters who virtuously defended Cuban women from being tormented and ravished by wicked Spaniards.⁸ Newspaper sketches and political cartoons depicted Cuban soldiers as

⁸ Kristen L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University, 1998), 11, 44-50. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba in the American Imagination: Metaphor and the Imperial Ethos* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2008), 42-94.

dashingly uniformed heroes that chivalrously fought conventional battles with their cruel Spanish opponents.⁹

The romantic notions of the Cuban Liberation Army held in the minds of the American soldiers shattered immediately after the U.S. Army landed. Cuban soldiers had almost no uniforms to speak of, let alone shoes. Upon landing at Daiquirí, Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt of the Rough Riders was shocked to find the Cuban soldiers dressed like “utter tatterdemalions... armed with every kind of rifle in all stages of dilapidation.”¹⁰ Besides a machete, a few lucky Cubans carried captured Spanish Mausers, but most were armed with Winchesters and Remingtons smuggled in from the United States. A private with a favorable view of the *mambises*’ fighting prowess remembered the Cubans had weather-worn straw sombreros, wore “jackets and breeches that were a mere lacework of tatters,” used Pillsbury flour or sugar sacks for their haversacks, and had tethered cognac bottles for canteens.¹¹ A reporter commented on how García’s soldiers looked more like “a horde of dirty Cuban beggars,” but conceded that they still may be good soldiers.¹² He was more disappointed because he had “pictured them...as a better dressed and better disciplined body of men, and had not made allowances enough for the hardships and privations of an insurgent’s life.”¹³ Most went barefoot and only put on their rawhide or fiber-soled sandals when traversing especially rough terrain.

⁹ Kristen L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University, 1998), 51.

¹⁰ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 65.

¹¹ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 130.

¹² George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 92.

¹³ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 92.

Three years of guerilla warfare and the difficulty of living off the land had emaciated these hardened fighters.¹⁴

The American leadership immediately made assumptions about the fighting capabilities of the ragtag Cuban soldiers from mental constructs created from their experiences on the American frontier. U.S. Army officers serving in the trans-Mississippi West believed that irregular Indian fighters made good scouts, but did not trust them to do serious fighting against their kinsmen. Shafter immediately relegated the Cuban *mambises* to the role of scouts and laborers after he observed their condition. Like Shafter, Roosevelt concluded “at first glance” that the Cuban soldiers “would be no use in serious fighting, but ... hoped that they might be of use in scouting.”¹⁵ Captain John Bigelow, who fought in the Apache Wars with both the 9th and 10th Cavalry, also profiled the fighting capabilities of the Cubans based on his experiences on the American frontier. Upon first observing the Cuban soldiers at Daiquirí, Bigelow “thought from their appearance that they would probably prove useful as guides and scouts, but that we would have to do practically all the fighting.”¹⁶ Based on their experience using Native Americans as scouts in the Indian Wars, most U.S. Army officers lost any hope of the Cuban Liberation Army providing any meaningful assistance in direct fighting with the Spanish upon first observing the condition of their allies on the landing beaches. Senior U.S. Army officers typically asked the Cuban soldiers to assist them as laborers and as a reconnaissance force.

Lieutenant Colonel Arthur L. Wager was one of the few U.S. Army officers not to immediately dismiss the Cuban soldiers’ ability to fight because of their ragged attire. While

¹⁴ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 126-32.

¹⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 65.

¹⁶ John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 84.

conferring with García at the camp of the Cuban Liberation Army, Wagner adopted a favorable opinion of the *mambises*'s "ready obedience of their officers, and their manifest good care of their arms" and thought that this "more than neutralized the unfavorable impression created by their ragged attire and general tatterdemalion appearance."¹⁷ Wagner hoped that the discipline the Cuban soldiers showed toward their officers and in caring for their weapons would translate into excellence in conventional warfare. After observing and hearing reports of their performance in battle from others, he concluded that "whatever their merits as bushwhackers might be, they were practically useless in battle."¹⁸ Wagner, like most American officers, perceived that the Cubans could not be relied upon to directly confront the Spanish.

During the first major engagement of the campaign at Las Guasimas, the performance of the Cuban Liberation Army reinforced the American perception that the Cuban soldiers could not be depended on to defeat entrenched Spanish forces. A detachment of Cuban fighters under General Demetrio Castillo led the initial attack against the Spanish positions at Las Guasimas and was soundly repulsed with significant casualties.¹⁹ Brigadier General Samuel B. M. Young complained that the Castillo promised to provide 800 *mambises* for a follow-on attack, but the troopers of his cavalry brigade recalled that the Cubans did not show until after the Americans had captured the Spanish trenches. Attacking from the right of the American line, Roosevelt recalled that his Cuban guide ran away as soon as the Spanish began firing.²⁰ The observations of the Cuban fighters by U.S. Army soldiers during the first skirmish of the campaign reinforced the U.S. Army's preconceived notions that irregular soldiers could not fight conventional battles.

¹⁷ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 32.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 51.

²⁰ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 65, 72.

Although the Cubans did play an important role in the Santiago Campaign, the soldiers of U.S. Army did not observe units of the Cuban Liberation Army successfully attacking Spanish defensive positions. The soldiers of the U.S. Army did witness a few cases of individual Cubans acting bravely. Witnesses recalled watching in amazement as a lone Cuban *mambise* in a soiled white uniform outpaced the charging Americans up San Juan Hill, waving his straw hat as encouragement.²¹ Still, the majority of U.S. Army personnel agreed with Shafter's aid-de-camp that the Cuban troops sent to assist the Americans take San Juan Heights on July 1 "did nothing," or that "they disappeared suddenly when the battle had begun."²² Usually outgunned and undersupplied, the Cuban insurgents learned early in their war for independence to avoid attacking fortified Spanish positions unless they could surprise an isolated outpost with overwhelming force.

As the Spanish positions around Santiago were alert and well manned, the Cuban Liberation Army avoided direct assaults against the Spanish trenches and blockhouses and limited their role during the assault on Santiago to skirmishing and reconnaissance. For instance, on June 29, García's forces advanced in front of the U.S. Army and provided a screen of outposts to observe the Spanish positions and to prevent the Spanish from launching a surprise attack against Shafter's Fifth Corps. The Americans looked despairingly at this indirect way of fighting, but soon learned the wisdom of avoiding frontal attacks against entrenched positions and the importance of careful reconnaissance after the battles of El Caney and San Juan Hill.

Furthermore, Shafter blamed the Cuban Liberation Army for failing to stop Colonel Federico

²¹ John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 84.

²² John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 105. Second quote from Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 15, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

Escario's relief column of 2,800 Spanish soldiers from marching from Manzanillo to reinforce the Santiago garrison.²³ Despite some observed episodes of Cuban bravery, the important reconnaissance the Cubans provided, and the success the Cuban army had in preventing all but one Spanish garrison from marching to relieve Santiago, the members of the U.S. Army never witnessed Cuban units directly attacking fortified Spanish lines during the Santiago Campaign and consequently condemned all Cuban fighters as cowards.²⁴

The Cuban Liberation Army's guerilla tactics did not seem an honorable way of waging war to American officers. The U.S. Army's officer corps held the virtues of honor and bravery in high regard. They believed that honorable officers directly confronted their enemies and were fearless in battle. U.S. Army's institutional culture demanded that officers lead from the front, and that soldiers aggressively follow their officers and take individual initiative in a fight. From their very first combat at Las Guasimas the American officers and soldiers displayed this aggressive and direct method of fighting. The Spanish shot Major James M. Bell of the 1st Cavalry Regiment and two of his officers as they encouraged their men forward. The Rough Riders had another four officers wounded in the battle as Roosevelt and his fellow officers directed the attack from exposed positions.²⁵ Days later, the "smoked Yankees" of the 10th Cavalry received praise for their gallantry as they followed Captain Ayers up Kettle Hill, but the

²³ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 122.

²⁴ John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 96. George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 73, 159. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 101. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 65. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 63-71, 100, 148-49.

²⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 71. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 86.

heralded regiment lost eleven of their twenty-two officers during the charge.²⁶ In all, General Joseph Wheeler's Cavalry Division had over a quarter of all its officers killed or wounded during the assault up Kettle Hill.²⁷ To their left, Brigadier General Jacob F. Kent's Division attacked San Juan. Lieutenant Jules "Gary" Ord led the First Brigade's assault, consisting of the regulars from the 6th and 16th Infantry and a portion of the 71st New York Volunteer Infantry, up San Juan Hill. Ord was the first American to reach the heights before being shot down by a wounded Spaniard.²⁸ The division's Third Brigade had its commander killed during the attack, and the subsequent two officers who assumed command of the brigade during the charge were both wounded.²⁹ Thus, the culture of the U.S. Army expected officers to expose themselves to danger while directly attacking the enemy.

Even in the defense, as their soldiers fired from the prone, officers typically stood directly behind the firing line and exposed themselves while giving orders to their men.³⁰ Captain G. H. Palmer gained the admiration of his men and other onlookers as he calmly strode behind the firing line of the 16th Infantry. Before leading the 10th Cavalry up Kettle Hill, Bigelow wanted to lie down to avoid the volleys of Spanish fire. His honor would not allow it, so he "compromised between standing up and laying down" by sitting.³¹ A wise sergeant convinced Bigelow to lie down after several of his prone black troopers took Mauser bullets to the head. American soldiers

²⁶ The Spaniards called the African American soldiers "smoked Yankees," Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 106. John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 123-25.

²⁷ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 106.

²⁸ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 183-86.

²⁹ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 83-84.

³⁰ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 199.

³¹ John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 120.

and officers alike considered it unmanly to duck or flinch at the sounds of bullets whizzing by, despite considering it wise to seek cover from them. Several soldiers, like Corporal John Walker of the 10th Cavalry, earned Medals of Honor for demonstrating their bravery at the Battle of San Juan Hill by continuing the charge after their officers fell.³² A Spanish staff officer was shocked “by the courage and dash” of the American soldiers assaulting El Caney, and how they “never retreated or fell back an inch” even as the Spanish “fire mowed them down by the hundreds.”³³ The Cuban Liberation Army avoided directly attacking Spanish positions and relied on surprise, ambush, and skirmishing as most guerilla armies do during protracted wars. The U.S. Army’s institutionalized norm for directly confronting the enemy did not align with the Cuban’s indirect method of fighting, and these differences in methods further alienated the allied armies.

Another reason that the U.S. Army’s personnel lost faith in the Cuban soldiers was because of the belief that the Cubans pilfered and stole from them while they were fighting the Spanish. The Cuban *mambises* had little food and even less ammunition and were in awe of the vast stocks of food and equipment being unloaded at Daiquirí and Siboney. Cubans from all walks of life hovered around the landing beaches in the hopes of acquiring food by any means.³⁴ In such a desperate state, they bartered, begged, and sometimes stole from American soldiers. Private Charles Post knew exactly what the Cuban soldiers wanted when they rubbed their stomachs and said they were “*Hambre.*” He traded his hardtack, bacon, and corned beef for mangoes, sugarcane, and plantains, but never acquired a taste for the latter.³⁵ The Cubans also

³² John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 84, 130-32.

³³ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 123.

³⁴ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 90.

³⁵ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 126-27.

collected the equipment cast aside by overheated U.S. soldiers as they trudged toward Santiago in the summer heat. An American officer remembered passing Cubans “driving donkeys loaded with cast-off U.S. blankets.”³⁶ More upsetting to the American officer was that some Cubans reportedly plundered the stacked haversacks of the U.S. soldiers as they fought for San Juan Hill. The perception among the Americans that the Cubans stole their personal belongings as they shirked from battle, further soured American soldiers’ opinions of the Cubans.³⁷

Racial prejudices against people of African descent, common among the white members of the U.S. Army in Santiago, significantly contributed to the rapidly growing anti-Cuban sentiment. Misled by press reports and their own imaginations, Americans were surprised and disappointed that García’s Cuban army was almost entirely composed of black soldiers. George Kennan, reporting for a weekly magazine out of New York, observed that over eighty percent of the *mambises* were black or mulatto.³⁸ Miley believed that about half were black, “the rest mulattoes, with only “a small number of whites.”³⁹ Kennan, Miley, and other American observers described the racial composition of the *mambises* to their American readers to do more than just show their surprise, but also to allude to race as an explanation for the Cuban Liberation Army’s poor performance. Most white Americans in Cuba accepted the commonly held racist view that white Americans were naturally of a better ethnic and national stock than black Cubans, and more than equal to the Cubans and Spanish of European decent. Lieutenant Reeves spoke for nearly all white soldiers in the U.S. Army when he said that, among other factors, “the

³⁶ John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 120.

³⁷ John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 92, 108.

³⁸ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 92.

³⁹ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 59. See also, Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 15, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

individuality of our race...[had] won the day for us.”⁴⁰ Some American reporters were more overtly bigoted, calling the black Cuban soldiers “cave dwellers or something quite forsaken.”⁴¹ Perhaps because of the superb performance of African Americans serving in the 24th Infantry, 25th Infantry, 9th Cavalry, and 10th Cavalry Regiments, U.S. officers tended to be less malicious in their racism, preferring a more paternalistic view. Commonly held racial prejudices, the perception that the Cubans did not do their share of the fighting, and observed instances of Cubans picking up abandoned or unguarded military equipment and food led most U.S. soldiers to view the *mambises* with contempt.

While the large majority of white American officers and soldiers discriminated against the black *mambises* and dismissed their contributions to the Santiago Campaign, a minority of officers did not share these views.⁴² Nelson A. Miles, Lawton, and Ludlow were among the U.S. generals who openly lauded the contribution the Cuban army made toward the victory over the Spanish in Santiago. In Miles’s memoir, *Serving the Republic*, he reflected on the important role the Cubans played throughout the Santiago campaign and acknowledged the spirited attempts the outnumbered Cuban forces made to halt the advance of the Spanish relief column from Manzanillo.⁴³ He concluded, “it will thus be seen that the Cuban troops took an active and most

⁴⁰ Entry from July 17, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴¹ W. Hillary Coston, *The Spanish-American War Volunteer: Ninth United States Volunteer Infantry* (Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Printery, 1899), 172-73.

⁴² To be fair, some historians briefly acknowledge that not all Americans held the Cuban soldier in contempt. See Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:356-357. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 35.

⁴³ Nelson A. Miles, *Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson A. Miles, Lieutenant-General, United States Army* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911) 280.

important part in that campaign, and are entitled to credit accordingly.”⁴⁴ These complimentary remarks made thirteen years after the war closely echoed the sentiments he expressed in 1899 in his article summarizing the War with Spain for the *North American Review*. Here he stated that the “Cubans are entitled to at least a good share of the credit” and “their part in obtaining the results should not be thus lightly be dismissed.”⁴⁵

Of the three American generals who wrote positively about the Cuban participation immediately following the Spanish surrender, none matched the sincerity and eloquence of Ludlow’s letter to García dated July 15. Ludlow congratulated their “combined forces” for their success in Santiago, and he extolled the Cubans for their invaluable and “notable service” as both auxiliaries and as fighters who shared a flank with his troops as equals in the investment of Santiago.⁴⁶ Ludlow thanked García for the Cuban officer’s “innumerable personal courtesies” and signed the letter with the valediction, “I beg to remain your obedient servant.”⁴⁷ Lawton’s praise for the Cuban soldiers under Castillo, who fought with him at El Caney, was less heartfelt than Ludlow’s, but he reported that the Cubans “did fairly good service” under him, losing “67 killed and wounded.”⁴⁸ Lawton, like most American officers, thought that the Cubans only added value to the campaign when they directly confronted the Spanish and lost soldiers in the process.

⁴⁴ Nelson A. Miles, *Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson A. Miles, Lieutenant-General, United States Army* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911) 280.

⁴⁵ Nelson A. Miles, “The War With Spain,” *North American Review* 510 (May 1899): 758.

⁴⁶ Ludlow to García, July 15, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴⁷ Ludlow to García, July 15, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴⁸ Lawton to Adjutant General, August 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 77.

Clearly, these generals did not show the same contempt toward the Cuban soldiers as the majority of American officers, soldiers, and correspondents. Why not? Miles's memoirs and correspondence show that, despite his eccentricities, he was an extremely progressive proponent of racial equality, while Ludlow consistently showed deference towards Cuban officers and other upper class Cubans. Lawton's past showed that he was always diplomatic towards his enemies and allies. Ludlow and Lawton, like most American officers, respected Cuban officers who acted within the norms of late-nineteenth-century Victorian gentlemen. Most, but not all, of the Cubans who met this criterion for American officers to treat them with respect were wealthy Cubans of European decent. Although Ludlow, Lawton and Miles all viewed the Cubans with respect and deference for their contributions, their views were not prevalent among the other U.S. officers in Santiago. However, they certainly comprised a significant and high-ranking minority and thus challenged the idea that the highest military authorities all viewed the Cubans with contempt.

Several field grade officers also showed respect for the achievements of the Cuban Army and avoided labeling the Cubans with typical racial stereotypes. In April, Miles dispatched Lieutenant Andrew S. Rowan to Cuba to locate García, obtain information on the Cuban forces in Santiago, and establish good relations.⁴⁹ For his intrepid work, Rowan received a temporary commission as a colonel and command of the 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiment recruited from Americans supposedly immune to tropical fevers. The close relationships he formed with the Cuban officers during his time in Cuba led Miles later to ask him to conduct an interview with García in September 1898 and write an official report to shed a positive light on the Cuban Liberation Army's role in the fighting in Santiago. Miles and Rowan both sought to reveal the Cubans' important role in the fighting. Although Rowan feverishly took on this assignment out

⁴⁹ David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 174.

of respect for his Cuban officer friends, perhaps Miles did it more to publicly undermine Shafter's condescending view of the Cuban army; the two were bitter rivals and represented different factions within the U.S. Army's officer corps.⁵⁰

Had Shafter dealt as amicably with García and the other Cuban officers as Ludlow and Lawton did, much of the tension between the U.S. Army and the Cuban Liberation Army could have been avoided. Shafter held strong racial prejudices against the Cubans, but his decision to exclude them from the peace negotiations, capitulation ceremony, and occupation government had as much to do with his egotistical personality and orders from the War Department as it did with his racist views. Shafter received specific guidance from President William McKinley to avoid any recognition of the Cubans as formal belligerents or to give them an official role in the occupation government, but his decision to deny them even symbolic representation in the surrender negotiations and ceremony had more to do with Shafter's personality. Selfishly denying that either the Cubans or the U.S. Navy played a significant role in the Spanish capitulation, Shafter also denied Rear Admiral William T. Sampson's repeated request to have a representative from the U.S. Navy present during the peace negotiations or to sign the articles of capitulation or attend the surrender ceremony.⁵¹

The desperate state of the Cuban *mambises* forced them to beg for food and clothing and steal unguarded American supplies. However, it was Shafter's decision to assign the Cuban soldiers primarily to auxiliary roles—scouts, laborers, and guides—that not only angered the proud Cubans, but also created a perception among the U.S. soldiers and American correspondents that the *mambises* were nothing more than ungrateful scroungers watching the

⁵⁰ Rowan to Miles, November 2, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁵¹ David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 320-22.

fighting on the sidelines. This American perception was reinforced by the fact that the typical U.S. soldier and officer had no knowledge of the significant fighting the Cubans did to help the U.S. Marines hold a defensive position on a hill overlooking Guantánamo Bay from a large Spanish attack; the successful effort by García's forces to clear the Spanish from the U.S. Army's landing sites at Siboney and Daiquirí; the shared fighting the Cubans did with Lawton at El Caney; or the numerous skirmishes the Cubans fought to prevent the Spanish garrisons in eastern Cuba from reinforcing the besieged Spanish garrison. Instead, Shafter and the news correspondents focused almost entirely on the inability of García's Cuban soldiers to stop a relief column of 3,500 Spanish soldiers under Colonel Frederico Escario from entering and reinforcing Santiago during the siege, despite the determined efforts of a much smaller Cuban force to block it. Furthermore, racial prejudices devalued the meaningful role the Cubans played in the fighting and created an unfair estimation among the majority of Americans in and out of Cuba that the Cubans did not significantly contribute to the joint victory over the Spanish in Santiago.⁵²

The Spanish Army: From Foe to Friend

While American views of the Cuban Liberation Army quickly soured upon arrival in Cuba, the U.S. Army increasingly regarded the Spanish as an honorable and worthy adversary as the campaign progressed. Soon a bond of mutual admiration formed between the one-time

⁵² Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 202-226. Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:355-373. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 34-38. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 72-74. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983) 199-205. John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 275-280, 285. David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 208-212.

enemies. In the eyes of the majority of the U.S. Army's soldiers, their Spanish opponents fought gallantly and within the conventional norms of late-nineteenth century warfare. Both American and Spanish officers maintained elitist and late-Victorian notions of how gentlemen should behave. These officers held the virtues of honor, courage, and manliness in high regard. Most Western military officers only considered other men to be their peers when they displayed similarly masculine virtues. During the fighting around Santiago and after their surrender, Spanish officers demonstrated behaviors that aligned closely with how their counterparts believed gentlemen should act, and the American officers treated the Spanish as professional colleagues during their internment. Cuban officers that similarly demonstrated gentlemanly behaviors that were consistent with the norms of the U.S. officer corps—usually wealthy, white, and educated in the U.S.—were similarly treated with dignity and respect. Later, the U.S. Army gave these privileged Cubans leadership positions in the occupation government.

Before the war, Cuban sympathizers and American newspapermen convincingly portrayed the Spanish officers either as brutish men who ravished women and committed other dishonorable atrocities against helpless Cubans, or as effeminate children incapable of masculine behavior. Americans labeled the Spanish as unmanly and cruel because they were convinced the Spanish fought dishonorably by resorting to trickery and by targeting Cuban civilians. The images used to portray the Spanish soldiers showed that either their chivalric tradition had degenerated from *Reconquista* or they alluded to the long tradition of Spanish cruelty in the New World, known as the Black Legend. Reports from Valeriano Weyler's reconcentration camps, whether exaggerated or true, confirmed these images to a believing American public.⁵³

⁵³ Kristen L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University, 1998), 49-51.

As the U.S. Army landed near Santiago, its soldiers still imagined their Spanish foes to be cruel and pusillanimous, but after their first bloody encounters with the Iberians, the American soldiers' perception of the Spaniards began to change. Following the battle of El Caney, Kennan believed that both armies left with a "feeling of deep respect for the bravery of the other."⁵⁴ Even after taking the fortified positions on San Juan by frontal attack, one American soldier commended the Spaniards for their bravery and placed most of the blame for their defeat on the faulty positioning of their defenses.⁵⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Wagner, perhaps the foremost tactician in the U.S. Army and head of the Military Information Division, concurred with the soldier's assessment. He described the Spanish defense as "characterized by courage rather than skill."⁵⁶ He commended the bravery of the Spanish soldiers but faulted the Spanish generals for not disrupting the advance of the Fifth Corps along the road from Siboney to Santiago and for not placing their blockhouses and trenches on the military crest of San Juan ridgeline.⁵⁷ As the fighting continued, the U.S. Army came to view the Spanish as not only a brave opponent, but also an honorable one.

During the campaign, American and Spanish officers increasingly treated each other with dignity and respect. They tried to behave within the norms expected of late-Victorian gentlemen, and in many ways followed the same chivalrous code of conduct found on an eighteenth-century battlefield. After Lieutenant Richmond P. Hobson and his crew failed to sink the *U.S.S. Merrimac* in the mouth of Santiago Harbor, the Spanish treated the captured sailors courteously,

⁵⁴ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 123.

⁵⁵ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 189.

⁵⁶ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 148.

⁵⁷ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 148-50.

and Admiral Pascual Cervera y Topete sent a personal letter to Admiral William T. Sampson to inform him that Hobson's crew was safe and to commend them for their "courage and devotion to duty."⁵⁸ This act surprised the officers and soldiers of the U.S. Army, who did not believe that the Spanish would act in such an honorable manner.

Similarly, the Spanish also initially thought that the American soldiers were barbaric and inhumane. The first Spanish soldiers captured by the U.S. Army believed that their captors would quickly execute them. Spanish officers spread this rumor among their soldiers, probably in the hopes of preventing their hungry and sickly soldiers from deserting and to steel their resolve. The captured Spaniards believed their worst fears would be realized when they saw a detail of soldiers marching toward them. Believing that the squad of soldiers was a firing squad, the Spanish prisoners "dropped down on their knees and awaited their death."⁵⁹ It took the American interpreters quite some time to convince the Spanish prisoners that they would be well taken care of and were in no danger of execution.⁶⁰ Seeing how fearful the Spanish prisoners were of their U.S. Army captors, and wanting to convince Toral to surrender all his forces, Shafter decided to return wounded prisoners to the Spanish. He hoped that the prisoners would tell of their good treatment in captivity and engender a more favorable attitude among the Spanish toward their American foes. On July 5, ambulances carrying 28 wounded Spanish officers and soldiers rumbled across no-man's-land under the flag of the Red Cross. Shafter asked for nothing in return for the prisoners. Shafter's move created "an excellent impression

⁵⁸ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 60.

⁵⁹ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 120.

⁶⁰ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 120-21, 138-39.

upon the Spaniards,” who now saw the Americans as trustworthy and honorable adversaries.⁶¹ Soon thereafter, Toral agreed to exchange Hobson and his crew and seriously begin surrender negotiations. Now that both the U.S. and Spanish realized that the other was adhering to chivalric European military conventions harkening back at least to the eighteenth century, a trusting relationship began to form between the two belligerents.

The mutual trust between the Spanish and U.S. Army helped to facilitate the surrender negotiations. The Spanish sought to avoid any language in the official terms that degraded their honor. Toral wanted to find a way to give up Santiago “under conditions honorable to the Spanish arms and trusted that General Shafter’s chivalry” to find a solution that would “leave the honor of his troops intact.”⁶² Understanding the importance of maintaining one’s honor, the U.S. Army’s negotiators willingly replaced the word “surrender,” with “capitulation,” and the American commissioners officially endorsed a letter officially “recognizing the chivalry, courage, and gallantry” of the Spanish officers and soldiers in the hopes that the War Department would allow them to return to Spain with their rifles and artillery, a request that was later denied.⁶³ Since Toral had to receive permission from Madrid for each clause of the capitulation terms over rerouted telegraph wires, the negotiations dragged out. The U.S. Army almost stormed the city on the July 16. Only the U.S. Army commissioners’ trust in Toral as a “fair dealing” and “courtly gentleman” and a last minute telegraph from Spain acquiescing to the

⁶¹ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 138-39.

⁶² John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 157.

⁶³ Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 15, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 166-67, 178.

surrender prevented the assault.⁶⁴ The mutual respect found between the commissioners extended to the officers and soldiers of both armies as well.

Following the surrender, there seemed to be a mutual respect between the Spanish and American soldiers and according to most witnesses there seemed to be “no hatred on either side.”⁶⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Marion P. Maus observed how “after the surrender it was remarked that the admiration of our men for the Spanish was very pronounced, as was that of the Spanish for our troops; they were good friends at once, and the hateful idea of the Yankee ... was soon dispelled.”⁶⁶ An American newspaper correspondent recorded how it gladdened “the heart of the impartial observers to see the many demonstrations of comradeship continually expressed by the victor and the vanquished as they meet either in the city streets, in the cafés or outside in the camps.”⁶⁷ In an effort to maintain their dignity, Spanish officers were allowed to keep their personal side arms and remain in their living quarters in Santiago until evacuated to Spain.⁶⁸

Moreover, the Spanish were “anxious to have it understood” that they only surrendered to the “brave, courageous, noble and generous” U.S. Army and not the “cowardly Cubans,” a

⁶⁴ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 171, 173.

⁶⁵ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 224.

⁶⁶ Confidential Report of Lieutenant Colonel Marion P. Maus, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 34.

⁶⁷ “Our Governor,” *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Santiago de Cuba, August 1, 1898.

⁶⁸ J. Glenn Gray describes the phenomenon of captors treating enemy prisoners with humanity in warfare in detail. Furthermore, he notes that professional soldiers often see other “military men as comrades in arms” when they are similar to them in race and culture. They do not, however, treat their enemies of different races or deemed as subhuman with the same professionalism. See J. Glenn Gray, *The Warriors: Reflections on Men in Battle* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1967), 137-62. Wayne E. Lee further elaborates on the idea that restraint is often showed to enemies that are perceived as “brothers” because they shared a similar cultural understanding of how war should be fought. See Wayne E. Lee, *Barbarians and Brothers: Anglo-American Warfare, 1500-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1-11.

feeling shared by the American soldiers and officers.⁶⁹ The U.S. Army posted sentries around the perimeter of the prisoner camps on San Juan Heights, but did not meddle with the daily routine within the camps. The U.S. Army avoided treating the Spanish as jailed convicts, because, as one officer noted, the idea is “to avoid humiliating the enemy as much as possible.”⁷⁰ The U.S. soldiers found the Spanish hungry and eager to trade their insignia and other military accouterments for their much-despised hardtack and sowbelly bacon. Spanish officers sold their horses and other personal items that they would no longer need to eager American officers who had lost most of their personal items.⁷¹ This trading slowed once the U.S. Army was able to regularly deliver food to the prisoner camps.

Although the Spanish and American soldiers were on good terms, both sides were careful not to allow their former foes to catch them looking weak or disheveled. Before Captain Malcolm Rafferty of the 71st New York marched a detail of men through the recently captured city of Santiago, he mounted a mule and acquired a cavalry saber and a British pith helmet to look more like a professional officer. He also marched his ragged-looking men at strict attention every time they passed Spanish soldiers, explaining to his men that the Spanish ““have an idea we’re the better men. And, goddammit, we are going to keep up that impression!””⁷² An American observer noted how a group of Spanish prisoners also tried to maintain their dignity as

⁶⁹ Entry from July 21, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁷⁰ Entry from July 16, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁷¹ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 269. Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 22, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 3-4.

⁷² Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 266.

they were escorted to the rear. They “held their heads high” even as “Cuban women hung over the railings of the porches pointing and jeering at them.”⁷³ While both diseased and ragged armies tried to keep up their disciplined appearance in front of their foes, they could not help but increasingly view each other as comrades in arms.

By the time the U.S. Army began transporting the Spanish prisoners back to Spain the soldiers of the two armies had built a strong relationship. The Spanish felt more ties of kinship with the Americans than their former Cuban countrymen, just as the Americans seemed closer to the Spaniards than their former allies. Before leaving Cuba for Spain, Toral told a U.S. Army officer in an interview that he had no “hard feelings against the Americans” because of the “chivalric politeness displayed in all our conferences.”⁷⁴ Toral was also thankful for being “treated humanely” during the fighting and “nobly after the surrender.”⁷⁵ Officers in the U.S. Army thought equally highly of Toral and his soldiers. Reeves believed Toral to be an upstanding and educated gentleman, and the American lieutenant was sure the Spanish were “by far the best people” in Cuba.⁷⁶

An open letter written by a Pedro Lopez de Castillo, a private in the infantry, as he departed for Spain, illustrates the goodwill that formed between the Spanish and American soldiers. He began by expressing how his Spanish comrades held “no resentment against the men who fought us nobly and valiantly,” and by thanking them for complying “with all the laws and

⁷³ John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 144.

⁷⁴ CPT Mendoza’s interview with General Toral, 4 p.m., August 27, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

⁷⁵ CPT Mendoza’s interview with General Toral, 4 p.m., August 27, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

⁷⁶ Entry from July 21 and 31, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

usages of war as recognized by the armies of the most civilized nations in the world.”⁷⁷ More specifically, Lopez thanked the American soldiers for “giving freely of food and of your stock of medicines,” caring for the Spanish wounded, providing “honorable burial to the dead,” and treating the Spanish prisoners with “distinction and courtesy.”⁷⁸ In contrast to the Americans, Lopez wrote despairingly of Cuban soldiers. He described the Cubans as a people “without a religion, without morals, without conscience, and of a doubtful origin,” who murdered their enemies from ambush instead of confronting them directly.⁷⁹ Both the U.S. and Spanish armies looked down on the Cuban soldiers for their use of guerilla tactics.

Also like the U.S. Army, Lopez and his fellow Spanish soldiers spoke despairingly about the Cubans because of their race and hoped that the Americans could civilize them. Lopez described the Cubans as the “descendants of the Congos and Guineas, mingled with the blood of unscrupulous Spaniards and of traitors,” and he contrasted the Cubans to the “well-born” Spanish soldiers.⁸⁰ Lopez acknowledged that the Americans fairly conquered Cuba from Spain, and warned the Americans that the Cubans were “not able to exercise or enjoy their liberty, for they will find it a burden to comply with the laws which govern civilized humanity.”⁸¹ Lopez’s letter illustrates how the armies of Spain and the United States shared similar cultural norms on how officers and soldiers should behave and conduct warfare as “civilized” nations. Moreover, the Spaniards believed in the same Social Darwinian values that implied that it was the duty of the

⁷⁷ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 226. Shafter to Adjutant-General of the Army, July 24, 1898. For text of letter, also see Shafter to H. C. Corbin, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 250-51.

⁷⁸ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 226.

⁷⁹ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 226

⁸⁰ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 224-26

⁸¹ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 226.

Western nations to bring civilization and uplift the “inferior” races in the name of humanity. The same values held by American expansionists and many U.S. Army officers were used to justify keeping the colonies won from Spain.

Clearly the U.S. Army’s officers and men respected their Spanish counterparts more than their Cuban allies, but while the Americans may have dismissed the Cuban soldiers as inept in conventional fighting and racially inferior, they still treated most Cuban officers as professional peers and fellow gentlemen. At the first meeting between Shafter, Sampson, and García to share intelligence and strategy at the camp of General Jesus Rabi, the Cubans greeted the American officers with an honor guard. The American officers were pleasantly surprised to find that García acted like a gentlemen and “spoke English fairly well,” and that several of his staff officers were educated in the United States and “spoke it excellently.”⁸² Other officers that dealt with García found that he treated them with “great courtesy” and gave them “full and unreserved information” on the Spanish army.⁸³ Seeing most of the higher-ranking Cuban officers as fellow gentlemen, the American officers also began to treat them with a professional respect. Shafter ensured that the Cuban Liberation Army received supplies at Siboney, but he ordered his logisticians to act discretely when giving handouts to García’s officers in order to avoid their “embarrassment.”⁸⁴ For Cuban and American officers alike, it was considered ungentlemanly to accept charity. The U.S. Army officers never respected or recognized the Cuban Liberation Army, but they did treat the better-educated and wealthier class of Cuban officers with professional respect. Only after Shafter prevented García from entering Santiago with his

⁸² John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 54-55, 200.

⁸³ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 32.

⁸⁴ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 98.

victorious Cuban army and Cubans started to question the American motives did the relationship between the Cuban and American officers began to deteriorate. Even then, they still treated each other as fellow officers and gentlemen.

U.S. Army officers' experiences on the American frontier prepared them for dealing with the Cuban and Spanish officers they worked with in Santiago. From 1865 to 1898 the U.S. Army maintained a significant presence along the national borders where American officers frequently worked with Mexican and Canadian officers under trying circumstances. At the conclusion of the Civil War, General Ulysses S. Grant sent a large portion of the U.S. Army under Major General Phillip Sheridan to Texas to pressure the French forces under Emperor Ferdinand Maximilian to abandon Mexico and to supply the insurgent forces commanded by Benito Juárez. Partly in response to a sharp spike in the number of Native American raids, and partly due to a federal government that was increasingly apathetic about Reconstruction, U.S. Army garrisons moved from the most significant population centers in Texas to the southern and western borders of the state, where they frequently interacted with Mexican army officers. While pursuing Indian raiders in the southwest, U.S. and Mexican officers had frequent contact.⁸⁵

Despite the fact that the American and Mexican soldiers had many tense standoffs and occasionally clashed during pursuits of hostile Native Americans, the officers still maintained cordial relations and made a point to invite each other to dances and other social events.

Brigadier General Edward O. C. Ord, commander of the Department of Texas, dispatched several columns under Ranald Mackenzie and William R. Shafter deep into Mexico after Indian

⁸⁵ Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 92-93. Paul H. Carlson, "Pecos Bill:" *A Military Biography of William Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M, 1989), 97-104, 111-12. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1973), 284-89, 349-51, 363-64. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2009), 193-94.

raiders. These overt violations of Mexican sovereignty generated strong protests from the Mexican government and confrontations between Mexican and American soldiers. Even so, Ord maintained amicable relations with his Mexican counterpart, General Jeronimo Trevino, even allowing his daughter to wed the Mexican General. Other instances showed that Mexican and American troops could work together. In 1880, American and Mexican soldiers crossed the international border often in pursuit of Victorio's Apaches until the Mexican army finally surrounded and killed the Apache leader at Tres Castillos. Five years later the State Department negotiated a reciprocal crossing agreement with the Republic of Mexico that allowed for the armies of both countries to continue pursuits of hostile Indians across the international boundary.⁸⁶ Even with the agreement in place, Captain Emmet Crawford was killed in a skirmish with Mexican militia while chasing Geronimo's Apache band deep into Chihuahua, Mexico, in 1887. On the border with Canada, Miles and other officers worked closely with the North-West Mounted Police in an attempt to prevent Sitting Bull from returning to the United States. Many of the U.S. officers who saw service in Santiago, including Colonel Charles Crane, Shafter, Lawton, and Miles had extensive dealings with foreign officers along the borders. In these encounters, U.S. Army officers found it advantageous to treat their foreign counterparts with dignity and respect.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ General Orders, No. 128, Folder 3, Box 3, The Papers of Henry W. Lawton, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁸⁷ Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 92-93. Paul H. Carlson, "Pecos Bill:" *A Military Biography of William Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M, 1989), 97-104, 111-12. Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University, 2012), 100, 180. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2009), 220, 240, 264. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 96-99, 180-87.

Over the course of the Santiago campaign, the U.S. Army increasingly came to respect their Spanish adversaries as noble and worthy foes. Likewise, the officers of the Spanish army also showed increasing admiration for the chivalrous behavior of the American officers. These reciprocal feelings created trust among Toral, Shafter, and their subordinates, and set conditions for the two belligerents to find acceptable terms that allowed the Spanish to surrender Santiago while still maintaining their honor. Although American observers thought poorly of the Cuban Liberation Army and its soldiers, the U.S. Army's officers treated the upper-class Cuban officers with much of the same professional courtesies that they afforded to their Spanish counterparts. The professional relationship between American and Cuban officers began to fray only after Shafter's refusal to allow the Cuban Liberation Army to enter Santiago after the Spanish surrender, and his refusal to immediately replace the Spanish civil officials with representatives from García's army. The good relations between the U.S. and Spanish armies could have quickly deteriorated if the War Department had not overcome the logistical obstacles that plagued the invasion and efficiently returned their prisoners to Spain.

The Managerial War Department and the Evacuation of the Spanish Prisoners

After the surrender of Santiago, the soldiers of the Fifth Corps suffered from hunger, disease, and lack of supplies. The ships anchored off the coast contained an abundance of supplies, but the lack of lighters, able bodies, and ground transport continued to hamper the ability of Shafter to deliver the needed stores to his troops. To compound the War Department's logistical problems, it was now responsible for supplying approximately 23,000 Spanish

prisoners.⁸⁸ Toral began serious negotiations to surrender his entire command and eastern Cuba only when the War Department made the generous offer to transport his army back to Spain and provide for the prisoners' basic needs at the expense of the United States.⁸⁹ At the time of their capitulation, the Spanish army had already been decimated by disease, malnutrition, and exposure, just like their American captors. While analyzing the difficulty of supplying and transporting Toral's army, one American staff officer came to the simple conclusion that it was "going to be an enormous job."⁹⁰ Even though the Spanish and U.S. armies maintained cordial relations after the surrender ceremony, the mutual feeling of respect and goodwill could not be expected to last if the War Department could not overcome its dysfunctional logistical situation and begin to provide adequate food and medicine to both its own soldiers and the Spanish prisoners.

Fortunately, the War Department rectified much of its bureaucratic and logistical inefficiencies and successfully shipped Toral's army back to Spain. Much of the credit for the increased effectiveness of the War Department belongs to McKinley. He sidelined the bickering and egotistical Commanding General Miles, worked around the ineffectual Secretary of War Russell A. Alger, and personally took charge of the conduct of the war and subsequent occupation. Furthermore, McKinley relied more and more on Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin to administer the War Department. Corbin brought order to the War Department by coordinating the disparate staff bureaus, which were independently capable of professional work, but lacked

⁸⁸ Shafter to Adjutant-General, July 19, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 165.

⁸⁹ Miles to Shafter, July 14, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, *Spanish American War, Correspondence on Cuba and Puerto Rico*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁹⁰ Entry from July 15, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, *Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

direction. Within weeks, the War Department overcame the logistical obstacles necessary to feed and then efficiently transport the Spanish prisoners home.

The fact that all the officers who commanded the U.S. forces in Santiago during the movement of the Spanish prisoners from their garrisons to Spain had previous experience in caring for large numbers of detainees certainly contributed to the success of the operation. Following the winter fight between Miles's command and the Sioux warrior Crazy Horse and his five hundred followers at the Battle of Wolf Mountain on January 8, 1877, thousands of northern-plains Indians surrendered to Miles. Captain Ezra P. Ewers cared for many of the Northern Cheyenne captured during the campaign and soon won a reputation among them for being a compassionate captor who looked after his prisoners' best interest. Thirteen years later, Miles again captured thousands of Native American prisoners. This time, thousands of Sioux fled the Pine Ridge Agency upon hearing the sounds of battle echoing from Wounded Knee Creek. After some fighting, Miles's 3,500 soldiers surrounded the fleeing Sioux and escorted them back to the Pine Ridge Agency, where he again ordered Ewers to secure and care for the 5,000 prisoners. Just eight years later, Ewers would care for thousands of Spanish prisoners of war as a Brigadier General at Guantanamo, Cuba. When Colonel William R. Shafter arrived at the Pine Ridge Agency later in January 1891 to assume overall responsibility for the control and care of the Sioux prisoners of war, Ewers separated the Pine Ridge Cheyenne from the Sioux and escorted the Cheyenne back to their kinsmen's reservation at Tongue River, Montana. Meanwhile, Shafter and his soldiers issued the Sioux rations and blankets, and ensured that the Indians received enough clothing and shelter to survive the rest of the winter. Shafter, Ewers, and

Miles all gained valuable experience dealing with captured Sioux that they would serve them later when dealing with Spanish prisoners of war in Cuba less than a decade later.⁹¹

After Shafter departed with the Fifth Corps to the United States, Lawton assumed command of the recently arrived U.S. occupation troops. One of Lawton's first tasks was to ship the remaining prisoners back to Spain. Fortunately for the U.S. Army, Lawton had overseen the care and transportation of Indian detainees on at least two occasions during his over thirty years of service on the American frontier. As a first lieutenant in 1877, Lawton relocated about 1,000 Northern Cheyenne to the agency near Ft. Reno after their earlier surrender at Ft. Robinson. The famous warrior Wooden Leg knew Lawton as Tall White Man, and recalled that he "was a good man" who was "always kind to the Indians."⁹² Lawton allowed the elderly and sick to ride in the Army wagons and provided them sufficient food and shelter during the journey.⁹³ In 1886, Captain Lawton led a small expedition that included Assistant Surgeon Leonard Wood on a five-month pursuit of Geronimo and his small band of Chiricahua Apaches deep into Mexico's Sierra Madre Mountains. After Lieutenant Charles B. Gatewood convinced Geronimo's exhausted band to surrender, Lawton again showed sympathy to his exhausted opponent by protecting the Apaches from both vengeful American officers and a detachment of Mexican Infantry led by the

⁹¹ Paul H. Carlson, "*Pecos Bill*:" *A Military Biography of William Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M, 1989), 144-50. Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 231-40, 260, 272. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 2009), 235. William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 71-75, 83-4, 90, 115-16.

⁹² Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1971), 333.

⁹³ Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1971), 333. Steven L. Ossad, "Henry Ware Lawton: Flawed Giant and Hero of Four Wars," *U.S. Army Center of Military History*, Internet, available from http://www.history.army.mil/html/bookshelves/resmat/civil_war/articles/article_from_AH63w.pdf, accessed 22 November 2014.

hostile Jesús Aguirre, the Prefect of Arispe.⁹⁴ The U.S. Army was fortunate that Shafter, and each of the three general officers left to occupy Santiago, all had experience handling and caring for large numbers of detainees.

Shafter and his other officers had to rely on their frontier experience in dealing with prisoners because they had little to no time to prepare themselves to receive and care for approximately 23,000 prisoners after Toral's surrender. The U.S. Army took control of the 12,000-soldier garrison of Santiago de Cuba immediately following the ceremony by the ceiba tree. The remaining 11,000 Spaniards garrisoned other towns in the province. All around the city of Santiago de Cuba, Spanish regiments and battalions left their posts to turn in their weapons to the U.S. Army. The U.S. soldiers who entered the city to receive the Spanish arms realized that the city was well fortified and that the Spanish were not short on ammunition, with over six million rounds collected. Relieved that they did not have to assault the city, Shafter's soldiers also received the surrender of the surviving Spanish ships and sailors. Details of American artillerymen took control of the batteries protecting the harbor and worked diligently with the Spanish to detonate the electric mines protecting the mouth of the harbor. Four mines failed to detonate, so their positions were marked with buoys, the electrical cables leading to the mines were cut, and the detonators removed. With the batteries and mines neutralized, the American transports could now enter Santiago Harbor and use the city's docks to quickly unload supplies.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University, 2012), 193-220. For the varying attitudes of enlisted soldiers toward Native American prisoners see Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1963), 233-35.

⁹⁵ Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 20, 1898 and July 17, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 5. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 187-88.

U.S. soldiers collected the Spanish Mausers and Remington rifles at the Santiago Arsenal and escorted the disarmed Spanish to camps in the open areas in front of the American entrenchments on the San Juan Heights. The Santiago Arsenal was a large stone building covering several acres of the city's center. Shafter's ordnance officer, Lieutenant William Brooke, inventoried the weapons.⁹⁶ A troop from the 1st U.S. Cavalry Regiment secured the compound until the War Department determined if the Spanish would be allowed to return home with their weapons or if they would become the property of the U.S. government.⁹⁷ In the meantime, the U.S. occupation forces continued to move Spanish weapons from all over the newly named Department of Santiago to the arsenal. After a few weeks of deliberation, the War Department decided not to allow the Spanish to return with their rifles or cannons.

The prisoners captured at Santiago de Cuba were in poor health. Disease and hunger had taken its toll on the Spanish. Despite the poor conditions of the American soldiers, they were still astonished at the poor health of their captives. Lucy Graves, an assistant of Clara Barton working in Santiago, felt "very sorry" for the passing prisoners and described them "as poor ragged and miserable a lot of human beings as could be collected anywhere."⁹⁸ Of the 12,000 Spanish soldiers in Santiago de Cuba, U.S. officials estimated that roughly 4,000 were incapacitated by illness at the time of Toral's capitulation.⁹⁹ Those capable of marching to the detainment camps on the San Juan Heights begged and bartered for food from the American soldiers. Many Spanish

⁹⁶ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 186.

⁹⁷ Toral to Shafter, forwarded to Adjutant-General, U.S. Army, July 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁹⁸ Diary of Lucy Graves, Entry from August 9, 1898, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 2. Other estimates only had the number of sick Spanish at 2,000; Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 515.

prisoners were reduced to eating their horses until the U.S. Army could provide them full rations about two days later.¹⁰⁰ Ewers issued rations to the Spanish prisoners held at Guantanamo from his own commissary, which was against regulation, until they departed for Spain. Ewers wanted confirmation from Shafter that he could continue this practice without being prosecuted. The War Department and Shafter insisted that he continue issuing government rations, as the Spanish had no means to feed themselves.¹⁰¹

While under the care of the U.S. Army, the health of the Spanish prisoners continued to decline, though not due to neglect. The Spanish prisoners had gone on limited rations during the siege and had no shelter from the sun or the daily afternoon thunderstorms while camped in front of the American positions on the San Juan Heights.¹⁰² The U.S. Army soldiers had no shelter either and were still waiting for their own tents to be unloaded from the transports. On July 24, seven days after their surrender, the already suffering Spanish prisoners only had tarps and other bowers the Spanish collected and put up for shade.¹⁰³ Once the transports were offloaded, the U.S. Army had plenty of food and tents to offer the Spanish prisoners.

There were very few instances when soldiers of the U.S. Army intentionally denied the Spanish available shelter. In one such instance, Colonel Charles F. Humphrey, Shafter's chief quartermaster officer, ordered Major Summers to stop erecting a large tarpaulin to provide shade for the Spanish prisoners waiting by the docks to board ships destined for Spain. Humphrey,

¹⁰⁰ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 186-87.

¹⁰¹ Ewers to Adjutant General, 5th Army Corps, Santiago, August 20, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 39.

¹⁰² Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 516.

¹⁰³ Shafter to Secretary of War, July 24, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 177.

largely responsible for the loading fiasco in Tampa, used profane language and suggested that the Spanish prisoners could “die if they wanted to.”¹⁰⁴ Summers worked around his incompetent and malicious superior by having the Red Cross direct the erection of the tarp, while he provided the manpower.¹⁰⁵

It was disease, not exposure or hunger, which decimated the Spanish ranks. By August 2, there were 2,181 prisoners being cared for in the Spanish hospital in Santiago.¹⁰⁶ Many more were not dire enough to be committed. Just two days later another 500 Spaniards entered the hospital for treatment.¹⁰⁷ And by the end of the week, the hospital with a capacity for 2,000 was overflowing with over 3,000 patients.¹⁰⁸ Despite the best efforts of the medical staff in the hospital, Spanish soldiers were dying at a rate of about fifty a day.¹⁰⁹ Captain Matthew F. Steele and most other U.S. Army officers observed that the Spanish prisoners were “daily dying like sheep” from fever and attributed their high death rate to the fact that their camp was located near “foul sloughs” found in the “low ground,” and also because the Spaniards drank “deadly water.”¹¹⁰ In an attempt to slow the fever epidemic in the Spanish camp, those Spanish prisoners

¹⁰⁴ Diary of Lucy Graves, Entry from August 9, 1898, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁵ Diary of Lucy Graves, Entry from August 9, 1898, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁶ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 2, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 194.

¹⁰⁷ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 4, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁸ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 10, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 218.

¹⁰⁹ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 4, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹¹⁰ Steele to Wife, August 4, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

healthy enough to clean their own camp and the city of Santiago de Cuba were mandated to do so.¹¹¹ Furthermore, Wood accompanied Toral and his staff on a reconnaissance to locate healthier ground to relocate the Spanish prisoners. The two hoped the elevated ground three miles south of the city would be healthier, both still believing that malaria and yellow fever were contracted from filthy living conditions and a pestilence found in contaminated ground and diseased air.¹¹² In their new camp, the Spanish continued to sicken and die of tropical fevers at the same rate. The Spanish had lost approximately 4,000 soldiers to disease within forty days of their capitulation. Toral lamented that even though his soldiers were well fed in captivity, those that survived their fevers looked like “electrified corpses.”¹¹³ He believed that the U.S. Army had done its best to stop the epidemic and that the sick and wounded had “been cared for with the utmost kindness.”¹¹⁴ After spending two years in Cuba, he likely accepted that malarial and yellow fever could not be prevented during the rainy season.

Receiving the surrender of the isolated Spanish garrisons along the coast of the province and in the interior of the province proved a difficult task. Shafter and Toral agreed to each send a staff officer to notify the garrisons of the capitulation. Shafter detailed his most trusted aid, Lieutenant Miley, for the mission, and provided him an escort of two troops from the 2nd U.S. Cavalry under Captain Thomas J. Lewis and a pack train of mules with ten days of supplies.

¹¹¹ William B. Gatewood Jr., *“Smoked Yankees” and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 186.

¹¹² Entry from July 31, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹¹³ CPT Mendoza’s interview with General Toral, 4 p.m., August 27, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

¹¹⁴ CPT Mendoza’s interview with General Toral, 4 p.m., August 27, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

Toral sent Captain Ramus and a pack train with medical supplies with Miley's detachment. Ramus carried a letter from the Spanish general informing the garrison commanders of the terms of capitulation and ordering them to surrender their forces and adhere to orders given in Shafter's name. The expedition left Santiago on the July 19, two days after Santiago surrendered, and followed a Cuban guide along a single-track trail high into the mountains north of the city. Once a road, the trail was now overgrown and washed out in many places. After reaching the railroad line at Dos Bocas, the expedition decided moving over the track was quicker than taking the nearly impassible trail network. Miley observed that the many plantations that once thrived in the interior plateau had "disappeared except the ruins of dwellings in two places." After struggling through the mud and daily-afternoon downpours, Miley's expedition reached El Cristo, the first Spanish garrison north of Santiago de Cuba.

Miley's column stopped short of the two Spanish blockhouses guarding the approach to El Cristo. Ramus and a cavalryman rode forward carrying a white flag and presented Toral's letter to the garrison commander. The Spanish soldiers were delighted to find out that they would return to Spain soon and the local Cuban insurgents were jubilant not only to hear that the war was over, but also at the possibility of receiving meaningful sustenance. Miley and Ramus repeated the process of notifying the Spanish garrisons of Toral's capitulation at Moron and Dos Caminos without incident. At each town they found a small-cultivated zone protected by the local Spanish garrison to feed the women, children, and elderly living in the town. All the able-bodied men belonged to the insurgency and besieged the towns subsisting on mangoes and any other food they could scavenge. Fearing retribution against disarmed Spanish soldiers, Miley decided to allow the Spanish soldiers to keep their weapons until they could be escorted safely

back to Santiago. The Spanish *comandante* at Dos Caminos warned Miley's expedition that the commander of the garrison at San Luis "would not surrender as long as he had a man to fight."¹¹⁵

After riding the twenty miles from Dos Caminos to San Luis, it seemed that the Spanish would defend the town. The Spanish soldiers rushed to their trenches as Miley's expedition approached. Captain Ramos spurred his horse forward and convinced the defenders not to shoot. The *comandante* did not order his men to fire, but refused to surrender San Luis, believing the "whole affair was a ruse of war and that the Captain was a traitor."¹¹⁶ The garrison "had not heard of [the] loss of Cervera's fleet or Toral's surrender."¹¹⁷ The standoff continued until Miley consented to the *comandante*'s request to escort officers from the San Luis garrison to Santiago de Cuba to see for themselves if the Spanish army in Santiago de Cuba had in fact surrendered. When the party returned the next evening with confirmation of Toral's capitulation, the San Luis garrison surrendered. One troop from the 2nd U.S. Cavalry stayed behind to disarm the garrison and safeguard them from an attack by the local Cuban insurgents. The Spanish signaled a message from San Luis to Palma Soriano by means of heliograph to inform the garrison of the situation. They received the reply that "if the American column came there it would be fired upon." Miley dismissed the threatening remark and the expedition departed at once.¹¹⁸

Ramus rode ahead to Palma Soriano with Toral's letter and easily convinced the garrison of its authenticity. When Miley's column arrived they were warmly received, and the Iberians were

¹¹⁵ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 192-4.

¹¹⁶ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 194-97.

¹¹⁷ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, July 22, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 172.

¹¹⁸ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 195. Shafter to H. C. Corbin, July 22, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 172.

“all apparently greatly delighted at the prospect of returning home.”¹¹⁹ Before surrendering, the 600 Spanish regulars who were not too sick marched to San Luis with their weapons for protection from the Cubans. The battalion of 350 Spanish volunteers in Palma Soriano, composed of Cuban loyalists, held a formation and their commander read them the terms of their parole. After they all verbally agreed to adhere to the conditions, the volunteers deposited their arms in large two-wheeled ox carts called *carretas* and were released to their homes. The volunteers were very concerned about their safety because of the intense feeling of hatred and the many atrocities committed between the Cuban *mambises* and the Cuban volunteers that remained loyal to Spain. Fortunately for the Spanish volunteers, the local Cuban forces composed entirely of blacks and mulattoes and commanded by General Sobreco had already received word from García informing them of the Toral’s capitulation and ordering his forces to cease all hostilities against the Spanish. Sobreco promised to control his soldiers, and no attacks ever occurred against the volunteers. Even so, Miley left his second troop of cavalry in Palma Soriano to keep the peace and assuage the fears of the volunteers before returning with the Spanish garrison to San Luis. The 3,500 Spanish soldiers consolidated at San Luis, Songo, and El Cristo remained armed until garrison regiments arrived at Santiago from the United States to disarm and escort the Spanish soldiers safely to Santiago for transport back to Spain.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Shafter to Adjutant –General of the Army, July 24, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 177.

¹²⁰ Before their shipment to Spain, the number of Spanish prisoners collected at San Luis increased to 5,000. See William B. Gatewood Jr., “*Smoked Yankees*” and the *Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 184. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 198-206. Shafter to Adjutant –General of the Army, July 24, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 177.

Two weeks after returning from San Luis on July 29, Miley—recently promoted to major—departed on the Spanish transport *San Juan* with fifty tons of Red Cross supplies to notify the garrisons of Baracoa and Sagua de Tanamo of Toral’s surrender and deliver much needed food and medicine. Accompanying Miley on the *San Juan* were a Red Cross doctor, a journalist, an interpreter, and four Spanish officers. After dropping twenty tons of supplies to the Spanish interned at Guantanamo, the *San Juan* steamed for Baracoa. The situation in the town was similar to San Luis and Palma Soriano. The Spanish had not heard of Toral’s capitulation but were easily convinced by the four Spanish officers accompanying Miley that this was indeed the case. The Spanish remained fearful of the local Cuban guerillas that had built breastworks surrounding Baraco’s land approaches within four hundred yards of the town. Miley received assurances from the local Cuban commander that he would not attack the town, but he still allowed the Spanish garrison to keep their weapons until the War Department sent U.S. Army troops to garrison the town. The Cubans also decided to maintain their positions and weapons until they received official new order and just compensation for their services. The *San Juan* left half the remaining supplies for the Spanish garrison and steamed for Sagua de Tanamo.¹²¹

The *San Juan* anchored at Esteron, a small Spanish outpost at the mouth of a perfectly calm bay. Using a steam launch Miley and his party went ashore and used the small garrison’s telephone to call the commander of Sagua de Tanamo, several miles inland. The Spanish forces there accepted the fact that their war was over and seemed “delighted at the prospect of returning to Spain.”¹²² The Spanish used a schooner to unload the supplies from the *San Juan* and then a

¹²¹ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 206-211. Shafter to H.C. Corbin, August 17, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 235.

¹²² John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 214.

pack train carried the supplies inland to Sagua de Tanamo. While the unloading took place, Miley ate dinner with the Spanish lieutenant who commanded the small outpost at Esteron and his wife. To Miley's surprise, the Spanish officer had a propaganda bulletin posted describing a "great victory" over the U.S. Navy at Manila.¹²³ Miley did not record whether or not he told his gracious hosts the truth about the Battle of Manila Bay. The Spanish garrison did not surrender their weapons or themselves until U.S. soldiers under General Ewers arrived later to garrison the town.¹²⁴

The Spanish soldiers that garrisoned the smaller inland towns in the province were often in worse shape than their countrymen in Santiago de Cuba because local Cuban guerillas had cut off the garrisons from regular resupply. Miley reported that the Spanish soldiers in the interior garrisons "were on the verge of starvation" when he found them."¹²⁵ Corporal W. T. Goode, an African American soldier of the 8th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment, remembered with disbelief the sickly state of a 900 man Spanish battalion arriving in Santiago to be shipped back to Spain. He described the "half-naked, half-starved" Spanish soldiers as having sunken eyes and jaws and were the "most miserable looking specimens of humanity" that anyone would care to see."¹²⁶ Major Thomas S. Wyllie had a similar reaction when his newly arrived 3rd U.S. Volunteer Regiment marched past 2,000 Spanish prisoners making their way to Santiago harbor.

¹²³ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 17, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 235.

¹²⁴ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 212-14. Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 17, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 235.

¹²⁵ Shafter to Adjutant –General of the Army, July 24, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 177.

¹²⁶ Corporal W. T. Goode, *The "Eighth Illinois"* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 151-2.

He remembered that most of the Spaniards were “hollow cheeked” boys who limped and hobbled along, many without shoes, and some “with faces so scarred that they actually looked more like wild beasts than human beings.”¹²⁷ Wylly did not expect most of the Spanish prisoners to survive the journey home. Another soldier in the 3rd Volunteer Regiment became gravely concerned for his own health after passing the emaciated and sickly Spanish. He imagined himself already “in a Spanish cemetery,” and when he came down with a fever a few days later he concluded the ““jig was up.””¹²⁸ But his fever soon passed.

Once Spanish garrisons surrendered to the U.S. Army, American soldiers disarmed the Spanish soldiers and transported them back to Santiago or Guantanamo for shipment back to Cadiz, Spain. In every instance, the disarmament process went without incident. The peripheral towns in the Santiago Province were all garrisoned by newly arrived regiments composed of African American soldiers and so called immunes because the War Department believed these soldiers would be resistant to tropical diseases, since they were believed to be either naturally resistant or to have been previously exposed to malaria and yellow fever and therefore immune to the diseases. Both of these assumptions proved to be false. In the town of San Luis, the soldiers of the all-black 8th Illinois Volunteer Regiment collected the machetes, Mausers, and other military accouterments from 5,000 soldiers and turned them over to the regimental quartermaster to be inventoried at the town’s arsenal. The soldiers of the 8th Illinois kept the

¹²⁷ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “MAJ. Wylly in Command,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹²⁸ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Truth of Condition of Ray’s Regiment,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

arsenal under close guard until they could ship the weapons and ammunition to Santiago.¹²⁹ The 3rd U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Immunes), commanded by Colonel Patrick H. Ray, was ordered to secure all the captured Spanish arms in Guantanamo.¹³⁰ Meanwhile, the recently arrived 9th U.S. Volunteer Infantry of African American “Immunes” replaced the 9th Massachusetts Regiment’s soldiers guarding the prisoners outside Santiago so these last soldiers belonging to Shafter’s Fifth Corps could return to the United States. The 9th Immunes continued guarding the prisoners until they embarked for Spain.¹³¹ The newly arrived regiments were not securing the stored Mauser rifles from their former Spanish owners. Instead, the American soldiers guarded the weapons and ammunition from the Cubans because they were fearful that the alliance between the Cuban Liberation Army and the United States might not hold.

Similarly, American guards were more concerned about protecting the Spanish prisoners from vengeful Cubans than trying to prevent the Spaniards from escaping. Shafter worried that because the “feelings between Spaniards and Cubans [was] very bitter,” that great “care will have to be taken to avoid collision.”¹³² Major General John C. Bates, completing his duty as officer responsible for the Spanish prisoners, told his replacement, Colonel Charles Crane of the 9th Immunes, that the prisoners “needed no guards except to prevent some mean Cubans from

¹²⁹ Corporal W. T. Goode, *The “Eighth Illinois”* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 197.

¹³⁰ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Truth of Condition of Ray’s Regiment,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹³¹ W. Hillary Coston, *The Spanish-American War Volunteer: Ninth United States Volunteer Infantry* (Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Printery, 1899), 81. Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 275.

¹³² Shafter to Adjutant-General, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 159.

illtreating them.”¹³³ Taking the general’s advice, Crane placed his sentries on the road leading to the Spanish camp to protect the prisoners from unwanted Cuban incursions.¹³⁴ Although there were some confirmed reports of Cubans taking the horses of Spanish officers, there were no reported incidents of Cuban officers or *mambises* harming the Spanish prisoners.¹³⁵ The absence of attacks may have been the result of the U.S. Army’s precaution or the discipline of the Cuban Liberation Army. Regardless of the reason, the Cuban soldiers never attacked their hated enemies.

Even if no attacks occurred, the Spanish still feared the Cuban Liberation Army and seemed very happy to be returning to Spain and under the protection of the U.S. Army. Brigadier General Adelbert Ames observed that the Spanish prisoners seemed “perfectly happy” with their predicament.¹³⁶ With plenty to eat and their transports home on the way, the Spanish behaved extremely well in captivity. Shafter reported that they were “the most orderly, tractable, and generally best behaved men that I have ever known.”¹³⁷ Private Paul Andrew, a Scottish immigrant and a bookbinder from Savannah, remembered guarding the Spanish as they boarded the ships for home on his eighteenth birthday. He recalled that “they did not need a guard, they were to[o] darn glad to be going.”¹³⁸

¹³³ Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 279.

¹³⁴ Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 280.

¹³⁵ Entry from July 21, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹³⁶ Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 22, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 3.

¹³⁷ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 4, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹³⁸ 3rd Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Paul, Andrew, Company I, The, Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 66, Folder Number 18, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

In addition to these efforts, staff officers also had to consider how to transport captured Spanish troops and their weapons from remote outposts back to Santiago de Cuba. The individual staff sections worked diligently to transport the weapons, but still struggled to coordinate their work. In the headquarters in Santiago, the chief ordnance officer formally requested that the adjutant general order the quartermaster department to ship all the captured arms in San Luis, El Cristo, Songo, and Guantanamo to the Santiago Arsenal on August 24. Once the adjutant published the order the quartermaster could then allocate government funds for the transportation of the weapons and accouterments. Even within the Department of Santiago, the staff bureaus did not communicate well. The quartermaster officer was already shipping Spanish weapons and ammunition to the Santiago Arsenal, and the ordnance officer, Lieutenant Colonel Henry D. Borup, had no idea where the weapons were coming from.¹³⁹ Eventually, Borup and his successor accounted for almost all the Spanish small caliber weapons and ammunition in the Department of Santiago before it departed to the United States for storage.

Although the staff bureaus working for the Department of Santiago during the initial occupation still struggled to coordinate their work with each other, they performed well within their individual staff sections. The War Department contracted four ships to transport the Spanish small arms and ammunition to the United States. Once the vessels arrived in Santiago, the Ordnance staff section—consisting of Borup, a clerk, and one Sergeant—supervised the counting, oiling, and packing of 13,326 Mauser Rifles, 11,292 Remington rifles, and over 10,000,000 rounds of ammunition.¹⁴⁰ After all of this was crated, the quartermaster department

¹³⁹ H. D. Borup, Chief Ordnance Officer to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, August 24, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 89.

¹⁴⁰ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 74-75.

took responsibility for loading the captured Spanish arms on to the waiting transports. The three-man ordinance section also oversaw the loading of 130 artillery pieces that were either captured from the Spanish or surplus American guns onto eight ships contracted by the War Department. Additionally, they maintained and accounted for all the small arms, ammunition, accouterments, and 27 modern field pieces required by the occupation troops.¹⁴¹

Shipping the captured Spanish troops and sick American soldiers home was a greater priority for the War Department. Until the prisoners departed or fresh garrison troops arrived, the sick soldiers of Shafter's Fifth Army Corps had to remain in Santiago de Cuba. And with each passing day, more soldiers succumbed to malaria and yellow fever. Fortunately, the War Department was already working on moving regiments of "Immunes" to garrison Santiago and contracting ships to return the prisoners to Spain before the outbreak of tropical fevers reached epidemic proportions. On July 18, just one day after the formal surrender, Shafter asked Corbin to rush ships to transport the Spanish prisoners home as soon as they became available. Shafter wanted to reduce the number of U.S. Army troops needed in Santiago to guard the prisoners, and did not want the Fifth Corps to have to wait until all the transports were ready.¹⁴² Perhaps for the first time in the conflict, the War Department effectively planned and executed the mission to move the Spanish back to Iberia. Alger announced to shipping lines as soon as Toral formally surrendered that the War Department would be accepting bids on July 20. That morning in New York, ten companies submitted their best offers to the War Department. The German and British transatlantic shipping companies colluded in rigging their prices, all asking \$110 for officers and

¹⁴¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 66-73.

¹⁴² Shafter to Adjutant-General of the Army, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 159.

\$55 for soldiers. The one Spanish steamship company to make a bid asked only \$55 for officers and \$20 for enlisted men. The following day the War Department awarded a contract to the Spanish company spending only \$513,860 to ship the 22,864 prisoners home.¹⁴³

As ships began to arrive to remove the Spanish prisoners from Santiago de Cuba, Toral and Lawton worked on a plan to send small coastal steamers to Sagua de Tanamo and Baracoa to pick-up the Spanish garrisons and bring them to Guantanamo's port at Caimanera. Once there, they would join the Brigade of Spanish soldiers from Guantanamo for shipment to Spain.¹⁴⁴ The waters were too shallow at Baracoa and Sagua de Tanamo for large ocean going steamers. Moreover, the contract with the Spanish shipping line only obligated them to pick up prisoners in the bays of Guantanamo and Santiago.¹⁴⁵ Lawton and his staff came up with a plan to send Major James H. McLeary and Colonel Ray on the captured coastal steamers *Reina de los Angeles*, *San Juan*, and *Bessie* to retrieve the coastal garrisons. The ships departed Santiago with 30,000 daily rations to be divided between the destitute populations of Sagua de Tanamo and Barracoa. Additionally, they carried enough rations to feed the Cubans on the return voyage to Caimanera. Not wanting to repeat the trip, Lawton ordered his two officers to collect and transport all the Spanish ordnance and weapons at these two towns and bring them to the Santiago Arsenal at the

¹⁴³ Russell A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 278-279. Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 23, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1. Unpublished Autobiography of Major General Henry C. Corbin, Folder 8, Container 11, Henry Clark Corbin papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 96. H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, July 20, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 168, and H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, July 21, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 170.

¹⁴⁴ José Toral to General Commanding the American Forces, Santiago, August 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 538.

¹⁴⁵ H. C. Corbin to Commanding General Santiago, Washington, D.C., September 7, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 194.

conclusion of the voyage. In one round trip Lawton and his staff delivered humanitarian aid, collected captured arms and ammunition, and brought the prisoners to Guantanamo Bay for shipment to Spain.¹⁴⁶

Two administrative complications arose during the movement of the Spanish army back to its homeland. First, many of the Spanish officers had their families in Havana and wanted to return to them before leaving Cuba. After hostilities between Spain and the United States concluded on August 12, this became a possibility. General Toral submitted the names to Lawton of the eight officers who wished to return to Havana on August 28.¹⁴⁷ The War Department had no issue accommodating these Spanish officers, but did not want to pay for their travel to Havana and then to Spain from Havana.¹⁴⁸ Once Spain agreed to pay for the eight officers' travel expenses on September 14, the issue was resolved.¹⁴⁹ Second, doctors did not want to transport Spanish infected with malaria and yellow fever for fear that the prisoners would infect others. To solve this problem the War Department contracted the *Alicante* to transport a thousand Spanish patients separate from the healthy prisoners.¹⁵⁰ By September 18, there were only eight Spanish soldiers remaining from Toral's original command, and all had yellow fever (seven in

¹⁴⁶ C. G. Starr to Major James H. McLeary, September 12, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 268.

¹⁴⁷ José Toral to His excellency the Governor General of the City, Santiago, August 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 3227.

¹⁴⁸ H. C. Corbin to Major General Lawton, Washington, D.C., September 13, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 695.

¹⁴⁹ The Captain General to Major Gen. Lawton, Havana September 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 724.

¹⁵⁰ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 9, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 216.

Guantanamo and one in Baracoa).¹⁵¹ The War Department did an excellent job working through administrative issues to transport almost all the Spanish prisoner home within two months of the capitulation.

The War Department accomplished the monumental task of collecting and transporting the prisoners without much of the confusion and inefficiencies that occurred during the Fifth Corps's embarkation in Tampa and landings at Siboney and Daiquirí. From August 9 to September 17, the War Department contracted nine Spanish vessels to carry prisoners out of Santiago de Cuba and six transports departed from Guantanamo. These 15 ships carried 22,137 officers and soldiers, 331 women, 348 children, 21 priests and monks, and 27 charitable nuns.¹⁵² General Toral left Santiago on 31 August aboard the *Leon XIII* with the last Spanish soldiers from the city and briefly stopped in Caimanera to load additional soldiers before continuing to Spain, only to be greeted by stone throwing civilians and a court-martial.¹⁵³ Staying behind in Santiago were about 3,000 Cuban loyalists who had volunteered to fight for Spain.¹⁵⁴

Conclusion

The Spanish belief that the Americans would treat them as gentlemen and would protect them against revenge attacks by vengeful Cubans probably did more to ensure the Spanish

¹⁵¹ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 18, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 356.

¹⁵² Executive Mansion, August, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Salon Massey to The Adjutant General, Dep't of Santiago, September 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 909. War Department, *Annual Report of the Adjutant-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 26.

¹⁵³ José Toral to General of the American Forces, Santiago de Cuba, August 31, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 291.

¹⁵⁴ Shafter to H, C, Corbin, August 22, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 249.

surrender than the strength of Shafter's army or the destruction of Cervera's fleet. The U.S. Army may not have had the strength necessary to capture Toral's large and entrenched garrison, had it decided to fight to the last man. Moreover, with the health of Shafter's soldiers quickly deteriorating, it is unlikely that the U.S. Army could have mustered the strength to capture the remaining Spanish garrisons in Eastern Cuba for months, and without great loss of life. The officers and soldiers of the U.S. Army, drawing upon their experiences in dealing with Mexican and Canadian officers on the frontier, had built a trusting relationship with their Spanish prisoners based on a mutual understanding of how armies should conduct themselves and a shared concept of being comrades in arms. The mutual respect that quickly formed between the Spanish and American armies helped to facilitate the capitulation of Toral's forces in Santiago de Cuba, ensured that the remaining Spanish garrisons in the surrounding province surrendered as well, and influenced Spanish prisoners, once disarmed, to behave exceptionally well for their sympathetic captors.

With the Spanish capitulation, however, the U.S. Army was left to deal with an armed insurgent army justifiably outraged after Shafter refused to offer formal recognition, did not ask for their input in the surrender negotiations, barred their armed entry into the city, omitted them from the glory of victory celebrations and ceremonies, and left Spanish officials in their positions. Soon after landing, most of the Americans became disillusioned with the irregular Cuban fighters because of their appearance and tactics. Furthermore, Shafter relegated the Cubans to serve as scouts and laborers. Racial prejudices further complicated the relationship between the largely black *mambises* and most of the American soldiers. Soon after the egotistical Shafter departed, Lawton set about to repair the relationship with the Cuban Liberation Army. Lawton and the other American officers gave positions in the new occupation government to

officers in the Cuban army that troops respected and trusted. Not surprisingly, the Cuban officers they selected were almost entirely wealthy, white, and educated in the United States.

Most impressively, McKinley seized control of the War Department from Miles and Alger, and had Corbin implement his strategy and coordinate the disparate staff departments. The War Department finally began to function in a coordinated fashion. Ships were soon contracted, and within a few months, all the Spanish garrisons in Eastern Cuba had been transported back to Spain. Corbin ordered fresh regiments of soldiers that he believed would be largely immune to the tropical fevers decimating the Spanish prisoners and the soldiers of Shafter's Fifth Corps to garrison Santiago. Fortunately for these ill soldiers, McKinley and Corbin got the War Department functioning somewhat smoothly again just in time to evacuate Shafter's soldiers from Cuba before the majority of them perished.

CHAPTER 3:
AN ARMY OF CONVALESCENTS: YELLOW AND MALARIAL FEVER EPIDEMICS
AND THE EVACUATION OF THE FIFTH CORPS

In my opinion there is but one course to take, and that is to immediately transport the Fifth Corps and the detached regiments that came with it to the United States. If that is not done, I believe the death rate will be appalling. I am sustained in this view by every medical officer present. I called together to-day the general officers and the senior medical officers and telegraph you their views.

- Shafter, to the Adjutant-General, U.S.A. (August 3, 1898)

Introduction

The uniform lines of the 9th U.S. Infantry and the motionless horsemen of the 2nd U.S. Cavalry formed in the plaza beneath the governor's palace during the surrender ceremony at Santiago de Cuba on July 17, 1898, made an impression on the Cuban and Spanish spectators. Beneath their disciplined veneer, however, all was not well with the soldiers of Major General William R. Shafter's victorious Fifth Corps. First Lieutenant Matthew F. Steele was one of the American staff officers attending the ceremony. He was so sick with malarial fever that he could barely hold himself up in his saddle, but he "stuck it out to the bitter end by taking a pull at the brandy flask of one good friend."¹ Another officer attending the ceremony considered the army

¹ Steele to Wife, July 20, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 3.

extremely blessed that the Spanish surrendered because the recent outbreak of yellow fever in the town of Siboney threatened the health of the entire American army.²

Just three weeks after landing at Daiquirí, most of the American soldiers suffered from some combination of dysentery, typhoid, malaria, and yellow fever. Still, the War Department hoped that moving Shafter's army to a healthier encampment, enforcing stricter sanitation measures, and quarantining the infected soldiers could ameliorate the epidemics. By taking these measures, Commanding General of the Army Nelson A. Miles hoped that some regiments of the Fifth Corps remain to garrison eastern Cuba, while the remainder participated in further campaigning against the Spanish. Within two weeks of the Spanish surrender, however, Shafter informed the Secretary of War Russell A. Alger that over three quarters of his men were ill, leaving him with an "army of convalescents."³ Shafter's general officers and their chief physicians joined their commanding officer in petitioning the War Department to immediately evacuate the Fifth Corps to the United States in order to avoid a terrible loss of life. After receiving what became known as the "Round Robin" telegrams, the War Department sprang into action and spared no expense in rushing ships, doctors, and medicine to Shafter's moribund army. Between the 7th and 24th of August, the War Department quickly, if somewhat haphazardly, evacuated the over 19,000 Fifth Corps soldiers.⁴

Throughout the initial occupation, the U.S. Army's experience on the American frontier proved invaluable in dealing with most of the problems they encountered in Santiago, Cuba.

² Adelbert Ames to Mother, July 18, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

³ Russell A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 263-264.

⁴ War Department, *Annual Report of the Adjutant-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 19.

When it came to dealing with the malaria and yellow fever epidemics that decimated the invasion forces, however, the Army's frontier experience did not provide any solutions. As the proportion of soldiers afflicted with malaria and dysentery increased to over seventy-five percent and fear of yellow fever spread, Shafter and his medical officers continued to battle against the tropical fevers in the same manner that they dealt with all contagious diseases. They sterilized their facilities, quarantined sick soldiers, and tried to move their camps to healthier locations. When these preventative measures failed to halt the malaria and yellow fever epidemics, the American officers simply redoubled their efforts. A few scientists had already hypothesized that mosquitos might carry the two deadly diseases, but U.S. Army physicians did not confirm this theory until well after the diseased soldiers of General William R. Shafter's Fifth Corps departed Cuba for Long Island, New York. Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin sent regiments to replace the Fifth Corps that he hoped might be immune to tropical fevers. They were not. Only the end of the summer rainy season brought relief to American troops left to garrison eastern Cuba.

The Outbreak of Disease

By the time of the surrender ceremony, the soldiers in Shafter's army suffered from malnourishment and many were already infected with various diseases. Dysentery, typhoid, and malaria were the most prevalent illnesses; but the War Department was most concerned about the first cases of yellow fever among soldiers encamped at Siboney because of the lethality of the disease. The end of the fighting allowed supply ships to unload in Santiago harbor and soldiers soon received their personal items, tents, and cooking equipment. Army officers and physicians began implementing sanitation measures and moving their encampments to what they hoped would be healthier locations. The instances of soldiers falling ill to typhoid and dysentery

decreased, but recurrent malarial fevers continued to affect most of the soldiers and prevented them from doing the most basic duties.

The War Department, Miles, and Shafter still hoped that the epidemics could be quickly halted and the soldiers in Santiago used elsewhere. Miles wrote to Shafter, soon after arriving off the coast of Santiago de Cuba, with instructions to quarantine all soldiers with yellow fever and move his soldiers to healthier elevations and to “improve the sanitary condition” of the new camps.⁵ By taking these preventative measures, Miles hoped that the epidemics would end and that the majority Shafter’s soldiers would “be available for service with another expedition.”⁶ Miles preferred to have some of the veteran regulars in the Fifth Corps to accompany his army of volunteers to Puerto Rico, but also considered employing them in a planned fall campaign on the north coast of Cuba to capture Havana. The persistent epidemic eventually eliminated any hopes Miles had of using the cream of the American army in the Puerto Rican campaign.⁷ Observing the growing outbreak of malaria, Miles wisely decided to keep the reinforcements he brought from Tampa on board their transports, and both Alger and Miles made peace with the fact that Shafter and his men would remain in Santiago until the “fever has had its run.”⁸

The malarial fever that devastated Shafter’s soldiers occur after an infected female *Anopheles* mosquito injects a *Plasmodium* parasite into the human body while feeding. Once inside its victim, the parasite moves into the bloodstream and travels to the liver, where the

⁵ Miles to General Shafter, July 14, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁶ Miles to General Shafter, July 14, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁷ Miles to Alger, July 14, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁸ Alger to Miles, July 14, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

parasite asexually reproduces for eight to ten days before reentering the bloodstream. Fever-like symptoms in the human host occur after the enlarged parasites reenter the circulatory system to feed and reproduce on red blood cells. The recurring fever, pounding headache, muscular pains, and skin chills characteristic of malaria are known as a paroxysm, and are a biological reaction to white blood cells digesting the parasites. Depending on the specific species of *Plasmodium* infecting the person, the high fevers—accompanied by severe fatigue and an enlarged spleen—reoccur every two to three days, and the malarial parasite can continue to affect the patient for months. In severe cases, malaria can lead to seizures, failures of the liver or kidney, and comas. The worst cases of malaria are caused by the *Plasmodium falciparum* species, which can cause death to its host.⁹

By the time of the Spanish surrender, a large number of Shafter's suffering soldiers had the *Plasmodium* parasite in their blood stream and were subjected to malarial fevers. Because malaria incubates in the liver for about nine days before the infected person shows any symptoms, most of the American soldiers did not start to become ill with the disease until after the battles of El Caney and San Juan Hill. Most soldiers began to feel the effects of the fever during the siege of Santiago de Cuba. While conducting the siege, Theodore Roosevelt worried about his feverish soldiers "lying on their blankets, if they had any, and if not then simply in the mud."¹⁰ The soldiers blamed the fact that "half the army [was] sick from exposure and want of the right kind of food."¹¹ Since the fighting began, the soldiers lived off a few pieces of hardtack

⁹ Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974), 70.

¹⁰ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 142.

¹¹ Adelbert Ames to Mother, July 25, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

each day and the occasional piece of salt pork, and they had no shelter from the midday sun or afternoon rains. The soldiers did not suspect that it was the mosquitos, and not hunger or exposure, which caused the outbreak of malaria.¹²

Lieutenant Steele explained in a letter to his wife how suddenly the symptoms of malarial fever appeared and then dissipated just to return a few days later. He told her that when the fever hit, it felt as “if his eyes are going to pop out, your head is going [to] pop open, your stomach and abdomen are going to explode, [and] the small of your back is being ground to pieces.”¹³

Similarly, Lieutenant James H. Reeves suffered from a pounding headache and from “pains in back and legs.”¹⁴ The fevers caused by malaria usually dissipated after two to three days, and the partially recovered patient could do some work, but “after a little time he would be again struck down.”¹⁵ Private Ed Kroupa suffered from repeated bouts of the fever until one day his mates noticed that his “feet seemed to be in the same position, sticking out of the little tent, that they had been the day before. Kroupa was dead and cold.”¹⁶

Fortunately, most soldiers did not share Kroupa’s fate because doctors came to Cuba with an effective treatment for most malaria symptoms. For centuries doctors used quinine, found in the bark of the cinchona tree of Peru, to treat malaria. The U.S. Army’s physicians distributed thousands of quinine pills to the afflicted soldiers. By doing so, the doctors prevented most

¹² Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 238-9.

¹³ Steele to Wife, July 20, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁴ Entry from August 3, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 158.

¹⁶ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 265.

malarial cases from becoming lethal. The bitter quinine pill could cause vomiting, blurred vision, and ringing in the ears, and other more serious side effects, including permanent hearing loss and even death. Steele complained that his doctor was keeping him “loaded to the brim with quinine still, so I hear a thousand sounds in my ears all the time.”¹⁷ Despite the many popular myths held by the officers and men in Shafter’s corps, the Army physicians knew that a parasite caused malaria, but they thought that it entered the body through infected water or from disturbed earth. The doctor and later commander of the Department of Santiago, Leonard Wood, believed the Spanish and American soldiers had been infected in the trenches during the siege, where “they lived in freshly upturned earth, deadly with the germs of malignant tropical malaria.”¹⁸ They continued to hope that living in cleaner conditions, boiling water, and dispensing quinine pills would stop the epidemic.¹⁹

Another disease that caused fevers among the soldiers of the Fifth Corps was typhoid. The symptoms were so similar to malaria that Civil War doctors believed that they were the same disease. Typhoid spreads when flies touch human waste contaminated with a specific type of *Salmonella* bacteria and then land on food or water consumed by the soldiers. The soldiers brought the typhoid causing *Salmonella* with them from camps in the U.S. The disease affected the men besieging Santiago from the unsanitary American trenches, where they did not have the ability to boil their water and where the heavy rains washed their contaminated feces downhill into their water supply. The difficult logistical situation exacerbated the situation.

¹⁷ Steele to Wife, July 20, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 253.

¹⁸ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 516.

¹⁹ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 150.

An unimproved trail led to the siege lines from the American supply depot at Siboney, and heavy rains made the streams temporarily impassable and turned the already poor road into a quagmire. The quartermasters could barely keep the soldiers supplied with enough ammunition, making it impossible for soldiers to receive their personal baggage with their cooking equipment to boil their food and water. Soldiers did not start receiving their mess kits to cook their food or pots to boil their water until July 18, and some had to wait until August 1.²⁰ The fact that the civilians contracted by the War Department to pack the mules and drive the wagons were the first group to be debilitated by the fevers further complicated matters. The lack of kettles forced the soldiers to drink water directly from streams. Both Captain John Bigelow and Private Charles J. Post complained that soldiers filled their canteens, bathed, and washed their clothes in the same location on the San Juan River as the mules drank. An order was disseminated that men had to boil all the water they drank, but no one had cauldrons or pots. Many men tried to boil water in their tin cups, but rarely had time to do it. Bigelow and his soldiers tried to obey the order, but “soon gave it up as impracticable.”²¹

Not only did soldiers become infected with typhoid by drinking unfiltered and un-boiled water from contaminated sources, but they also became infected with dysentery. Like typhoid, dysentery infected American soldiers after they consumed contaminated food or water, causing their intestines to become inflamed as their immune systems fought the pathogens. The soldiers

²⁰ Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 18, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1. Steele to Wife, August 1, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2.

²¹ Quote from John Bigelow, *Reminiscences of the Santiago Campaign* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), 84-85. Also see Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 263. George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 215-6.

suffered from stomach cramps, dehydration, and severe diarrhea after becoming infected. One brigade commander noted that many of his soldiers suffered from “bowl complaints” during the siege.²² A soldier in another brigade knew that dysentery had arrived to the camp because “the shallow latrines were spattered with blood.”²³ By improving the sanitary conditions, dysentery usually dissipated within a week, but if left untreated dysentery could be deadly, and it made the soldiers more vulnerable to the other serious ailments plaguing the army.

The arrival of supplies, plentiful food, and the implementation of sanitation measures greatly diminished the number of soldiers suffering from dysentery and typhoid. Malaria continued to affect a large number of soldiers, but the physicians and soldiers of Shafter’s Fifth Corps were most concerned about the first confirmed case of yellow fever on July 6 by an American soldier camped at Siboney. The soldier was immediately taken across the bay to prevent the disease from spreading, but to no avail.²⁴ Further occurrences of yellow fever remained confined to American soldiers in Siboney and some Spanish soldiers in Santiago, and did not affect the majority of Shafter’s army camped in the hills outside Santiago.²⁵ When strict hygiene and sanitation measures failed to stop further cases of yellow fever in Siboney, Miles ordered all the buildings identified by the yellow fever expert, Juan Guiteras, to be burned. Guiteras hoped to destroy the unknown germs infecting the seaside town, but to no avail.

²² Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 21, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2.

²³ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 253.

²⁴ Entries from July 23 and 24, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

²⁵ Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 20, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2.

The U.S. Army's biggest fear was the spread of yellow fever from Siboney to the Fifth Corps camps and the annihilation of the soldiers already weakened by malaria, dysentery, and typhoid fever.²⁶ The reason that yellow fever cases generally remained confined to Sanitago and Siboney was that the species of mosquito that carries the deadly virus prefers to lay its eggs in calm clear water, the kind typically found in the water containers and gardens found in urban settings. The Fifth Corps camps fell outside the habitat of yellow fever-carrying mosquitos, but they camped in the open fields preferred by the *Anopheles* mosquitos carrying the malaria parasite.²⁷

Yellow fever was an especially terrible disease. After being bitten by an *Aedes aegypti* mosquito carrying the single-stranded RNA *Flavivirus*, the victim felt no symptoms for three to six days as the virus incubated. The symptoms of the disease varied, but the infected person typically suffered from sudden and severe pain in the upper abdomen and back, and fatigue in the muscle and joints across the body. Next, high fevers brought on a rapid increase in the victim's pulse, persistent headaches, swollen eyes and tongue, and intense chills. All that a physician could do was comfort the patient and let the disease run its course. After the victim was completely incapacitated by the fever for three to five days, the symptoms began to diminish. The fortunate had no further symptoms and recovered. The third of those that relapsed, however, suffered an excruciating but quick death as the virus attacked the victim's organs. As

²⁶ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 155, 215-16. Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 253.

²⁷ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 248. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 2, 151. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 51.

the liver failed, the skin and eyes turned a yellowish hue, giving the disease its name. In the last stages of the disease, the sufferer bled out of their mouth, eyes, and nose and regurgitated coagulated blood that turned the vomit black. Only death brought relief from the afflicted person's suffering.²⁸

Many of the physicians struggled to diagnose the specific illnesses plaguing their soldiers, and there was much disagreement among the doctors as to how many of their patients suffered from the more lethal yellow fever.²⁹ One brigade commander complained, "The doctors don't know what kind of fever it is."³⁰ The difficulty diagnosing the different diseases resulted from the fact that malarial, yellow, and typhoid fevers shared many of the same initial symptoms, and the physicians in the field did not have lab equipment or microscopes to diagnose the diseases more exactly. Moreover, many of the contract surgeons hired to fill vacancies in Shafter's corps were of questionable quality or did not have any experience treating or diagnosing these diseases, which were not prevalent in most parts of North America. Eventually, the doctors realized that the vast majority of the American soldiers suffered from malarial fever, also known as the "slow fever" or "dengue fever," and that there were very few instances of the more lethal yellow fever.³¹

²⁸ William Coleman, *Yellow Fever in the North: The Methods of Early Epidemiology* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1987), 5-7, 10. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 1-2, 57. Jason R. Musteen, *Nelson's Refuge: Gibraltar in the Age of Napoleon* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute, 2011), 68, 73.

²⁹ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 22, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 172.

³⁰ Steele to Wife, July 20, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

³¹ Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 21, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding*

After the surrender of Santiago, the number of soldiers suffering from malarial fever grew at an alarming rate. Brigadier General Adelbert Ames reported on July 21 that in his brigade “many men are sick, many others are ailing, while comparatively few are in first class condition.”³² Two days later, he noted that over thirty-five percent of his soldiers were too ill for any duty, primarily because of malaria.³³ By August 5, Ames still reported that just less than forty percent of his brigade’s soldiers were on the doctor’s sick roll, and the rest were too exhausted after recovering from the fever to drill or perform any hard labor.³⁴ Meanwhile, Roosevelt reported that in the Rough Riders “the percentage actually on the sick list never got over twenty,” but “there were less than fifty per cent. who were fit for any kind of work.”³⁵

Shafter was slow to realize the extent of the malarial epidemic in the ranks. He reported to War Department on July 22 that most units had less than ten percent of their soldiers suffering from fever, and thought that total loss of fifteen soldiers to fever and two to dysentery was about the normal rate for a campaigning army. That very same day, Ames observed that nearly half his command was debilitated. Shafter acknowledged that the 17th and 25th Infantry Regiments had close to thirty percent of their soldiers suffering from malaria, but he did not realize that the rate

Department of Santiago, 1899, 51-2. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 159-60.

³² Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 21, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2.

³³ Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 23, 1898, and Adelbert Ames to mother July 25, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

³⁴ Adelbert Ames to mother, August 5, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2.

³⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 159.

of disease in these regiments was the norm and not the exception.³⁶ Shafter grew alarmed as he began to realize the extent of the epidemic. On July 24 Shafter's medical officer informed him that four soldiers had died of their fevers and 396 more soldiers suffered from them, and the next day over a hundred more had acute fevers and were added to the sick roles.³⁷ Then the number of seriously ill began to rise exponentially.

The War Department and Shafter grew alarmed at the large number of soldiers now suffering from disease. During the last week in July, Shafter's surgeons reported an average of 4,000 soldiers on their sick rolls each day, with about 3,100 of them suffering from fever. Each day around 650 soldiers recovered enough from their acute fevers to return to duty, but about the same number of soldiers became sick enough with malaria or yellow fever to be added to the sick rolls. Moreover, each day about eight soldiers died from their fevers or dysentery. Everyone in Washington and in Santiago began to realize that Shafter's army was not gaining any ground in the attritional battle against disease.³⁸

The numbers on the sick roll did not reflect the seriousness of the epidemic. Medical officers placed on this report only soldiers too sick to perform any duty or hospitalized, meaning the large number of exhausted soldiers still recovering from their bouts with malaria did not get reported. A private remembered that most feverish soldiers avoided reporting to sick call because most believed that "if anyone was well enough to report sick he was well enough for duty and

³⁶ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 22, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 172

³⁷ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 24, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 172

³⁸ See sanitary reports from Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 26-31, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 184, 186, 188, 193-94, 196.

detail.”³⁹ Well over seventy-five percent of Shafter’s army was too sick to perform guard duty, labor, or drill. The 9th U.S. Infantry went twenty-four hours without water because “the men did not did not have strength to go for it.”⁴⁰ Similarly, the 71st New York struggled to find men healthy enough for the chore.⁴¹ Few buglers remained to play the tunes that regulated Army life and units struggled to find enough healthy men to pull guard detail.⁴² The officers and doctors in the Fifth Corps took all the traditional sanitary precautions that they had used since the Civil War to stop the epidemics, but they failed because the doctors fundamentally misunderstood the origins of malaria and yellow fever and how they spread.

Dealing with Disease in the Post-Civil War U.S. Army

The U.S. Army Medical Department learned many important lessons during the Civil War that its surgeons took to with them when they returned to their constabulary role on the American frontier. Most importantly, they learned that enforcing strict sanitation measures in encampments radically reduced the number of soldiers inflicted with communicable diseases, such as cholera, typhoid, and dysentery. On the frontier, Army physicians enforced cleanliness in their outposts, issued quinine to treat the malarial fevers, vaccinated soldiers for smallpox, used morphine and alcohol to alleviate pain, and reduced the instances of scurvy by trying to add

³⁹ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 249.

⁴⁰ Adelbert Ames to mother, August 5, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2.

⁴¹ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 249.

⁴² Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 261. Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 518.

vegetables to their soldiers' diet. All of these practical measures served the U.S. Army well on the frontier, but still its doctors knew nothing about the organisms that caused diseases.⁴³

All of that began to change in the late-nineteenth century as physicians in Europe began to understand that tiny germs, unseen by the human eye, could live within the human body, cause disease, and be transmitted from one human to another. John Snow's study of London's 1854 cholera epidemic first informed scientists that unobserved microorganisms might cause most diseases. His insight led to a medical revolution in epidemiology and surgery. After reading a paper published by Louis Pasteur on methods to kill microorganisms, Joseph Lister began to use antiseptics on surgical tools and bandages to prevent patients from becoming infected during surgery and published a series of groundbreaking journal articles in 1867 describing his success. Lister's work led to a dramatic increase in the number of surgeries, as the chance of survival dramatically increased as the likelihood of infection diminished. Later in the nineteenth century, other European medical researchers like Robert Koch used the knowledge that larger microbes, which could be removed with a filter, caused disease to begin identifying the species of bacteria that generated specific illnesses. About the same time scientists developed better microscopes and staining procedures to identify the microbes. Many American scientists remained skeptical of germ theory, but the notion began to gain acceptance in the Army Medical Department by the early 1890s, as was evident when the bacteriologist George M. Sternberg—who first

⁴³ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 385. Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 130-33. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999) 183, 188-89. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 86-87. War Department, *Annual Report of the Surgeon-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 626-7.

photographed the bacteria responsible for tuberculosis—became the eighteenth Surgeon General of the Army in 1893.⁴⁴

Army physicians devoted a tremendous amount of time and research to the study of yellow fever in the decades preceding the War with Spain and ensured that doctors familiar with the disease accompanied the Fifth Corps to Cuba. Sternberg had studied the disease in Florida after the Civil War and even fell ill to yellow fever while stationed at Pensacola in 1869. Now immune to the disease, Sternberg represented the Army Medical Department on the Havana Yellow Fever Commission sent to Cuba in 1879 to investigate the cause of the disease and to determine possible measures that the U.S. government could take to prevent the future epidemics from reaching the United States, like the ones in 1873 and 1878. With no understanding of viruses or bacteria, the commission made little progress.⁴⁵ Understanding of bacteria and scientific procedures increased over the preceding decade, and Sternberg made great progress in ruling out different bacteria as the cause of yellow fever in his second trip to Cuba in 1888. Sternberg concluded that their scientific methods failed to “demonstrate the constant presence of any particular microorganism in the blood and tissues of yellow-fever cadavers.”⁴⁶ The evidence proved that the unknown organism did not spread through drinking water. Sternberg

⁴⁴ William Coleman, *Yellow Fever in the North: The Methods of Early Epidemiology* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1987), xiii, 174. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 25, 30-31, 50-51. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 15-16. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999) 13, 191.

⁴⁵ Stanfrod E. Chaillé, “Report to the United States National Board of Health on Yellow Fever in Havana and Cuba,” in *Annual Report of the National Board of Health, 1880*, ed. U.S. National Board of Health (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1881), 67-78.

⁴⁶ George M. Sternberg, *Report on the Etiology and Prevention of Yellow Fever* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 221.

hypothesized that the disease may spread through infected fecal material and recommended quarantine, sanitation, and evacuation to stop the spread of the yellow fever.⁴⁷

The Fifth Corps' chief surgeon, Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin F. Pope, did not have much familiarity with yellow fever or malaria. To help him, Sternberg sent Juan Guiteras, a Cuban-born physician and an expert on yellow fever and malaria. Guiteras had worked with Sternberg earlier on the Havana Yellow Fever Commission and through careful observation had noted that yellow fever was not transmitted directly between patients. He was skeptical whether quinine could prevent malaria, but recommend its use for those suffering from a malarial fever. Later, Sternberg selected Major William C. Gorgas to be Havana's chief sanitary officer when the U.S. Army's occupation troops arrived to the city in January 1899, because Gorgas had spent years studying the disease at Fort Brown during the 1882 yellow fever outbreak in Texas, several episodes in Florida, and an outbreak in Ocean Springs, Mississippi, in 1897. Sternberg's knowledge of the life cycle of yellow fever led him, along with Commanding General of the Army Nelson A. Miles, to warn President William McKinley against invading Cuba in the summer and advise that the expedition be postponed until fall.⁴⁸

Still not knowing the origin of yellow fever, the physicians relied on two basic postulations on how disease spread in their attempts to combat the sickness. The first theory traced its origins to Hippocrates's *Airs, Waters and Places*, and suggested that diseases originated from poisonous air and noxious vapors, known as miasmas, that emanated from

⁴⁷ George M. Sternberg, *Report on the Etiology and Prevention of Yellow Fever* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890), 12, 221-23.

⁴⁸ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 386. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 40-41, 129-30. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 41, 58.

decaying organic debris or inorganic substances under certain atmospheric conditions. Therefore, to eliminate disease one needed to clean one's surroundings to eliminate the unspecified source of the disease or move to a healthier climate. The advantage of the miasma hypothesis is that a physician could use it to explain any outbreak of an otherwise inexplicable disease, but the exact determinant in the atmosphere was impossible for nineteenth-century science to uncover.

Medical observers in the United States researching the yellow fever epidemics in the Southeast in 1878 and 1897 validated the earlier observations by the European epidemiologists Francois Mélier and George Buchanan that disproved that miasmas caused the disease. The scientists studying the outbreaks in the American South noted that the disease spread along travel corridors and not within certain environments, and that quarantine could stop the spread of the disease.⁴⁹

For lack of a better explanation, many doctors and laymen continued to believe that miasmas caused yellow fever during the initial occupation of Cuba. The reporter George Kennan and many other American officers were adamant that miasmas caused the yellow fever outbreak in the town of Siboney. They blamed the “number of stagnant, foul-smelling ponds and pools, half overgrown with rank tropical vegetation, and so full of decaying organic matter” that “the very air from them seemed poisonous.”⁵⁰ Most medical officers at Siboney understood germ theory and dismissed the thought of miasmas causing yellow fever. They believed that the buildings used by the Fifth Corps as warehouses for their supplies should be fumigated or burned

⁴⁹ William Coleman, *Yellow Fever in the North: The Methods of Early Epidemiology* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1987), xiii-xiv 190-91. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 3. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 14-15, 31-32.

⁵⁰ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 158.

because their walls were likely the source of the yet to be identified germ that caused the yellow fever outbreak.⁵¹

Ironically, the Army Medical Department's own experiments after the 1878 Yellow Fever epidemic killed over 20,000 people and caused one hundred million dollars in economic damages in the United States showed that germs passed between people did not cause the disease. The U.S. National Board of Health created the Havana Yellow Fever Commission to determine the cause of the illness after the epidemic and to determine measures to prevent the disease from again spreading to the United States. Carlos J. Finlay, a Cuban doctor employed by the commission, observed that sanitation workers had lower rates of yellow fever compared to the rest of Havana's population, suggesting that yellow fever was not transmitted through the germs in human waste like cholera and typhoid, but the commission left Cuba without solving the yellow fever mystery. With neither miasmas nor germ theory adequately explaining the transmission of yellow fever, the U.S. Army surgeons who accompanied Shafter's expedition to Santiago could only hope that basic sanitation and other preventative measures would keep the dreaded "yellow jack" at bay.⁵²

The cause of malaria similarly baffled the U.S. Army's physicians, even though the disease infected almost one in every ten soldiers each year. Fortunately, the introduction of quinine to the U.S. Army in 1843 to treat malaria helped to reduce the number of deaths to the disease.⁵³ British medical doctors identified the parasite that caused malaria before the War with

⁵¹ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 159.

⁵² Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 39. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 15-16.

⁵³ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 183-186.

Spain, and they even suspected that mosquitos might somehow carry the disease. U.S. Army physicians had some knowledge of the British army's theories and issued warnings to troops leaving to Cuba and the Philippines to avoid mosquitos if possible.⁵⁴ U.S. Army bacteriologists, including Sternberg and Assistant Surgeon Walter Reed, wondered whether the malaria parasite discovered by the British might be transmitted thorough the water found in hot and moist climates. The association between wetlands and the disease had already been established. Medical Department experiments at Fort Meyer, Virginia—where over half the soldiers suffered from malarial fevers each year—disproved the hypothesis that malaria spread through the drinking of contaminated drinking water, leaving Reed to assume that perhaps miasmas emanating from the Potomac transmitted the disease. Reed struggled again to understand the cause of malaria while treating Geronimo's Chiricahua Apaches for the "shaking sickness" and other diseases while they were being held as prisoners of war at Mt. Vernon Barracks in Alabama from 1887 to 1890.⁵⁵ In addition to outbreaks of malaria at Fort Meyer and Mt. Vernon, large numbers of soldiers sent to maintain order in the Sacramento rail yards during the Pullman Strike of 1894 came down with malarial fever. The doctors treating the cases were baffled when new cases developed among the soldiers even after they arrived back to the healthier climate at the Presidio in San Francisco.⁵⁶ With neither germ theory nor miasmas explaining the spread of yellow fever or malaria in the, U.S. Army doctors hoped that zealous cleanliness and sanitation

⁵⁴ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 134.

⁵⁵ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 81-83. Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012) 238-39, 246. Walter Reed, "Geronimo and His Warriors in Captivity," *Illustrated American* 3 (August 16, 1890): 231-35, in Peter Cozzens, ed., *The Struggle for Apacheria*, vol. 1 of *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars, 1865-1890* (Mechanicsburg, P.A.: Stackpole Books, 2001), 627.

⁵⁶ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 111-12.

could somehow thwart the fevers as these measures did when practiced against other communicable diseases.⁵⁷

Army physicians advised their commanding officers to deal with fever epidemics by evacuating the area and by enforcing sanitation measures.⁵⁸ While stationed at Ringgold Barracks, Texas after the Civil War, Shafter dealt with a yellow fever epidemic that killed two of his assistant surgeons and his quartermaster clerk, along with half the population of Rio Grande City. To deal with the outbreak of yellow fever and epidemic of severe diarrhea, Shafter first secured a cleaner water supply, and then temporarily shuttled his infantry unit away from the epicenter to Fort Brown, Texas, near Brownsville.⁵⁹ Then Lieutenant Henry W. Lawton experienced a malaria epidemic in 1877 while escorting the Northern Cheyenne to Indian Territory. Lawton blamed the outbreak on the lack of adequate food and the poor quality of the rations. He also criticized the Indian Bureau for not providing the Indians quinine. Moreover, both Lawton and the War Department pleaded with the Department of the Interior to move the Cheyenne to a healthier climate.⁶⁰ Lawton again encountered malaria when chasing Geronimo through Sonora, Mexico. Confounded by the disease, Assistant Surgeon Wood could only

⁵⁷ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 387. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 105, 134. War Department, *Annual Report of the Surgeon-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 626-7.

⁵⁸ War Department, *Annual Report of the Surgeon-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 625-6.

⁵⁹ Paul H. Carlson, "Pecos Bill:" *A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989) 39-41.

⁶⁰ Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1971), 333-38.

evacuate the soldiers of Lawton's command back to Arizona after they fell ill.⁶¹ While evacuating the epicenter of yellow fever and malaria outbreaks was the U.S. Army's best defense, sanitation seemed to prevent most other diseases.

The discovery that cholera, typhus, and dysentery spread through the bacteria found in infected excrement led to a public health movement to eliminate these diseases across the United States before the War with Spain. Medical professionals, to include those in the U.S. Army, thought that all communicable diseases might be eliminated by regular garbage collection, the establishment of modern sewer systems, and by setting up water filtration plants or boiling water. Army surgeons worked with post commanders to improve the sanitation infrastructure on posts and the hygiene of soldiers. As smaller garrisons closed with the end of the Indian Wars, post commanders had the resources to build healthier barracks with modern plumbing. Army medical officers continued to rely on sanitation and evacuation as the best preventative measures to fight the outbreak of disease during the Santiago campaign.⁶²

Losing the Battle against Epidemic Fevers

Almost all medical professionals in 1898 believed that evacuation was the best way to stop a malaria or yellow fever outbreak. Upon hearing of the outbreak of the two diseases in Santiago during the siege, both Surgeon General Sternberg and Commanding General Miles advised Shafter to abandon the trenches and move to a cleaner and higher elevated campsite as

⁶¹ Leonard Wood, "On Campaign in Sonora," (September 8, 1886), in Peter Cozzens, ed., *The Struggle for Apacheria*, vol. 1 of *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars, 1865-1890* (Mechanicsburg, P.A.: Stackpole Books, 2001), 546-51.

⁶² Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 387-88. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 93-6, 102-03. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999) 191.

soon as the Spanish surrendered. Miles arrived to Santiago de Cuba with reinforcements from Tampa on July 16. Upon landing he advised Shafter to have his soldiers “change camps almost daily occupying fresh ground until free from the fever.”⁶³ Furthermore, Surgeon-General Sternberg sent word to Shafter that moving his troops to encampments in the foothills above the 800-foot fever belt and then changing camps every three to five days would protect the soldiers from yellow fever. Miles and Sternberg also recommended a strict quarantine of any infected soldiers.⁶⁴

Miles’s reasonable guidance that Shafter follow the Surgeon General’s advice and move his command to the hills north of Santiago met with a curt reply from Shafter that set off an unfortunate squabble for authority between the two generals in the midst of the fever epidemic. Shafter responded to Miles that he would comply with all his “requests and direction,” but had been told by Alger that Miles was “not to supercede [him] in command here.”⁶⁵ Despite the fact that Alger had indeed told Shafter that he would retain an independent command, and that Shafter attempted to remain professional in his rebuke of his superior, Shafter acted insubordinately. The same egotism and selfishness that led Shafter to deny the Navy and the Cubans any part in the surrender ceremony led him to attack his commanding officer who by law

⁶³ Miles to General Shafter, July 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁶⁴ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 216. Nelson Appleton Miles, *Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson A. Miles, Lieutenant-General, United States Army* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911), 292-3. Miles to General Shafter, July 17, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. R. A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 256-8.

⁶⁵ Shafter to Miles, July 17, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. War Department, *Annual Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 26.

and by order of the President commanded all the field forces in the U.S. Army, including those in Santiago.⁶⁶

Miles took the slight personally, especially after he had gone out of his way not to threaten the autonomy of Shafter's command in his correspondence and interactions with the general after arriving in Cuba.⁶⁷ The Commanding General responded politely but authoritatively that he had "no desire" to and had "carefully avoided any appearance of superseding" Shafter.⁶⁸ Then Miles pointed out that Shafter and his soldiers belonged to the U.S. Army, which he "had the honor to command."⁶⁹ After referencing orders from the Alger and McKinely that gave him the authorization to do with Shafter's command as he saw fit, Miles chided the corps commander by concluding that he "should regret that any event would cause either yourself or any part of your command to cease to be a part of mine."⁷⁰ After being reprimanded, Shafter said nothing else to his superior and obeyed all his orders until Miles departed for Puerto Rico on 21 July.

Shafter did complain, however, to Adjutant-General Corbin about Miles giving him orders. Shafter wrote to Corbin that he did not "wish to be small about anything," even as he acted small, and said that he did not "care to be raising questions," even as he did; Shafter

⁶⁶ Nelson Appleton Miles, *Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson A. Miles, Lieutenant-General, United States Army* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911), 288, 294-5.

⁶⁷ See Miles's correspondence from July 11 to July 21 in the Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁶⁸ Miles to Shafter, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. War Department, *Annual Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 26.

⁶⁹ Miles to Shafter, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. War Department, *Annual Report of the Major-General Commanding the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 26-27.

⁷⁰ Miles to Shafter, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

wanted Corbin to affirm that he was in the right.⁷¹ In what was likely a masterful bureaucratic sleight-of-hand, Corbin seems to have purposefully misplaced Shafter's letter until August 11, the day before hostilities ended with Spain, so as to avoid getting caught up in the feud. A confidential investigation conducted by Lieutenant Colonel Marion P. Maus on behalf of Miles into the affair found that Shafter's dispatch appeared to be "insubordinate, highly unmilitary and uncalled for," but Maus also concluded that "the manner in which instructions had been given, regardless of military courtesy and procedure would, perhaps, serve as an excuse, to some extent, for General Shafter's action."⁷² With that the War Department let the issue drop, but the two feuding generals continued their row for years after the war.

Meanwhile, Shafter's division commanders acted on the advice of Miles and the Army Medical Department and searched for high ground to encamp the Fifth Corps in the afternoon following the Spanish surrender. Major General Joseph Wheeler sent the physician and acting brigade commander, Brigadier General Wood, and his aide Lieutenant James H. Reeves to conduct a reconnaissance of the surrounding hills to find a camp with clean-open ground, healthy breezes, and clear water. Wheeler ordered his Cavalry Division to occupy the camp Wood and Reeves selected two miles northeast of the city the next morning.⁷³ By the morning of June 19, the majority of Shafter's army had abandoned the trenches on the San Juan Heights and occupied

⁷¹ Shafter to Corbin, August 1, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 219-220.

⁷² Confidential Report of Lieutenant Colonel Marion P. Maus, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 36. The phrase is underlined in the original.

⁷³ Entries from July 17 and July 18, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aide-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 157.

new camps. During the short march nearly half the soldiers in the Cavalry Division fell out due to fevers and heat exhaustion.⁷⁴

In the short term, the move temporarily reduced the number of sick by moving the soldiers away from the contaminated water supply and overflowing toilet sumps, and the presence of cooler temperatures in the hills and breezes coming of both the mountains and sea led to the “noticeable” absence of mosquitos.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the new camps were better organized, cleaner, and the soldiers now had access to canvas tents, a clear stream, their cooking supplies, and quality rations, including fresh meet and canned food.⁷⁶ Unfortunately, the breezes soon subsided and the mosquitos returned, and Steele complained that the flies became “so thick in here they are nearly driving me crazy” and “everyone has diarrhea most of the time.”⁷⁷ Later, Steele wrote his wife that there were “four hundred and seventy-five thousand flies pestering” him as he penned the letter.⁷⁸ Roosevelt reported that the number suffering from malaria in his regiment actually increased after moving to the new camp.⁷⁹ The move failed to stop dysentery and malaria from plaguing the Fifth Corps.

Most physicians did not believe that foul air and miasmas found in the low grounds caused malarial and yellow fever; rather, a strict quarantine of those suffering from the illnesses

⁷⁴ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 216-7. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 159.

⁷⁵ Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 20, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1-3.

⁷⁶ Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 26, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

⁷⁷ Steele to Wife, July 27, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

⁷⁸ Steele to Wife, August 1, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁷⁹ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 157.

was the best means to stop the spread the unknown germs that caused the diseases. Medical officers tried to quarantine the few confirmed yellow fever patients to Siboney, but met with minimal success due to the difficulty of distinguishing between the two diseases. Physicians could only distinguish yellow fever from typhoid and malaria when a patient relapsed to the lethal and easily identifiable final stage of the illness. The yellow fever patient had already been contagious for some time by this point. Yellow fever spread to “almost every regiment throughout the command” and over a hundred soldiers fell ill to the virus.⁸⁰ Similarly, with close to eighty percent of the soldiers infected by intermittent outbreaks of malarial fever, isolation of the disease became impossible. Shafter tried to quarantine newly arrived units by isolating them from the both Cubans and American soldiers. Shafter and his physicians were baffled when soldiers in the newly arrived 8th Ohio fell ill despite being in complete isolation. Quarantine failed to check the spread of fever.⁸¹

Fortunately, the improved cleanliness at the new camps did reduce, but did not eliminate, the number of soldiers inflicted with of dysentery and typhoid. The distribution of new uniforms increased the health and morale of the troops. Most soldiers had not changed their clothing since they packed their baggage in the hulls of their transports back in Tampa in early June. Lice

⁸⁰ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 3, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 202. Nelson Appleton Miles, *Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson A. Miles, Lieutenant-General, United States Army* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911), 287.

⁸¹ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 2, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 197. C. V. Hard to President, July 25, 1898, Series 1, Reel 4, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 217.

infested the soldiers' hair and dirty clothes.⁸² Besides the daily soaking of their clothes by the afternoon thunderstorms, the American soldiers had not washed their uniforms since landing at Daiquirí. One officer commented on how "all the clothes were in rags; even the officers had neither socks nor underwear."⁸³ Army regulations dictated that soldiers should buy their own replacement uniforms, but Miles asked and received permission from Alger to issue the soldiers replacement uniforms free of charge. The soldiers received lightweight canvas uniforms to replace their blue wool ones, just in time to leave Santiago.⁸⁴

In mid-July, the War Department decided to evacuate the most seriously wounded and ill to New York and Fortress Monroe, Virginia aboard the *Concho*, *Seneca*, and *Olivette*. In many cases, officers used their rank or political connections to get themselves and their kin out on these two transports filled with the most serious cases. Brigadier General Ames sent his ailing son, who served as his aide-de-camp, out on July 22 aboard the *Concho* with soldiers wounded during the attack up San Juan Heights.⁸⁵ The fact that Ames's son, Shafter's son-in-law, and others fled the epidemic made many soldiers angry with these "coffee coolers" for escaping Santiago as the rest of the sick continued to suffer.⁸⁶ Most of the soldiers aboard the three ships, however, were in desperate condition, including William Paulding. The now eighty-pound

⁸² Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 255. George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 216-7.

⁸³ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 159.

⁸⁴ Miles to Secretary of War, July 15, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 291.

⁸⁵ Adelbert Ames to Blanche, July 22, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

⁸⁶ Entry from August 3, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

captain suffered from both malarial and yellow fever and drifted in and out of a coma. Making matters worse for the patients, the *Concho*, later known as “the death ship,” left Santiago without adequate food, water, medicine, or medical personnel. When the War Department and the American press saw the conditions of the *Concho* and *Seneca* upon their arrival to the U.S., they were dismayed that Shafter and his quartermaster allowed the ships to leave in such a state. McKinley ordered an immediate investigation, and wanted assurances that it would not happen again.⁸⁷ Those aboard the *Olivette* fared much better on their journey to Fortress Monroe and New York City fared much better because the hospital ship was built especially to care for the sick and wounded and had a robust medical staff.⁸⁸ Back in Santiago, the situation continued to worsen.

The Decline and Evacuation of the Fifth Corps

Despite its best efforts to sanitize camps and move soldiers to healthier locations, the Fifth Corps continued to suffer from high rates of fever. Of the approximately 19,000 soldiers in the Fifth Corps, physicians treated an average of 2,732 soldiers for acute fevers each day, with at least three times more suffering from feverish paroxysms in any three-day period. Despite this, Shafter reported for the first time that more soldiers left the hospital than entered it. Most of the soldiers were still sick, but they stopped reporting to the hospital, most likely because there was little that could be done for them there. Furthermore, Shafter and his medical officers may have

⁸⁷ Grace Paulding Memoirs, William and Grace Paulding Papers, Box Number 1, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 26-27. H. C. Corbin and R. A. Alger to General Shafter, July 29, 1898 Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 192. William Paulding Memoirs, William and Grace Paulding Papers, Box Number 1, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 90-91.

⁸⁸ “Soldados americanos,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, July 29, 1898.

played with the number to give the impression that the situation was improving. Probably for the same reasons, the number of reported sick soldiers in the corps fell slightly from the last week of July, but the number of soldiers dying of disease each day increased to twelve. Also, by this point almost all soldiers had been affected by the fevers and still suffered from their lingering effects.⁸⁹

The example of the 7th U.S. Infantry demonstrates how the different diseases affected each regiment. The Cavalry Division Surgeon, Major Valery Havard, reported that that 300 of the 740 soldiers in the regiment were on the sick rolls. Of those, 250 had malaria or severe diarrhea, probably caused by dysentery. The other 50 had yellow fever, of whom six later perished. Most of the remaining 400 soldiers in the regiment had recently recovered from earlier bouts with malaria and were still exhausted.⁹⁰ With about fourteen soldiers succumbing to disease in Shafter's army each day in early August, the gravediggers, ceremonial firing squads, and buglers became overworked performing burial services. The constant playing of "Taps" so demoralized the men that Shafter ordered that it no longer be played during the services.⁹¹ The large number of deaths forced Shafter to ask the Adjutant General that "150 large, 250 medium, and 100 small size" coffins be sent "to meet demand from time to time."⁹² Even more than he needed coffins, Shafter needed the War Department to send more doctors.

⁸⁹ See sanitary reports from Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 1-7, 1898; Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 28, 1898; Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 29, 1898 Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 198, 203, 205-07, 210, 212, 214.

⁹⁰ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 51.

⁹¹ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 260-61.

⁹² Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 10, 1898; Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 28, 1898; Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 29, 1898 Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence*

The surgeons treating feverish soldiers became infected at an alarming rate, leaving the increasing number of sick soldiers without proper medical attention. At any one time, as many as fifteen percent of the physicians in the corps were incapacitated by fevers and a growing number became so ill they were evacuated to the U.S.⁹³ Captain William Paulding complained that in his ward of the Yellow Fever Hospital there was only a single Cuban doctor treating over fifty patients. The officers in Paulding's tent started their own mess to cook their food because the orderlies were too busy. The doctor had no nurses or hospital corpsmen to assist him, and he had to rely on a few untrained soldiers who volunteered for the job. The Cuban doctor became so overworked that he threatened to "give up," but was placated after three Army doctors and some volunteer nurses arrived to help.⁹⁴ To find more physicians, Shafter pulled the "medical students and young doctors out of the ranks of the volunteer regiments" to care for his thousands of sick soldiers, including Harry Thorpe, a Rough Rider from New York.⁹⁵

With such a shortage of healthy medical personnel, Shafter pleaded to the War Department to send more doctors and nurses to Santiago as soon as possible. Shafter made his first request for more medical personnel on July 19. Seeing that the "case is one of such importance," Shafter and Havard—who acted as corps surgeon after Colonel Pope became incapacitated by his fever—requested the immediate dispatch of "500 hospital attendants, 100

relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 217.

⁹³ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 150.

⁹⁴ William Paulding Memoirs, William and Grace Paulding Papers, Box Number 1, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 85-87.

⁹⁵ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 29, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 187. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 158.

immune nurses, and a large number of immune doctors” to Santiago, regardless of cost.⁹⁶ Even after the *Olivette* arrived in Santiago with surgeons, nurses, and medical supplies on July 24, Shafter still pleaded with the War Department to rush fifty more physicians “within a week.”⁹⁷ Corbin replied the next day that an additional 129 nurses and 65 doctors were already on the way to Cuba, and that Sternberg understood the severity of the situation and was sending further immune nurses and doctors as quickly as he could.⁹⁸ The Red Cross nurses and doctors also pitched in and Clara Barton provided cots, bedding, comfort items to the soldiers.⁹⁹ Even after the Fifth Corps began evacuating Santiago, Shafter requested another 70 doctors and nurses, because of the high rate in which his medical personnel continued to fall ill.¹⁰⁰

With so many doctors, nurses, and hospital stewards falling ill with fever and the delays sending replacements, Colonel Charles R. Greenleaf, in charge of the Yellow Fever Hospital, requested that Shafter detail a company of soldiers to serve as attendants. Shafter dismissed the Colonel’s request. With that, Greenleaf appealed to Miles, who asked the 24th Infantry for volunteers. Miles and Greenleaf went to this African American regiment for several reasons. First, racial attitudes in the U.S. Army toward African Americans led to black soldiers being

⁹⁶ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 19, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 165.

⁹⁷ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 29, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 187.

⁹⁸ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., July 30, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 187.

⁹⁹ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 147.

¹⁰⁰ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 10, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 218.

picked over their white colleagues to serve as stewards and do more menial labor. Second, most officers and physicians, including Miles and Greenleaf, still assumed that African Americans had a natural resistance to tropical fevers, despite observations to the contrary.¹⁰¹

The Army Medical Department knew that diseases such as smallpox, dysentery, and cholera affected all races of people the same, but centuries of observations had led most people to believe that certain races had immunity to many tropical ailments. The War Department naively assumed that African American soldiers still had a genetic safeguard against malaria and yellow fever, despite the fact that Army Medical Department statistics showed that malaria rates were equal, if not greater, among black soldiers.¹⁰² Ordinary observations also destroyed the myth of black immunity, as Roosevelt noted the “curious” fact that “colored troops seemed to suffer as heavily as the white” from fever.¹⁰³ The assumption that late-nineteenth century African Americans had immunity to the disease was based on observations that enslaved sub-Saharan Africans brought to the American South beginning in the seventeenth century suffered far less from yellow and malarial fevers than their Anglo-American masters. A large portion of the slaves brought to the American South came from West Africa, where many people carried the inherited sickle-cell trait. Although some children born with the trait died in childhood from sickle-cell anemia, the majority had no complications and carried partial immunity to the malaria *Plasmodium*, especially the deadly *falciparum* variety. Many more of the enslaved Africans carried antibodies to the parasite passed to them from their exposed mother’s blood before birth,

¹⁰¹ Cleveland Moffett, “Stories from Camp Wikoff.-V,” *Leslie's Weekly*, November 3, 1898, 342.

¹⁰² Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 387.

¹⁰³ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 65.

making it easier for them to battle early exposure to malaria and develop their own immunity to the disease.¹⁰⁴

Like malaria, yellow fever caused only mild symptoms in children whose mother's carried the antibody to the virus. Slaves arriving to the United States from parts of Africa where yellow fever was endemic typically had antibiotic immunity to the disease. Because of the rarity of yellow fever epidemics in the United States, almost no Americans of African descent had immunity to the disease by 1898. Their enslaved ancestors from sub-Saharan Africa may have been immune to yellow fever if exposed as a child, but if the descendants of these slaves were not exposed to the disease as children, then they were just as vulnerable to the disease as any other adult. In contrast, most native-born Cubans, regardless of race, were exposed to both malaria and yellow fever as children and probably had some antibodies already in their blood stream passed to them from their mothers to help them survive early infection and develop a lifelong immunity. With most native Cubans developing childhood immunity to the yellow fever-causing *Flavivirus* and the malaria-producing *Plasmodium* parasite, Cubans did not suffer anywhere near the same rates of infection to the fevers as immigrants to the island or Spanish and American soldiers of any race.¹⁰⁵

The black soldiers of the 24th Infantry went to work burying the dead, erecting tents, and performing nursing duties in the Yellow Fever Hospital with little complaint, much to the surprise of Greenleaf, and suffered heavily performing their duties. Believing that “colored people...will go to pieces like children and become absolutely useless” when faced by a plague,

¹⁰⁴ Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974), 79-90.

¹⁰⁵ Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 49. Peter H. Wood, *Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974), 90-91.

Greenfield was stunned when every single man in the regiment volunteered.¹⁰⁶ With no natural immunity to malaria or yellow fever, the black soldiers and their officers quickly fell ill.¹⁰⁷ In one company of the regiment, all but four members came down with fevers. The regiment of 456 men only had three officers and twenty-four soldiers escape sickness altogether. Nearly twenty percent of the 24th Infantry died of disease, by far the highest rate of any regiment.¹⁰⁸ Miles, one of the few officers who believed in racial equality, praised the men of the 24th Infantry for fighting with “such heroism as well as sacrifice” in their assault up San Juan Hill, and for having “voluntarily engaged in nursing yellow-fever patients.”¹⁰⁹ Greenleaf and Miles did not need to ask additional units, since every soldier and officer of the 24th volunteered for duty at the Yellow Fever Hospital.¹¹⁰

Not only did the thousands of sick soldiers overwhelm the limited number of health care providers, but they also stretched the capacity of the permanent and temporary hospitals in Santiago. The temporary hospitals set up by the Medical Department upon arriving in Santiago were already overcrowded with the approximately 1,400 battle-wounded soldiers when the fever epidemic started. The surrender of Santiago alleviated the crisis, as buildings in Santiago were converted to hospitals, tents and medical supplies were quickly unloaded onto the docks, and hospital ships arrived from the United States. The Yacht Club of Santiago was one of the many

¹⁰⁶ Cleveland Moffett, “Stories from Camp Wikoff.-V,” *Leslie's Weekly*, November 3, 1898, 342.

¹⁰⁷ Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 28, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

¹⁰⁸ W. Hillary Coston, *The Spanish-American War Volunteer: Ninth United States Volunteer Infantry* (Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Printery, 1899), 135-37. Marvin E. Fletcher, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army, 1891-1917* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1974), 42-43.

¹⁰⁹ Nelson A. Miles, “The War With Spain,” *North American Review* 510 (May 1899): 760.

¹¹⁰ Cleveland Moffett, “Stories from Camp Wikoff.-V,” *Leslie's Weekly*, 3 November 1898. Nelson Appleton Miles, *Serving the Republic: Memoirs of the Civil and Military Life of Nelson A. Miles, Lieutenant-General, United States Army* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1911), 293.

buildings converted into a makeshift hospital, where an observer noted how at random a “half-naked and delirious soldier would crawl out aimlessly, and try to walk away, stumbling feebly,” while others “just lay inert, or waiving their...hands in the delirium of fever.”¹¹¹ The doctors did put mosquito nets over the crowded cots in this hospital to provide comfort to the patients, and by doing so unknowingly prevented the further spread of malaria and yellow fever. A small launch took confirmed yellow fever cases to the Yellow Fever Hospital in the harbor for quarantine.¹¹² By August 10, Doctors Wood and Havard decided that the War Department did not need to build a new hospital from scratch, as proposed. The hospital would take far too long to build and the carpenters and wood would have to be shipped in from the United States. More importantly, the existing hospital in Santiago had excellent cooking facilities and a sanitation plant, and it could accommodate 2,000 men comfortably. By mid-August, the War Department had a sufficient number of hospitals in Santiago to accommodate all the seriously ill patients.¹¹³

The War Department hoped to keep the Fifth Corps in Santiago until the fever ran its course, the Spanish prisoners departed, and replacement troops arrived from the United States to garrison Eastern Cuba. The War Department worked quickly to meet those three conditions in order to evacuate Shafter’s soldiers. Corbin had two replacement regiments already in route to Santiago on July 23 and asked how many more he should send, so he could “bring the entire

¹¹¹ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 282.

¹¹² Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 519.

¹¹³ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 10, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 218.

Fifth Corps north for rest and recuperation.”¹¹⁴ With reinforcements on the way and the Spanish prisoners waiting for the contracted transports to arrive to take them to Spain, Alger informed Shafter that all that remained before his army would be evacuated to Montauk Point, Long Island, was for the fevers to subside. The War Department did not want to bring the infected soldiers back to the United States because it feared that their arrival would cause a yellow fever outbreak, and they picked a port north of Delaware because the people in the Southern states dreaded another yellow fever epidemic.¹¹⁵ Their fears were not unreasonable, as Cuban refugees arriving in New Orleans had caused a yellow fever outbreak and widespread panic across the Southeastern U.S. less than a year earlier.¹¹⁶ Alger hoped the news that the army would sail to Long Island after the fevers receded would encourage the men to recover like a “tonic.”¹¹⁷ Shafter informed the soldiers of the news in a published circular letter on 29 July.¹¹⁸

The War Department’s decision to delay the evacuation until the fevers subsided did not go over well with the troops. The soldiers now realized that they could not survive their persistent spells of malaria through the rest of the rainy months of August and September.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ H.C. Corbin to General Shafter, July 23, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 174.

¹¹⁵ Coppinger to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 1, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 190.

¹¹⁶ Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 11-14.

¹¹⁷ R.A. Alger to General Shafter, July 28, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 186.

¹¹⁸ Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 30, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2. R. A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 260-61.

¹¹⁹ Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 27, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

Lieutenant Steele told his wife “if the President doesn’t get us out of this place, we shall all die sooner or later.”¹²⁰ Similarly, Roosevelt believed that “every officer, from the highest to the lowest realized” that if the corps “spent the summer in their sick camps” they would lose “half the men and [shatter] the health of the remainder.”¹²¹ Ames knew that the division he now commanded was “quite unfit for further campaigning,” and it soon became apparent to the other senior officers that the Fifth Corps was no longer fit for subsequent campaigns in Puerto Rico or Cuba and must be evacuated back to the United States.¹²²

The War Department still hoped that the Fifth Corps could recover from the malaria and yellow fever epidemics simply by moving the corps by rail to the presumably healthier highlands inland from Santiago de Cuba. Sternberg also wanted the corps to shift camps every two to three days, an idea Roosevelt and other thought utterly absurd due to the lack of transportation and the condition of the men.¹²³ Shafter wrote the War Department on 3 August, in what became the first of the three “Round Robin” letters, to explain the infeasibility of their plan. He reported to Corbin that the rail line was in a state in disrepair, and even after they completed the repairs the following week, it would take a month to ferry the entire corps due to the small capacity of the trunk line. Furthermore, a reconnaissance conducted by Shafter’s aid, Lieutenant John D. Miley, found that area ill-suited for a camp because of the six-foot-tall grass, the lack of a nearby water source, and the loamy soil. Even if the campsite had been a good one, Shafter’s soldiers “were now really an army of convalescents,” and with “at least 75 per cent of the men having malarial

¹²⁰ Steele to Wife, July 27, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

¹²¹ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 162-63.

¹²² Adelbert Ames to Blanch Ames, July 21, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2.

¹²³ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 160.

fever,” they were incapable of performing any major movement. Shafter concluded that the only remaining course of action was “to immediately transport the Fifth Corps...to the United States. If all the soldiers remained in Cuba until the fever season passed, Shafter believed that in the fall “there will then be very few to move” back home.¹²⁴

Shafter came to the conclusion that the Army could not stay in Cuba sometime before August 3, but knew he could not insist upon the evacuation of his entire corps until he reached a consensus with all his senior officers, so that no one would receive all the criticism for the monumental decision, especially himself. Shafter held a meeting at 10:00 AM on August 3 with every senior medical and general officer except two who were too ill.¹²⁵ During the meeting Colonel Theodore Roosevelt and Brigadier General Ames spoke the most openly as volunteer officers, while Wheeler, the only other volunteer officer present, “saw fit to pipe low” as a “political aspirant.”¹²⁶ The remaining officers present were Regulars and were less forceful when recommending for the evacuation of the army because they feared for their careers, “had been brought up to life-long habits of obedience without protest,” and “had the dread of the War Department before their eyes.”¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 3, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 202. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 217-220.

¹²⁵ Adelbert Ames to Blanche, August 3, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 3-4.

¹²⁶ Adelbert Ames to Blanche, August 5, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

¹²⁷ First quote from Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 163; Second quote from Adelbert Ames to Blanche, August 5, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

Even if the Regulars tended to be reserved when giving their recommendations, all those present accepted that the army must be evacuated immediately to save it from destruction.¹²⁸ Major Havard and all of his subordinate division surgeons expressed concern that the malarial epidemic could not be stopped and that the number of yellow fever cases continued to rise. Furthermore, they expected the mortality rate from both diseases to increase. After reaching these conclusions, “they unanimously recommended that the only course to pursue to save the lives of thousands of our soldiers is to transport the whole army to the United States as quickly as possible” and signed the first of two circular letters.¹²⁹ The general officers echoed the medical opinion of the surgeons and added that the Fifth Corps was incapacitated by malaria and incapable of moving to the interior. They concluded that the army must be moved north immediately “or it will perish,” and all the brigade and division commanders signed their names to the second circular telegram stating their unified opinion.¹³⁰

While acting prudently, if belatedly, to save his corps, Shafter erred by giving his consent for the Associated Press to send dispatches back to New York with published copies of the three Round Robin letters. He even agreed that “he would remove the censorship on any cablegrams” the generals sent to “their friends on this subject” in order to put pressure on the War Department

¹²⁸ Entry from August 3, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 163.

¹²⁹ Havard, Kilbourne, Wood, Ives, Harris, and Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 3, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 202. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 220-21.

¹³⁰ Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 3, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 203. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 221-22. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 164.

to act quickly.¹³¹ The War Department did not need the prodding and would have acted sooner if it had understood the severity of the situation, but before August 3, Shafter's correspondence had constantly suggested that the situation was improving and not dire.¹³² Alger, Corbin, and the President were all surprised by Shafter's sudden sense of urgency, and they were embarrassed and upset that the press published the contents of the Round Robin telegrams at the same time the War Department received them, not giving them any time to react. Alger considered "the publication of the 'Round Robin' at that time" as "one of the most unfortunate and regrettable incidents of the war," because it breached army discipline, threatened the peace negotiations in Paris, forced the War Department to rush the Fifth Corps home before Camp Wikoff was ready to receive them, and embarrassed the administration.¹³³ Alger insisted that all future official reports only be released to the press under his authority, and thought it "strange" that Shafter released the telegram to the Associated Press without permission or even awaiting a reply.¹³⁴ Shafer dishonestly suggested that a draft of the telegram was leaked to the press without his consent.¹³⁵

Despite being circumvented, the War Department officials did not hesitate to begin planning the rapid withdrawal of the Fifth Corps. Corbin needed information from Shafter in order to plan and coordinate the War Department's response. He asked how many additional

¹³¹ Adelbert Ames to Blanche, August 3, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 163-4.

¹³² R. A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 262.

¹³³ R. A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 269-70.

¹³⁴ R. A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 270. Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 3, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 204-05.

¹³⁵ R. A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 271.

transports were required to evacuate the entire corps. Corbin instructed Shafter to use any transports already unloaded in Santiago to begin immediately shipping soldiers to Long Island. “Sparing no effort,” Corbin diverted all available transports from Puerto Rico and Tampa.¹³⁶ Next, the War Department determined how many regiments were needed to occupy the area of Eastern Cuba surrendered by General José Toral. Shafter believed that two brigades were needed, so Corbin issued orders to a total of eight regiments to report to Santiago. When designating units to relieve the Fifth Corps, Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin, with one exception, sent regiments he hoped would be at least partially immune to the tropical ailments that plagued the Fifth Corps. Five of the replacement regiments sent to Santiago were called “Immunes,” for their supposed resistance to tropical diseases due to previous infection. The 9th Immune Regiment consisted of black soldiers and junior officers, while the other four were white regiments. Corbin understood that most of these men probably had no immunity, but had no better options. Corbin also sent two state volunteer regiments selected from Kansas and Illinois that consisted entirely of black officers and soldiers, because the Adjutant General hoped that African Americans had some natural genetic resistance to the ailments found in warmer climates. Lastly, Corbin also sent the Fifth U.S. Infantry to bolster the less disciplined volunteers with the presence of regulars.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Entry from August 4, 5, 6, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, August 5, 1898; H.C. Corbin to General Shafter, August 3, 1898; and H. C. Corbin to General Miles, August 5, 1898; Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 204-206.

¹³⁷ War Department, *Annual Report of the Adjutant-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 20. R. A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 272-73.

When making his recommendation on which regiments from the Fifth Corps should be the last to leave, Shafter decided to keep three of the four black regiments under his command in Santiago. Despite obvious evidence to the contrary, he still believed they had a greater immunity to malaria and yellow fever. The 24th Infantry continued to assist at the Yellow Fever Hospital until relieved by select members of the 2nd Tennessee Volunteer Regiment, thought to be immune from yellow fever. Thomas O. Sommers arrived with the volunteers, a doctor who had treated over 1,500 cases of yellow fever during the 1878 and 1879 epidemics in the United States.¹³⁸ Similarly, the 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments guarded the last of the Spanish prisoners and garrisoned the city until the full contingent of Immunes regiments arrived. Someone had to be the last to depart, and the black soldiers had the fewest patrons acting on their behalf.¹³⁹ Even the prejudiced white officers in the U.S. Army thought that the black soldiers had been singled out for racial reasons. Steele confessed he was “opposed to nigger regiments as strongly as anyone can be,” but he “felt so sorry for the officers and the men of the 9th and 10th” because “they not only didn’t show themselves any better adapted to the climate than the whites, but in fact had more sickness and more deaths.”¹⁴⁰

With the obvious exception of the three black regiments, the soldiers became jovial on receiving news that they would immediately begin departing for the United States.¹⁴¹ Even so,

¹³⁸ “Inmunes,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, July 29, 1898.

¹³⁹ Steele to Wife, August 5, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1. Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 4, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁴⁰ Steele to Wife, August 10, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 4.

¹⁴¹ Adelbert Ames to Blanche, August 6, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2. Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 3, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to*

they struggled to muster the strength to march the seven miles from their camp to the harbor to board ships bound for home. The heavy rains that occurred daily in Santiago during the first week in August turned the roads into a sticky mud that came up to men's knees in some places.¹⁴² The 71st New York entered Santiago in column of fours in their brilliant new khaki-colored uniforms with their colors flying, but many "men struggled to keep themselves in the ranks, and were braced by the men on either side of them."¹⁴³ Half the men collapsed on their backs from exhaustion as soon as they arrived on the wharf. The slenderness of the soldiers and their gaunt expressions as they trudged through the mud toward the docks led Lieutenant Reeves to conclude that "everybody, or almost everybody, would have died in a short while if left in Cuba very long."¹⁴⁴

The first troops began loading ships to depart Cuba on August 7. Lieutenant Colonel Charles F. Humphrey and his other quartermaster officers still struggled to coordinate and plan the loading of the Fifth Corps, but the effort was considerably better than the embarkation at Tampa and the landing at Daiquirí because of the arrival of additional lighters and tugs from the United States and the ability to use Santiago de Cuba's docks. The quartermaster officers still loaded units on a first-come, first-serve basis, and the Rough Riders once again stormed a better ship, the *Miami*, than the one assigned to them.¹⁴⁵ After the *Concho* fiasco, the War Department

Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 204-05. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 164.

¹⁴² Steele to Wife, August 5, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

¹⁴³ Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish-American War Seen up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1999), 293.

¹⁴⁴ Entry from August 9, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁴⁵ War Department, *Annual Report of the Adjutant-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 19. Entries from August 8 and 9, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box

did not want any transports leaving Cuba without adequate medical personal, rations, and clean water. Havard had Surgeon Frank J. Ives work with the quartermaster officers to inspect each transport before it departed Santiago to ensure “all necessary medical supplies were put on board each transport and that all suitable preparations were made for the sick.”¹⁴⁶ Shafter took other precautions to ensure the health of the soldiers on their voyage home.

Still believing that malaria and yellow fever might be caused by germs on the soldiers, Shafter followed the advice of his medical doctors and ordered the soldiers to burn all their clothing and bedding and leave their tents standing in Cuba.¹⁴⁷ The War Department also insisted that no yellow fever patients leave with the Fifth Corps until they recovered, but allowed all but the most critical malarial patients to be shipped home, since the War Department only feared the more lethal yellow fever being brought back to the U.S.¹⁴⁸ A board of medical officers inspected every sick soldier for any signs of yellow fever before they allowed them to board transports. The inspections, however, caused almost every member of the committee to become ill, and the members were replaced several times over.¹⁴⁹

Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Steele to Wife, August 10, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1-2. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 165.

¹⁴⁶ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 45. R. A. Alger to General Shafter, August 4, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 205.

¹⁴⁷ Adelbert Ames to Blanche, August 6, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 2.

¹⁴⁸ H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, August 5, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 206-7.

¹⁴⁹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 45.

Within four days of the Round Robin telegrams being sent to Washington, sanitized transports with adequate provisions and medical staff began regularly departing Santiago for Long Island. The Cavalry Division, with the exception of its black regiments, had departed by August 10, and half the regiments from General Jacob F. Kent's Division departed on the 12th aboard the *St. Paul* and *Morteno*.¹⁵⁰ With the arrival of the first two regiments of "Immunes," the War Department allowed the first companies of African American cavalry troopers to leave Santiago with elements of the corps artillery, just a week after the main body of Wheeler's Cavalry Division.¹⁵¹ With the exception of the 24th Infantry, which did not leave until September, and the 1,400 still too ill to travel, the last soldiers of the Fifth Corps and its commanding general boarded transports on August 25 and arrived in Montauk on September 1. Surgeons cleared 1,200 of the patients to travel within two weeks of the Fifth Corps departure, and only 200 acute malarial and yellow fever patients remained for the occupation troops to care for. The War Department's evacuation of the over 19,000 soldier-strong Fifth Corps in about three weeks was probably the most efficient work it did during the entire campaign in the Caribbean.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 4, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 220-21.

¹⁵¹ H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, August 5, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 206-7.

¹⁵² Unpublished Autobiography of Major General Henry C. Corbin, Folder 8, Container 11, Henry Clark Corbin papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 96. War Department, *Annual Report of the Adjutant-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 19. Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., August 25, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 206-7. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 1-2, 45-46.

Conclusion

The inability of the U.S. Army and the medical community to determine the specific causes of malaria and yellow fever led observers to blame a wide variety of factors for the fever epidemics. Although some believed that fever epidemics were simply the natural result of campaigning in the tropics during the summer months and could not have been mitigated, the sanitary measures ordered by Havard, Wood, and other Army doctors did reduce the number of soldiers infected with typhoid, dysentery, and other communicable diseases caused by unsanitary conditions. Most, however, believed that the number of soldiers suffering from malaria and yellow fever could have also been drastically reduced if proper tentage, clothing, shelter, and medical attention had been provided by the War Department. Miles even blamed the canned beef provided to the soldiers for the fever. Because these perceived causal factors could have been mitigated with proper planning, most people blamed Shafter, the Army Medical Department, and the War Department for neglecting the soldiers. Surely, Shafter and the War Department could have done a better job of planning and sustaining the Santiago campaign, but the conclusion of fighting and the arrival of adequate food, tents, and medical care did nothing to resolve the fever epidemic in Shafter's Fifth Corps. Finally, the soldiers sent to relieve the Fifth Corps and garrison the Province of Santiago did not endure the hardships of campaigning and had adequate food, supplies, and shelter, but still suffered from the same rates of malaria. Even so, the criticisms against the War Department for neglecting the Fifth Corps and other mobilized soldiers in stateside training camps led to an executive investigation, known as the Dodge

Commission, the sidelining of Miles and Shafter for their rest of their careers, and eventually the resignation of Secretary Alger.¹⁵³

In all, 427 of Shafter's men died of disease in Santiago, including 46 from yellow fever, and another 87 died in transit to Long Island. Another 257 soldiers perished from the diseases they acquired in Cuba while at Camp Wikoff. A total of 771 soldiers died of disease before the Fifth Corps disbanded on October 3, 1898, so that the Regulars could return to their frontier posts and the volunteers could go home.¹⁵⁴ Typical of wars before the twentieth century, the number of soldiers from the Fifth Corps that perished from disease far surpassed the 260 killed in combat.¹⁵⁵

The Army Medical Department continued its research into yellow fever and malaria, and by the end of the occupation of Cuba, Army surgeons confirmed that mosquitos were the vector of the two diseases and implemented preventive measures to reduce the chance of infection. British research into malaria allowed the Army Medical Department to mitigate the chances of soldiers becoming infected by the disease, but the information had arrived a few weeks too late to benefit Shafter's Fifth Corps. As the last of the last of the emaciated soldiers departed Santiago for Montauk in August 1898, British scientist Ronald Ross wrote Sternberg with his findings showing that mosquitos did in fact carry the malaria *Plasmodium*. With this

¹⁵³ Russell A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 281-97. George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 256-69. "Remarks of President McKinley to the Commission appointed to investigate the administration of the War Department in relation to its conduct of the Hispano-American War," Executive Mansion, September 26, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁵⁴ General Orders, No. 50, October 3, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 258.

¹⁵⁵ War Department, *Annual Report of the Adjutant-General of the Army to the Secretary of War, 1898* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 25-26. Russell A. Alger, *The Spanish-American War* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1901), 292. There was a discrepancy in the number of casualties reported by Alger and Corbin. As Corbin was the Adjutant General of the Army, I went with the numbers he published in his annual report.

information, Major Jefferson R. Kean advised the occupation troops arriving in Havana in January 1899 to use mosquito netting. At first soldiers and officers ignored his advice, but as the evidence became overwhelming, the use of mosquito nets became standard. By December 1900, a general order finally directed their use. The regulation plus a mosquito eradication campaign in Cuban cities produced dramatic results. The number of deaths attributed to malaria dropped by fifty percent by 1901, and dropped another fifty percent by 1902. The number of people in Havana infected by the disease plummeted by seventy-five percent.¹⁵⁶

The U.S. Army's determination to eradicate yellow fever also eventually paid off, largely due to the efforts of Carlos Finlay. After the Havana Yellow Fever Commission departed Cuba in 1880, the Cuban physician continued to research the disease. In 1881, Finlay presented a paper asserting that because yellow fever attacked the victim's blood and caused hemorrhaging it must be transmitted from one victim's bloodstream to another by a vector. He deduced that because the lifecycle of the mosquito mirrored yellow fever outbreaks it likely transmitted the disease between people. Finlay even postulated correctly that the *Aedes aegypti* species of mosquito transmitted the disease. Most of the scientific community discounted Finlay's findings because he conducted his experiments in Havana where his subjects could have been exposed to the disease by other means and his test subjects did not regularly contract yellow fever as he predicted.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 230, 249.

¹⁵⁷ William Coleman, *Yellow Fever in the North: The Methods of Early Epidemiology* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1987), xiii-xiv 8. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 57-58. Carlos J. Finlay, "El mosquito hipotéticamente considerado como agente de transmisión de la fiebre amarilla," *Anales de la Academia de Ciencias Médicas, Físicas y Naturales de La Habana* 18 (1881): 147-69.

Surgeon General Sternberg sent a second yellow fever commission to study the disease in 1900. Major Walter Reed headed the commission that included other respected bacteriologists, including: Jesse W. Lazear, James Carroll, and the Cuban-born Arítides Agramonte. The physicians focused on validating the claim by the Italian researcher, Giuseppe Sanarelli, that *Bacillus iceteroides* caused yellow fever. Experiments by the Yellow Fever Board at Columbia Barracks, outside Havana, concluded that the bacterium was not the culprit. Frustrated, Lazear corresponded with a Dr. Henry R. Carter whose own research on yellow fever in the American South indicated that the disease required about two weeks to mature in a victim before it could be transmitted. Carter believed that Finlay did not wait long enough before allowing his infected mosquitos to bite his test subjects, thus explaining his inconclusive results. With mosquitos donated by Finlay, Lazear tested Carter's hypothesis. Carroll and Lazear both allowed themselves and other volunteers to be bitten by mosquitos that had fed on infected patients two weeks earlier. Both doctors become infected with yellow fever; Carroll recovered and Lazear died. Reed rushed back to Cuba from Washington and used Lazear's detailed notes to publish a paper and conduct more thorough experiments that substantiated Carter's and Finlay's theories.¹⁵⁸

With this information in hand, Major William C. Gorgas led the sanitation department's effort to destroy the mosquito breeding grounds in Havana starting in December 1901. Despite some resistance, the sanitation workers ruthlessly enforced new regulations to destroy mosquito populations, especially in wells and containers that caught rainwater and in the homes near a

¹⁵⁸ William Coleman, *Yellow Fever in the North: The Methods of Early Epidemiology* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1987), 8, 17. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 239-47. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 58-62.

patient diagnosed with yellow fever. The year 1901 saw the fewest cases of yellow fever in Havana's history and Gorgas's methods were applied across Cuba. By the time the U.S. Army withdrew from Cuba on May 9, 1902, the policies enacted by the occupation government had almost completely eradicated the disease in Cuba.¹⁵⁹

The dedicated work of British, Cuban, and American physicians to find the causes of yellow and malarial fever eventually succeeded. While success came too late to save Shafter's Fifth Corps or benefit most of the U.S. Army's occupation troops in Cuba, it paved the way for the U.S. Army's subsequent tropical operations, including successful completion of the Panama Canal—where Gorgas managed the vital sanitation effort—and allowed for the long-term occupation of Panama, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines by U.S. forces. In addition to fighting the diseases harming their occupation troops, the U.S. Army also worked diligently to provide humanitarian relief to the Cuban population suffering after three years of civil war.

¹⁵⁹ William Coleman, *Yellow Fever in the North: The Methods of Early Epidemiology* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1987), 8. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 247-49. Mariola Espinosa, *Epidemic Invasions: Yellow Fever and the Limits of Cuban Independence, 1878-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2009), 63-69.

CHAPTER 4:
THE HUMANITARIANS: THE U.S. ARMY AND THE RED CROSS PROVIDE RELIEF
ACROSS EASTERN CUBA

It is gratifying to all of us to know that this has never ceased to be a war of humanity. The last ship that went out of the harbor of Havana before war was closed was an American ship that had taken to the suffering people of Cuba the supplies furnished by American charity. (Applause) And the first ship to sail into the harbor of Santiago was another ship bearing food supplies for suffering Cubans.

- President William McKinley at the Auditorium in Chicago (October 18, 1898)

Introduction

Even while the majority of soldiers in Major General William R. Shafter's Fifth Corps became afflicted with some combination of malaria, dysentery, or yellow fever, they worked with the Red Cross to assist tens of thousands of Cubans suffering from malnourishment and disease. The people of Eastern Cuba suffered from three years of continuous fighting during the Cuban War for Independence and the American War with Spain. Governor General Valeriano Weyler's policy of *reconcentracion* forced civilians to move from their farms into larger towns where the Spanish failed to provide adequate shelter and food, causing many Cubans to die from malnourishment and related afflictions. The already vulnerable population of Santiago de Cuba faced another crisis after the U.S. Navy blockaded the harbor and the Cuban and American armies invested the city, cutting the city off from resupply by land or sea. To make matters worse

for the civilians in Santiago de Cuba, the U.S. Army destroyed the pipeline bringing the city its drinking water. At the request of several foreign consuls, Shafter and General José Toral agreed to allow civilians to evacuate the besieged city to prevent them from being shelled and starved to death.¹

Beginning on the night of July 4, 1898, and continuing for several days, somewhere between 18,000 and 20,000 men, women, and children walked through the American lines to El Caney. Brigadier General Henry W. Lawton wrote his wife that the terrified droves of helpless refugees fleeing the city were “one of the most distressing sights [he] ever witnessed.”² There was not enough food, shelter, or clean water in El Caney, despite the efforts of the Red Cross and the U.S. Army to feed them. Toral did not allow the civilians to take any food with them, believing his army would need it to last out the siege, and the U.S. Army could not carry enough food to the front to keep its own soldiers fully fed, although it gave what it could to the refugees. The Red Cross managed to get a mere six tons of food to El Caney by borrowing scarce U.S. Army wagons. Hundreds of Cubans died of exposure and disease while at El Caney, especially the young and the old. Only a few died of starvation, but all were hungry. The Cubans crowded into the few buildings in the small town, but most sheltered in hastily fashioned tents made from cloth and vegetation.³

¹ Shafter to Adjutant General, July 15, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 130.

² Henry Lawton to Marry Lawton, July 19, 1898, Folder 2, Box 2, The Papers of Henry W. Lawton, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 131-33, 154-55. Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 100-101. Joseph Wheeler, *The Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Lamson, Wolfe, and Company, 1898), 191-92. Miles to Secretary of War, July 12, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish-American War, Correspondence on Cuba and Puerto Rico, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. George Kennan,

On July 17, immediately following the surrender ceremony, the refugees returned to Santiago de Cuba. The wealthy class trudged side by side on the muddy roads with the poorest residents “all carrying bundles of some kind,” and Lieutenant James H. Reeves remembered “the awful site” of people “half starved and so sick they could hardly walk.”⁴ Similarly, Adelbert Ames wrote to his wife that he “never saw such sorry specimens of humanity as the Santiagoians,” whom he described as “emaciated, colorless, [and] feeble.”⁵ Many of the old and young collapsed on the side of the road from exhaustion, and their loved ones carried them under the shade of trees to either recover or die.⁶

Upon their return to Santiago de Cuba, the surviving refugees found that conditions in the city were not much better than the ones that they had left at El Caney. The stress of the populations’ exodus during the heat of summer without proper nourishment or shelter caused hundreds more civilians to fall seriously ill. On July 20, Shafter assigned Brigadier General Leonard Wood—who was still officially an Army surgeon—as the military commander of the city of Santiago de Cuba because Shafter perceived the problems the civilian population faced there as primarily humanitarian and medical in nature.⁷ Wood described the situation as “serious in the extreme,” with about thirty percent of the civilians sick and an estimated 180 civilians

Campaigning in Cuba (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 157. Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 516.

⁴ Entry from July 17, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁵ Adelbert Ames to Blanche Ames, July 18, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1.

⁶ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 515-16. George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 180.

⁷ Entry from July 20, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

succumbing to hunger or disease each day.⁸ Lawton heard a rumor that 50 children succumbed each night.⁹ Reeves approximated the number of civilians dying each day to be 50 out of an estimated population of 30,000—but as commander of the city, Wood was in a better position to know the extent of the terrible situation.¹⁰

One lieutenant recalled the “very gruesome” memory of men plodding with “black coffins balanced on their heads” on their way to the city’s cemetery during all hours of the day.¹¹ The number of dead quickly overwhelmed the ability of city officials and family members to bury them, and American soldiers entering the city for days after the surrender commented on how “there were found many dead and decayed bodies, lying bloated in the streets, and in the Spanish hospitals.”¹² The dead human bodies often rested next to the carcasses of rotting animals and decaying garbage, giving the city a hideous odor. Eventually, the people of the city stopped trying to bury all their dead. Fearing the diseases the bodies carried, they began cremating the bodies *en masse*. Local men stacked nearly a hundred corpses at a time on top of “gratings of railroad iron...mixed with grass and sticks” and covered the heap with “thousands of gallons of

⁸ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 2. Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 515.

⁹ Henry Lawton to Marry Lawton, July 19, 1898, Folder 2, Box 2, The Papers of Henry W. Lawton, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰ Entry from August 3, 1898, Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Some reports have the population at 50,000. This number comes from the pre-war census. By the summer of 1898, the population was probably closer to 30,000.

¹¹ Matthew to wife, August 4, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹² Corporal W. T. Goode, *The “Eighth Illinois”* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 144.

kerosene,” reducing the burial pyre to ashes.¹³ Black clouds hovered over Santiago de Cuba for days.¹⁴

Observing the magnitude of the humanitarian crises, the soldiers of the Fifth Corps immediately joined the Red Cross in providing assistance to the starving Cuban citizens, even before they received official guidance or policy directives from President McKinley and the War Department. Whatever the underlying political and economic motives were for the United States going to war with Spain, the McKinley administration sold the war to the American public as one to provide humanitarian relief to the Cuban people. The attention that McKinley gave to aiding the people of Cuba before the outbreak of hostilities and after the surrender of Santiago suggests that he was probably sincere in his concern for the plight of the Cuban people, so much so that sending food and medicines to the people Eastern Cuba took priority over sending soldiers to occupy towns for the War Department. With the assistance of local residents, the Red Cross distributed supplies to the destitute in and around Santiago de Cuba. At first, while the U.S. Army in Cuba focused most of its efforts on guarding the Spanish prisoners and alleviating disease within its own ranks, it still found the manpower to provide assistance to the Red Cross in helping the destitute Cubans. The two generally worked well together, although there was some friction over limited resources. Over the long term, however, those resources proved too limited for the Red Cross. Relying on donations and the work of volunteers, it could not sustain its efforts in Cuba. After the problem became apparent and the McKinley administration granted the necessary legal authorization, the American occupation troops gradually took over the humanitarian efforts in Eastern Cuba.

¹³ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 515-17.

¹⁴ Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:381.

A Legacy of Performing Humanitarian Missions on the American Frontier

Fortunately for the starving Cubans, the U.S. Army's officers in Cuba had experience providing humanitarian relief to destitute populations within the American continental empire and along its frontier. The War Department was the federal institution most capable of providing responsive relief to local authorities and civilians during a humanitarian crisis. At the end of the Civil War, Congress created the Freedmen's Bureau within the War Department. In addition to protecting the rights of recently freed African Americans, organizing workers, and creating a free labor system, the Freedmen's Bureau provided direct government assistance to needy former slaves and poor whites during Reconstruction in the South. When a locust infestation devastated farmers on the plains from Kansas to North Dakota in 1874, Brigadier General Edward O. C. Ord used the soldiers under his command to distribute food, clothing, and cots to destitute farmers. The Army also delivered humanitarian aid to local officials for distribution after the Chicago fire of 1871 and the Seattle fire of 1889; during the yellow fever epidemics of 1873 and 1878; and after several floods in the Mississippi, Missouri, and Ohio River Valleys. Just months before the War with Spain, the U.S. Army established forts in Southeast Alaska to provide law and order and distribute food to starving miners struggling to reach the Klondike.¹⁵

The U.S. Army did not consider providing humanitarian relief its primary duty and officially mandated that officers gain permission from the War Department before expending government resources on humanitarian efforts. But in a crisis—such as the one following the

¹⁵ Edward M. Coffman, *The Regulars: The American Army, 1898-1941* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 21, 236, 244. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 216. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 16, 197-98.

surrender of Santiago de Cuba—officers were expected to provide immediate assistance to civilians. As long as they acted in good faith, officers almost never faced any negative consequences for acting without official approval. The War Department could ask its field commanders to provide humanitarian relief unilaterally, but more often they worked with other federal, local, and non-governmental agencies in a crisis. During the locust crisis of 1874 the War Department received authorization from President Ulysses S. Grant for units assigned to the Department of the Platte to work with the Kansas Central Relief Committee and the Nebraska Relief and Aid Society in distributing Army uniforms and rations to the destitute farmers. Congress approved the President's actions and further appropriated \$150,000 to allow Ord to distribute over a million rations to 29,000 needy citizens.¹⁶ More common than these large-scale relief efforts, however, were the numerous acts by soldiers on the frontier to help travelers, miners, farmers, and Indians.

One of the primary forms of humanitarian assistance the U.S. Army provided to white settlers and Indians on the American frontier was medical care. The responsibility to care for reservation Indians belonged to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, but as prisoners of war, Geronimo's band of Chiricahua Apaches remained under the care of Army physicians. Similarly, Indians captured by the U.S. Army off the reservation remained under the care of its surgeons until they were escorted back. Often the only doctors available to settlers and Indians in remote locations, Army surgeons regularly provided medical services to local civilians even though they did not have official authorization from Congress to do so. As long as it did not interfere with their official duties, adequate medicines were available, and the situation was dire enough,

¹⁶ Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 217-22.

commanding officers did not mind that their surgeons provided care to civilians and even made money for their services.¹⁷ Like his fellow Army surgeons, Leonard Wood offered his medical services to locals while assigned to Fort Huachuca, Arizona Territory. Wood cared for the soldiers assigned to Captain Henry Lawton's command as they pursued Geronimo's Apaches across Arizona and Northern Mexico. Along the way, he cared for American and Mexican civilians, including a cross-eyed Mexican boy who became one of Wood's surgical patients.¹⁸

In addition to Wood, Shafter and the other two generals from the Fifth Corps left to occupy Santiago in 1898 all had previous experience providing humanitarian assistance to Native Americans during the Indian Wars. Lawton had assisted the Northern Cheyenne suffering from hunger and malaria at Fort Reno in 1877, advocating for them when the Bureau of Indian Affairs failed to deliver adequate rations.¹⁹ In January 1891 after Shafter assumed command of all the soldiers guarding the Pine River Agency after the fighting at Wounded Knee, he issued rations, tents, clothing, and blankets to the 4,000 returning Indians suffering from hunger and exposure.²⁰ While Colonel Shafter oversaw the Pine River Agency, Captain Ezra P. Ewers escorted the few Northern Cheyenne at the agency during the Ghost Dance troubles to the Tongue River Reservation and served as "acting" Indian agent from Fort Keogh, Montana. Left in terrible conditions after the massacre at Wounded Knee, the Cheyenne lauded Ewers for meeting their humanitarian needs. Ewers had previously earned the trust and friendship of Hump's band of

¹⁷ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 385. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 175-76 and 188-89.

¹⁸ Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 56, 78-9, 81-84.

¹⁹ Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1971), 333-38.

²⁰ Paul H. Carlson, "Pecos Bill:" *A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 149-53.

Northern Cheyenne when he oversaw the care given to the group for seven years after they surrendered to Nelson A. Miles in 1877.²¹

Caring for the very Indians whose traditional way of life they were sent to destroy seems paradoxical; however, the humanitarian actions of the U.S. Army soldiers in the second half of the nineteenth century illustrate one of the characteristics of American imperialism. The aggrandizement of the American empire has almost always been justified by some humanitarian intention. As the agents of empire on the American frontier, the U.S. Army was expected to provide humanitarian relief to American civilians and Indians alike. Western settlers and their representatives in Congress demanded that the U.S. Army protect white settlers from what were perceived as “barbaric” attacks by Native Americans by removing them from the borderlands between Indian and American civilization. At the same time, liberal Christian groups from the eastern United States insisted that the Army work with the Indian Bureau to move Indians to reservations where they could assimilate Western economic and religious practices. Despite underlying economic, racial, and strategic causes, nineteenth-century Americans tended to justify the Indian Wars to themselves as humane for one of these two contradicting reasons.

McKinley and his War for Humanity

As during the Indian Wars, McKinley and the majority of the American people convinced themselves that the War with Spain was ultimately a humanitarian mission. There is no doubt that geopolitical aspirations, economic motives, support for Cuban independence, and revenge

²¹ Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 399. Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 131-32, 272, 280. William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 71, 83-95, 119-21.

for the alleged sinking of the *Maine* all contributed to the overwhelming popular support within the United States to go to war with Spain. Public opinion forced McKinley to end his opposition to conflict and ask Congress for a declaration of war on April 11, but he sold the war to the American people, and perhaps to himself, as a humanitarian one. Whatever his motives, there is no doubt that the President made relief of the suffering Cubans a priority before the opening of hostilities. In December 1897, he ordered the State Department to work with the Spanish government to allow the Red Cross to deliver supplies to the destitute *reconcentrados* in Havana. And immediately following the Spanish capitulation he again accelerated the humanitarian mission.²²

McKinley's decision to send the Red Cross—under the leadership of the Central Cuban Relief Committee, with Clara Barton as its president—fit into accepted gendered norms in American society as to who should provide charity. Most Americans at the time believed that charity was a feminine attribute and should be given out by charitable institutions, and only rarely by the government. Once the war began McKinley authorized the chartered steamer, *State of Texas*, loaded with 1,400 tons of Red Cross supplies, to join the invasion fleet off the coast of Santiago de Cuba, so that Barton and her volunteer doctors, nurses, and staff members could bring assistance to the starving Cubans immediately after U.S. forces landed on the island.

McKinley's administration continued to support the Red Cross's efforts to help captured Spanish ship crews and Cuban refugees in Tampa during the war, but it did not allow the Red Cross to deliver aid to the island once the U.S. Navy began its blockade.²³ Once the invasion fleet sailed, Secretary of the Navy John D. Long allowed ships chartered by the American

²² David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (New York: Macmillan, 1981), 22.

²³ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 10-12.

National Red Cross to receive coal from any naval station or coaler at the price paid by the government, as long as it did not interfere with operations.²⁴ Otherwise, Red Cross ships would have had to make costly and timely detours when bringing relief supplies to Cuba. The Red Cross faced a financial predicament when the lease for the *State of Texas* expired of July 5 and the owner increased the rate for the ship to \$400 a day. Stephen E. Barton, Clara's nephew, sent a telegram to Secretary of State William R. Day on July 16, urging him to allow the transport to unload its relief supplies without delay. Day forwarded the request to the War Department, and the next day Corbin alerted Shafter to "enable the Red Cross steamer *State of Texas* to discharge cargo and leave the port as soon as possible."²⁵ Shafter allowed the *State of Texas* to be the first ship to dock in Santiago Harbor. This was a huge concession, given that the soldiers of Shafter's Fifth Corps did not have adequate food, shelter, or transportation and needed to unload these supplies from their own ships.²⁶

After the fighting between the United States and Spain formally ended with an armistice on August 12, McKinley began feeling out American public opinion on what to do with the Spanish colonies captured during the war. McKinley seemed to make up his mind fairly quickly to retain possession of Guam and Puerto Rico. As for the larger and more significant Spanish island possessions at stake, the Teller Amendment precluded the outright annexation of Cuba, but McKinley and his commissioners in Paris seemed uncertain as to the legality and how much,

²⁴ John Long to Stephen E. Barton, July 13, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 30.

²⁵ Corbin to General Shafter, 20 July, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 168.

²⁶ Stephen Barton to Clara Barton, Reel Number 94, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 648. William R. Day to Secretary of War, July 19, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 166.

if any, of the Philippines to annex.²⁷ In October, McKinley decided to attend the Trans-Mississippi Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska. He gave whistle-stop speeches as he traveled to and from the event, and carefully followed press reactions to his comments in order to gauge the level of public support for annexing the Spanish colonies. McKinley emphasized many themes during his speeches, including the growing strength of the U.S. economy, the end of the recession, the heroism of American soldiers and sailors, the unity of the country during the war, the need for continued harmony during the peace treaty negotiations in Paris, and the responsibility of the country to bring civilization and liberty to the areas brought under the control of the United States.²⁸

More than any of his other talking points, the President used the word “humanity” liberally in his October speeches. While passing through Cedar Rapids, Iowa on October 11, McKinley told the crowd that the United States had “accepted war for humanity,” and his words were greeted by applause when he conveyed to the audience that they could not accept a treaty unless it was “founded in right and justice and in the interest of humanity.”²⁹ At the Trans-Mississippi Exposition McKinley conveyed to the large crowd that the war had been fought for “humanity’s sake,” and how “humanity triumphed at every step of the war’s progress.”³⁰ On his way home, the President stopped in Chicago, where he told the audience that this “has never ceased to be a war of humanity,” reminding them that the last ship to leave Havana was a Red

²⁷ See Correspondence between commissioners and McKinley, October to December, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁸ Speeches by President, October, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁹ Speech of President McKinley at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, October 11, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁰ Speech by McKinley to the Trans-Mississippi Exposition, Omaha, Nebraska, October 12, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Cross ship that had taken to Cuba supplies “furnished by American charity” and that the first ship to enter “Santiago was another ship bearing food supplies for suffering Cubans.”³¹ Later that night, he told a banquet-hall audience “the war was undertaken not that the United States should increase its territory, but that oppression at our very doorstep should be stopped.”³² The President continued to tell crowds in Illinois, Ohio, and Indiana that the war was for “no purpose but that of humanity,” even as his commissioners negotiated to annex Spain’s former colonies.³³ Back in Cuba, the Red Cross and the U.S. military worked together to show the world that providing humanitarian relief to the long suffering civilian population of Cuba was indeed a top priority of the United States.

Providing Immediate Relief in Santiago de Cuba

The plight of the Cubans around El Caney and in Santiago de Cuba deeply affected the American soldiers of every rank, and they worked to address the humanitarian crisis. Shafter unsuccessfully urged the War Department to allow Toral to march out of Santiago de Cuba for Holguín because it would immediately open the harbor to supply ships and allow for the “return of thousands of women, children, and old men” who were “suffering fearfully” in El Caney to return to their homes.³⁴ Likewise, Miles insisted that the commissioners Shafter selected to negotiate the surrender of the city convince the Spanish to allow for the swift return of the

³¹ Speech of President McKinley at the Auditorium, Chicago, Illinois, October 18, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³² Speech of President McKinley at the Banquet in the Auditorium, Chicago, Illinois, October 19, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³³ Speech of President McKinley at Columbus, Ohio, October 21, 1898, Series 4, Reel 82, William McKinley Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁴ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 145.

refugees to Santiago de Cuba and for the immediate removal of the mines blocking the entrance of the harbor, so ships could supply the people with food.³⁵ The commissioners successfully negotiated for all of these humanitarian requirements in the final capitulation terms.³⁶ After the surrender, hungry American soldiers gave some of their inadequate supplies of food to the starving Cuban refugees as they returned from El Caney. Theodore Roosevelt reported that they relieved the women of their heavy bundles and carried their youngest children for them. The soldiers continued to help the refugees for a day after the surrender until medical officers ended the practice, fearing that the bundles the refugees carried were contaminated by the diseases plaguing both the American soldiers and the returning Cubans.³⁷ Without enough supplies to feed themselves and quickly falling ill to various types of fevers, the U.S. Army personnel were in no condition to lead the humanitarian effort to help the Cuban refugees.

Following the Spanish surrender of Santiago de Cuba on July 17, 1898, the Red Cross took the lead in providing relief to the civilian population of the city. While the U.S. military assisted the Red Cross in its efforts, it primarily focused on supplying its own troops, fighting the outbreak of tropical fevers, and securing the Spanish prisoners. Without the help of the U.S. military and local volunteers, however, Barton and her Red Cross volunteers would not have been able to provide nearly the same level of support to the tens of thousands of destitute civilians. But before the Red Cross could begin providing relief, the U.S. Navy had to clear the way for the *State of Texas* to enter Santiago harbor.

³⁵ Miles to Shafter, July 14, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 5, Spanish American War, Preparations and Cuban Campaign, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

³⁶ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), 165-66.

³⁷ Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders: An Autobiography* (New York: Library of America, 2004), 155-56.

Barton wanted to dock her ship in Santiago even before the surrender ceremony, but Captain Chadwick of the *U.S.S. New York* told her it was not safe to enter the harbor until they removed the remaining mines guarding its entrance.³⁸ The Navy pulled seven contact mines ashore, and marked two with buoys that could not be cleared. Next, the Navy attempted to detonate the electrically activated mines, but two failed to explode, so the Navy cut the lines and removed the firing mechanisms.³⁹ Shortly after three in the afternoon, a naval officer boarded the Red Cross ship to inform the crew that enough of the mines had been removed or deactivated to allow a local pilot to steer the ship to the docks. Many of the people aboard the ship had tears in their eyes, and everyone joined the chorus singing “Praise God from whom all blessings flow” and “My country, ‘tis of thee” as the ship passed under Morro Castle and the barrels of the batteries at the mouth of the harbor. Cubans lined the shore and waved handkerchiefs in joyous celebration of the ship’s arrival. The *State of Texas* anchored, and the Red Cross sent two representatives ashore to coordinate to use of a government-owned dock and to find warehouse space for the following morning. The people of the city struggled to wait another day and a crowd gathered on the pier and throngs of small boats surrounded the *State of Texas*, all yelling for bread.⁴⁰

Everyone aboard the ship was up by six the next morning to prepare for the day’s work. The ship glided in along the government wharf where one hundred stevedores—hired the day before at a rate of \$2 a day to be paid in rations—waited to unload the *State of Texas*. The *Vixen*,

³⁸ Chadwick to Miss Barton, July 17, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 88.

³⁹ John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 188.

⁴⁰ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 164-70. July 17, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. “De Santiago,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, August 2, 1898.

carrying Rear Admiral William T. Sampson and Commodore Winfield Scott Schley, arrived next and tied up next to the Red Cross ship. The naval commanders commented on the “wonderful rate” at which the stevedores unloaded the ship and conceded that Miss Barton did not need any “instruction or advice in that line of work.”⁴¹ Barton thanked the naval officers again for allowing the *State of Texas* to dock before their own ship. While the laborers carried crates on shore, Barton and her staff prepared to reopen a large soup kitchen to begin feeding thousands of people on July 19. The Spanish had closed the public kitchen during the siege after food became too scarce. A swarm of Cubans, including famished children with protruding bellies, surrounded the pier and eagerly waited for the contents of the ship to be unloaded. Any time a few beans or grains of rice escaped from a burlap bag, several kids scrambled forward, “collecting them carefully one by one, and putting them into their hats or tying them up in their shirt-tails and the hems of their tattered frocks.”⁴² Eventually the crowd became so great that soldiers had to clear the dock. Also on that day, Barton created a committee of three well-respected local residents to help advise her on how best to distribute the goods. She relied on the committee to prevent fraud, help her determine who most needed aid, and advise her where to open further food distribution centers.⁴³

The next morning, Barton set up headquarters in a house donated by a local merchant. From there they went to inspect the soup kitchen, feeding for the first time the hungry citizens of Santiago de Cuba. Barton’s secretary, Lucy Graves, saw at the kitchen the “most distressing

⁴¹ July 18, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴² George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 172.

⁴³ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 171-73, 189-90. July 18 and 26, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. “De Santiago,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, August 2, 1898.

mass of human beings” she had ever witnessed, noting that every one of them had the most “unmistakable evidences of famine and misery.”⁴⁴ The sound of the hungry people “uttering the word ‘hambre’ (hunger) over and over again, while they strove in vain to pull their miserable rags around” their exposed bodies were almost too much for her to bear.⁴⁵ Crowds of desperately starving Cubans pressed forward and came to blows on many occasions to secure their place in line. After tallying the distributed rations, the Red Cross clerks estimated that over eight thousand people received food on the first day, and they expected many more the following day.⁴⁶

U.S. Army officers with details of soldiers arrived the next day to join the growing throngs of Cubans to ask for charitable items from the Red Cross. The officers most wanted malted milk, flour, and other food items that were easier for their feverish soldiers to digest than the Army’s hard tack and salted pork.⁴⁷ They also hoped to borrow medicine and other hospital material until they could reach their own supplies buried in the hulls of steamers offshore. Barton made the decision to fill their requests in the hopes that anything given would be repaid in kind later. Likewise, the Red Cross also needed help from the Army to prevent the mass pilfering of its supplies by scavenging Cubans and American soldiers. Private Charles J. Post and his comrades from the 71st New York Infantry were particularly crafty thieves. They bayoneted sacks of Pillsbury flour and filled their mess tins with the white flour. Later, “they got bolder, or

⁴⁴ July 19, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁵ July 19, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁶ July 19, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁷ July 24, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

more sagacious,” and started taking entire sacks.⁴⁸ On 21 July, Barton asked if Shafter and Wood would provide a contingent of soldiers to guard her distribution points and warehoused goods. The generals readily agreed to her request. Soldiers sent to the feeding stations used “their rifles without bayonets and used only as bars” to keep control of the pressing crowds, form lines, and to protect those too weak to push to the front.⁴⁹ The sentries guarding the warehouses were less formidable, and Post found that “a glass of jelly [could] establish a friendship of definite value.”⁵⁰ Despite the small-scale pilfering, Barton had enough supplies to continue providing assistance to thousands of sick and wounded soldiers. Her organization fed an average of 15,000 to 18,000 Cubans each day.⁵¹

The U.S. military and the Red Cross continued their symbiotic relationship. The *State of Texas* finished unloading on July 22 and quickly steamed back to New York so the Red Cross could terminate its costly lease.⁵² The *State of Texas* was supposed to be replaced by the *Red Cross*, a yacht capable of delivering supplies to the shallow ports in Eastern Cuba, but a gale disabled her as she sailed to Santiago. The Chairman of the Red Cross Executive Committee, Stephen Barton, telegraphed Secretary Day for assistance. Secretary Long ordered the *Niagra* to take aboard the humanitarian supplies on the *Red Cross* and transport them to Santiago.⁵³

⁴⁸ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 275.

⁴⁹ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 521.

⁵⁰ Arthur L. Wagner, *The Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson, 1908), 276.

⁵¹ July 20, 21, and 23, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17–December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 519.

⁵² Shafter to Adjutant-General, U.S.A., 22 July, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 173.

⁵³ Chairman Executive Committee to W. R., July 22, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. 172. *American National Red Cross Relief Committee Reports, May 1898, March, 1899* (New York: Knickerbocker, 1899), 10–12.

When Barton, Shafter, and Wood realized that there were not nearly enough small boats to unload the donated ice aboard the schooner *Morse* and no place on shore to store it, Barton decided to donate approximately fifteen tons to each of the transports in the harbor waiting to take the sick and wounded of the Fifth Corps home.⁵⁴ To assist the Red Cross in its clerical work, the War Department allowed Shafter to permit some volunteer soldiers to work directly for the Red Cross.⁵⁵

Barton and her committee of three local advisors divided the city into thirty districts, and had each district elect a single commissioner to “make all applications for relief in their behalf” and to personally superintend the distribution of all food allotted to them.”⁵⁶ The local commissioner provided a list on a standard form of all the families and individuals in their assigned neighborhood that required provisions. The central committee reviewed the list for fraudulent claims before forwarding it to Barton’s staff to fill the orders. The commissioners picked up the requested rations each week and took them to their district’s distribution point, where a member of each needy household went between 7 A.M. and 4 P.M. to receive them.⁵⁷ A Red Cross weekly ration generally consisted of five pounds of corn meal, a pound of rice, a pound of beans, a pound of bacon, a half-pound of codfish, a half-pound of soda bread, and a

⁵⁴ Clara Barton to S. E. B., August 6, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 328. July 31 and August 1, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17–December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁵⁵ H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, 9 August, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 168.

⁵⁶ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 189.

⁵⁷ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 519.

half of a can of condensed milk.⁵⁸ By distributing a week's worth of uncooked rations at a time, the Red Cross Central Committee hope that the Cubans could return to their normal occupations and not spend their time waiting in line at the soup kitchen. While the soup kitchen had been the best means to provide quick relief to the refugees returning from El Caney, it now only served the homeless and the neediest in the city.⁵⁹

The Red Cross received some unsettling reports that many of the sub-commissioners chosen by the neighborhood leaders to distribute supplies to people who could not pick them up had been asking for a fee from those they delivered to in order to defray the cost of transporting them by cart. Worried that the press would accuse the Red Cross of selling donated food to the needy, Barton ordered that the practice be stopped. Wood found a solution to the problem of transporting rations to the destitute. The commander of the city knew that the Army needed every wagon and mule just to keep its soldiers fed and supplied, so he "seized every cart and wagon in the streets, rounded up drivers and laborers with the aid of the police, and worked them under guard."⁶⁰ The Cubans would probably have rebelled against the martinet, but the impressed workers were desperate for the fair salaries and food given to them for their services. Many Red Cross rations also appeared on the black market and in storefronts for sale. Given the size of the operation, it would have been virtually impossible to prevent all graft and fraud, but it seems that the rations continued to find their way to those most in need.⁶¹

⁵⁸ W. S. Warner to Stephen E. Barton, October 15, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 275.

⁵⁹ July 26, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 189-91.

⁶⁰ Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 518.

⁶¹ July 26, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Besides delivering food, the Red Cross also worked through its committee of local Cuban notables to create a second board responsible for supervising the distribution of clothing and medicine. “A committee of all the leading ladies in Santiago” took charge of ensuring that the most disadvantaged received the donated clothing.⁶² The Cuban women representing the Red Cross went house to house to determine the needs of each family and then returned later with the specific items needed for that household from the large stores of donated clothing and other goods donated by private citizens and social groups in the United States. Similarly, Cuban doctors employed by the Red Cross, and later the occupation government, did house calls to distribute medicines and quarantine the homes of anyone suspected of carrying yellow fever. The system worked well because it aligned with how Cubans felt charity should be distributed, discretely and at home.⁶³

In addition to providing food and clothing to the destitute civilian population of Santiago de Cuba and supplementing the diet of Shafter’s sick soldiers, the American and Cuban Red Cross volunteers worked to provide free medical care to those in need. They established their own clinic and ran the Yellow Fever Hospital in Santiago. The Red Cross furnished medicines and supplies to the Spanish army hospital, the children’s hospital, and the civil hospital.⁶⁴ Arriving transports carried additional volunteer doctors and nurses sent by the Red Cross’s New York Central Committee. Local Cubans with Red Cross supplies, however, ran most of the clinics and existing hospitals. Three Cuban doctors who traveled to Santiago to help decided to

⁶² Clara Barton to Steve, August 31, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 544.

⁶³ Clara Barton to Steve, August 31, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 544. Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 519.

⁶⁴ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 191.

volunteer for the Red Cross instead of doing paid work for the U.S. Army. Clara Barton assigned them to Dr. Solloso's clinic located on 15 Calle Alta where two Cuban nurses joined them to form an all-Cuban clinic.⁶⁵ To accommodate all the volunteers, Barton had to rent a large house for lodging. The most notable of all the volunteers was Major General Joseph Wheeler's daughter, Annie. She supervised six nurses in one of the smaller Red Cross hospitals, caring for about thirty patients. Her arrival created quite a stir among the soldiers because of her ladylike appearance and for the very un-ladylike act of riding eight miles to the Fifth Corps' encampment to call on old friends during the fever epidemic.⁶⁶ Despite her high status, other aid workers noted "Miss Wheeler is working like a Trojan and everyone is devoted to her."⁶⁷ Not all the nurses were received as well. The doctors dismissed a nurse named Miss Brooks because she had "made herself as disagreeable as possible, until the doctors could stand it no longer."⁶⁸ To get rid of her, Barton placed Brooks on board a transport to take care of the sick returning to the United States.⁶⁹

While distributing food and medicines and caring for the Cubans and the American soldiers, the Red Cross volunteers also fell ill to the endemic fevers. Mr. C. C. Bangs, who oversaw the distribution of Red Cross supplies to the Cuban refugees at El Caney, succumbed to

⁶⁵ "Noticias," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Santiago de Cuba, August 1, 1898. August 6, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁶⁶ Matthew to wife on July 24 and on August 1, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁶⁷ August 5, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁶⁸ August 5, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁶⁹ Clara Barton to S. E. B., August 6, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 329.

his fever on the morning of August 12.⁷⁰ Similarly, Dr. A. M. Lesser, his pharmacist, and all four of his Red Cross nurses working in the Yellow Fever Hospital became ill with the deadly fever, but all managed to recover.⁷¹ The captain of the *State of Texas* became fearful that the Red Cross workers would carry yellow and malarial fever onboard and quarantined his ship. Most of the Red Cross workers on shore had to remain there and receive food at the Red Cross soup kitchen with the Cubans, but some went back to the pier and had food lowered to them in a bucket from the side of the ship.⁷²

Even with many of their volunteers falling ill, the Red Cross and the Cuban Central Relief Committee continued to work well with the U.S. Army to relieve the suffering in Santiago de Cuba. There was, however, some friction between the organizations as they competed for the same limited resources, such as small boats, wagons, and stevedores. In a study uniformly critical of the U.S. Army's role in Cuba, historian Philip S. Foner highlights a single episode between the Red Cross and Lieutenant Colonel Charles F. Humphrey to argue that the relief organizations "met with considerable opposition from U.S. Army commanders," and that the government "placed obstacles in the way of these organizations when they tried to relieve suffering."⁷³ His anecdotal evidence fails to support his sweeping condemnations.

Nonetheless, there was still some friction between the U.S. Army and the Red Cross. Barton did have many squabbles with the quartermaster officers in Santiago as they competed for

⁷⁰ July 29 and August 12, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. "Red Cross Hero Succumbs," *Chicago Tribune*, August 13, 1898.

⁷¹ *American National Red Cross Relief Committee Reports, May 1898, March, 1899* (New York: Knickerbocker, 1899), 192-3.

⁷² George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 184-86.

⁷³ Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:383-4.

the limited transportation assets and storage facilities—especially Humphrey, who bungled the loading and unloading of the Fifth Corps. Tensions between the two came to a boil after the transport *Olivette* arrived carrying both government supplies and a hundred cots and seventy cases for the Red Cross, but no bill of lading. The quartermaster officers and a medical officer at the dock took the cots and other goods clearly marked with the words “American National Red Cross” and distributed most of them before Barton’s agents arrived.⁷⁴ The situation was further confused by the fact that many of the marked goods were donations for soldiers given to the War Department, but other Red Cross crates were not.⁷⁵ When Barton called on Humphrey to work out these kinds of issues or to receive help transporting supplies, he was always “too busy to see her,” so she went to his superior.⁷⁶ Shafter did his best to meet Clara Barton’s requests, and she declared him to be “most obliging” and “General Wood [to be] kindness itself,” but she called Humphrey a “perfect porcupine.”⁷⁷ When Barton complained to the generals about Humphrey, they rolled their eyes in a way to allude to the fact “that we are all in the same box” because the intricacies of the U.S. Army’s bureau system prevented them from superseding the Quartermaster General’s representative on the ground.⁷⁸ Barton still steamed at Humphrey’s nastiness. Her accountant complained to Stephen Barton in New York that Humphrey had “inconvenienced us in every way he could by refusing facilities,” and had “declared in

⁷⁴ August 2 and August 9, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17–December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁷⁵ Clara Barton to S. E. B., August 6, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 328.

⁷⁶ August 6, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17–December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁷⁷ Clara Barton to S. E. B., August 6, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 328.

⁷⁸ Clara Barton to S. E. B., August 6, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 331.

conversation his opinion that the Red Cross is no good, and that it is doing great harm here by feeding men who will not work.”⁷⁹ Clara Barton and her staff were delighted when they heard Humphrey was departing with the Fifth Corps, commenting that they hoped “a gentleman will relieve him.”⁸⁰

The main problem Barton faced was that she could not compete with the War Department’s bids to lease transportation assets, and Barton became frustrated at her inability to move her supplies ashore. After the *State of Texas* departed the Red Cross no longer had priority for the docking facilities in Santiago de Cuba. The War Department seized or purchased every lighter and small boat in the harbor. Clara told Stephen that she needed a large, shallow-draft boat “worse than anything else in the world,” and that with it, she could “do ten times the work.”⁸¹ She had only the tug *Triton* and the schooner *Morse*. Neither had a sufficiently shallow draft to bring supplies ashore, so she hoped to use them later to deliver aid to the ports of Gibara and Curacao. When Army officers reported the *Triton* sitting idle for a few days, Shafter ordered it seized. Although she appealed to Secretary Day, the War Department allowed Shafter to keep it to load sick soldiers and move supplies. Even when Barton convinced Shafter to transport some of her supplies ashore, she had no mules or wagons to move them inland.⁸²

She telegraphed Stephen Barton to send mules, harnesses, and ambulance wagons to Santiago as quickly as possible to provide a means of moving goods into the interior of the

⁷⁹ Cottrell to S. E. Barton, August 5, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 319.

⁸⁰ Cottrell to S. E. Barton, August 5, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 319.

⁸¹ Cottrell to S. E. Barton, August 5, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 319.

⁸² Barton to Day, August 6, 1898; Shafter to Adjutant-General, August 7, 1898; and Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 7, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 211 and 212.

province, beginning a darkly humorous episode of the Red Cross trying to get mules and wagons to Cuba. Stephen Barton rushed forty mules by train to Tampa from New Orleans at great expense. On the two-mile road from the railroad station to the Port of Tampa the Red Cross mules became intermixed with a team of government mules and three went missing. A further three mules had to be left behind after refusing to walk the gangplank and enter the steamer. Already short six mules, the Red Cross lost another after arriving in Santiago when the “tackle with which they were being hauled up broke and one mule fell into the hold and was killed.”⁸³ No doubt spooked after witnessing the death of one of their own kind and excited to be on dry land, the mules stampeded once ashore, and two more were lost. Stephen sent the ambulance wagons Clara Barton requested aboard the *Port Victor*, but they were buried in the hull under other supplies no longer needed in Santiago, and the ship returned with all six ambulances still on board when its contract expired. Similarly, Barton no longer needed the mules, as the Fifth Corps had begun departing and had left their surplus animals and wagons. She decided the only course of action left to take was for her to sell the mules and use the proceeds to fund further relief work.⁸⁴

Many officers and soldiers on the front lines resented the Red Cross, believing that the organization provided relief only to the Cubans while the Fifth Corps also suffered from hunger and disease. These men felt they were entitled to an equal share of the relief supplies. Brigadier General Adelbert Ames wrote to his wife that his staff officers had to compel the Red Cross to

⁸³ Cottrell to S. E. Barton, August 5, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 318.

⁸⁴ Cottrell to S. E. Barton, August 5, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 318. Clara Barton to S. E. B., August 6, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 327-8. *American National Red Cross Relief Committee Reports, May 1898, March, 1899* (New York: Knickerbocker, 1899), 28-29.

provide them with certain luxuries at first, but he acknowledged that “her cargo was intended for the reconcentrados,” and that she had “been much more liberal” since then.⁸⁵ The actual reason the troops on the front lines did not get many Red Cross supplies at first, or Army provisions for that matter, had nothing to do with Clara Barton’s stinginess, and had everything to do with the limited number of wagons and mules that plagued all supply efforts.⁸⁶ Barton’s secretary, Lucy Graves, recorded in her journal that beginning on July 1, the Red Cross took charge of the fever hospital in Siboney, began operating on American soldiers wounded in the fighting for the San Juan Heights and El Caney, and provided comfort items, bandages, cots, clothing, blankets, and food for all the wounded in the forward and rear field hospitals. The Red Cross and Army doctors also worked together to care for captured Spanish soldiers and sailors. Once the Army hospital ship *Relief* arrived, the Army no longer needed Red Cross medical supplies and cots. It even returned the ones it had used so they could be used to take care of sick Spaniards and Cubans.⁸⁷

In general, then, the Red Cross and the U.S. military worked well together. Close personal relationships and the desire by the Army, Navy, and the Red Cross to end the humanitarian crisis helped them overcome the small issues they had with one another. Besides Barton’s personal relationship with the President and senior officers in Washington, many of the Red Cross volunteers were family members of the officers in Cuba and administration officials, including Ms. Annie E. Wheeler and Mrs. Amy E. Porter, respectively the daughter of General

⁸⁵ Adelbert to Blanche, July 28, 1898, Adelbert Ames Papers, Box Number 1, Correspondence, April 26 to August 9, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁸⁶ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 157.

⁸⁷ July 1, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17–December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 115, 130, 147–48. *American National Red Cross Relief Committee Reports, May 1898, March, 1899* (New York: Knickerbocker, 1899), 182–91.

Joseph Wheeler and the wife of the McKinley's secretary, John A. Porter. Upon leaving Santiago de Cuba on August 24, 1898, Barton wrote to her sister Marriette Reed that "besides one instance perhaps of rare ignorance," likely a reference to Humphrey, "all the general officers, from Shafter and Admiral Sampson down" had been respectful and attentive of her needs.⁸⁸

Extending Humanitarian Assistance to the Surrounding Province

Barton wanted to begin distributing supplies in the other towns in Eastern Cuba as soon as possible. If she did not, she knew that starving Cubans would leave their villages and come to Santiago for handouts, reducing the chance of them rebuilding their homes and farms. By keeping them on their farms working, Miss Barton could avoid charges of having made the Cubans idle and dependent on her charity. Most late-nineteenth-century Americans, including almost all military officers, believed in the moral necessity of providing public or private charity during humanitarian disasters, but that any assistance should be given only briefly to prevent dependency and idleness. Furthermore, officers recognized that freely distributing government goods prevented the economic recovery of the Cuban marketplace.

Barton decided by July 24 that it was time to begin distributing aid in the other towns in the province, and she began identifying respectable Cubans in each town to help run their respective distribution centers.⁸⁹ On 26 July, Barton called a meeting of her key staff members to develop a strategy to "get the people away from the crowded city where they had flocked to get food and clothing, and back to the country, where they could begin to...become self

⁸⁸ Clara Barton to Marriette Reed, August 24, 1898, Reel Number 36, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁸⁹ July 24, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

supporting.”⁹⁰ On Mr. Mason’s recommendation, Barton decided it was near time to end the mass distribution of uncooked food to the entire population and to only keep the soup kitchen running for the neediest in the city. She wanted to dispense the rest of her food and clothing supplies in the nearby towns, especially Guantanamo, where several thousand people were in desperate need of sustenance. Guantanamo had not received any aid since the Red Cross delivered 10,000 pounds of food to General Pedro A. Pérez’s Cuban soldiers on June 29.⁹¹ Clara Barton questioned her key leaders on how much food and medicine to leave for the people in El Caney and Santiago de Cuba, and how many supplies the civil and military hospitals in the city would need to last for the next month. She then made arrangements to have the last of their supplies delivered to the local commissioners and hospitals and to settle her last debts. She telegraphed Stephen Barton not to send anymore supplies to Santiago de Cuba.⁹²

The next problem Clara Barton faced was how to get her remaining stores to the inland and coastal towns recently surrendered by the Spanish. She called on the U.S. Army’s headquarters at the palace in Santiago de Cuba to seek assistance and happened to run into the captain of the *Resolute*. In a fortunate turn of events, he planned to steam to Guantanamo on July 29 and volunteered to take her supplies with him free of charge.⁹³ The same day that the *Resolute* departed for Guantanamo, three Cuban doctors working for the Red Cross departed the city on horseback to conduct a week-long reconnaissance of the towns and villages just inland from

⁹⁰ July 26, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹¹ George Kennan, *Campaigning in Cuba* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat, 1971), 107.

⁹² To S. E. Barton, July 26, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 223. July 26, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹³ July 27, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Santiago de Cuba to determine their humanitarian needs and how best to move supplies to them.⁹⁴

The Cuban doctors found widespread need, and found that San Luis was the easiest place to deliver food aid to because a railroad ran the 22 miles to it, even though one of the warring armies had destroyed a railroad bridge on the line during the war. On August 7, Barton and a large entourage of staffers and dignitaries rode the train to the destroyed bridge, walked a quarter mile to the other side of the ravine, and then boarded a second train to San Luis. Miss Barton “received a number of handsome bouquets” and was generally welcomed in a “quite triumphal manner.”⁹⁵ She coordinated with Mr. Jose Rousseau, a plantation owner in the town, to use his warehouse to store the supplies necessary to provide short-term relief to 10,000 people in San Luis and the surrounding area once a few days’ worth of repairs reopened the railroad bridge.

Supplying aid to the province’s coastal towns proved to be a more difficult problem because of the shortage of shipping. The War Department had seized or chartered every available transport from New York to Santiago, except the *Morse* still unloading its relief supplies, making it impossible for the Red Cross to lease a ship to take food to the coastal towns of Eastern Cuba.⁹⁶ Once again, Shafter and the U.S. military offered a solution. Clara Barton learned on the morning of August 10 that Shafter planned to send Major John D. Miley and a member of Toral’s staff aboard the *S. S. San Juan* to Baracoa and Sagua de Tánamo to inform the Spanish garrisons and Cuban soldiers of the Spanish capitulation and the ending of hostilities. When she

⁹⁴ July 29 and August 4, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁵ August 7, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁶ Pierson to S. E. Barton, August 3, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 289.

asked Shafter for permission to send about sixty tons of food on the *San Juan* under the care of Dr. Julian B. Hubbell to help the destitute there, Shafter “very readily” agreed.⁹⁷

The problem was all the more acute due to the internal displacement of locals during the war and locals’ lack of awareness that the war had ended. Although Hubbell dropped off forty tons of supplies with the mayor of Baracoa for distribution, aid could not be distributed until he crossed the insurgent lines surrounding the city and convinced the civilians who had fled from the Spanish to return to their homes. The *San Juan* next steamed into Tánamo Bay, where Hubbell disembarked with eighteen tons of supplies and received an escort of Spanish soldiers as he rode over seven miles inland to the town of Sagua de Tánamo. Neither the Cubans nor the insurgents “had heard of the destruction of Cervera’s fleet, the surrender of Santiago, or the cessation of hostilities,” and were all “filled with wonder when told that the Red Cross had brought food for the people and sick.”⁹⁸ Once the *Morse* finally finished unloading in Santiago de Cuba it delivered 6,000 rations and about the same number sets of clothing to the people in Gibara, the furthest northwest port surrendered to the United States.⁹⁹

By August 21, Barton believed she had adequately dealt with the immediate humanitarian crisis in the Province of Santiago. She left a single representative under Wood’s supervision to manage the remaining stores in the city, “including more cornmeal than they will ever know what to do with,” and loaded up the rest of her staff aboard the *Clinton* with supplies for the

⁹⁷ August 10, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁸ August 17, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁹ W. S. Warner to Stephen E. Barton, October 15, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 275. John D. Miley, *In Cuba with Shafter* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899), 206-14.

suffering citizens of Havana.¹⁰⁰ She still needed 450 bags of Red Cross oats, wagons, and harnesses buried deep in the hull of the recently returned *Port Victor* before she could depart. To avoid delaying her departure, Barton asked for two government wagons and harnesses to help her move the supplies once she arrived in Havana.¹⁰¹ The government could not legally give away non-perishable items like wagons and harnesses to the Red Cross, but Wood allowed her to load government-owned oats in exchange for those aboard the *Port Victor* and gave her 100 bails of hay at no cost.¹⁰² That was not the only gift from the government. With the President's authorization, the War Department had furnished the Red Cross with the *Clinton* and provided all 2,000 tons of food aboard the steamer at no cost. McKinley authorized these gifts partly out of gratitude for all the help provided to the soldiers in Santiago de Cuba, but also because McKinley desperately wanted to help the *reconcentrados* in Havana.¹⁰³

Arriving in Havana in late August, Barton was shocked when the Spanish authorities insisted that the *Clinton* pay exorbitant customs on all the charitable goods the ship carried to relieve the suffering of the people in the city. After fining the ship \$500 in gold for some trifling irregularity in its manifest, customs officials demanded almost twice the value of each article

¹⁰⁰ Clara Barton to Steve, August 31, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 544.

¹⁰¹ Clara Barton to Pierson, August 19, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 240.

¹⁰² Steve to Clara Barton, August 23, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 482-3. August 19, 1898, Diary of Lucy Graves, June 17-December 30, Spanish-American War Relief, Reel Number 6, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰³ Clara Barton to McKinley, August 17, 1898; and R. A. Alger to Clara Barton, August 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 234-35. Clara Barton to Leonora B. Halstead, August 23, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 481. Clara Barton to Alger, 21 August, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 247.

aboard the ship as a tariff. She told Stephen Barton that the Spanish were sending a clear message that the Spanish government “was abundantly able to take care of its people” and that no assistance was needed from the United States.¹⁰⁴ While the Red Cross and the officers from another relief ship sent by the U.S. government tried to negotiate down the import duties, Clara Barton toured the nearby towns in Cuba to determine their need. She observed that Havana was better off than she had seen it during her last charitable mission, but that the outlying villages, such as Matanzas, Cardenas, and Cienfuegos, were in desperate need of humanitarian aid. Unwilling to pay the exorbitant rates or hand over the food to the Spanish for distribution, which was against her donors’ instructions, Clara Barton had the *Clinton* depart Havana. She noted that the cannon salute fired for the ship on its departure signaled the “knell of death to untold thousands of the doomed on that stricken island.”¹⁰⁵ The government rations onboard were returned to Tampa and the ship to its owners in New Orleans.¹⁰⁶

Although frustrated by the incident, Barton did not let the *Clinton* affair deter her for long. On September 29, over a month after being denied entry into Havana and any other point still under Spanish control, she received a telegram in Washington from the U.S. Commission in Havana, consisting of Major General James F. Wade, Rear Admiral Sampson, and Major General Matthew C. Butler. They informed her that they had negotiated a deal with Spanish authorities to allow charitable goods to be brought in duty free to Matanzas. Once through

¹⁰⁴ August 23, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 494.

¹⁰⁵ August 23, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 497.

¹⁰⁶ Clara Barton to Nola and Dr. Gardner, 19 September, 1898, Reel Number 36, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

customs there, the humanitarian aid could be distributed to other points of Cuba.¹⁰⁷ Clara and Stephen Barton made arrangements to send a large shipment of humanitarian aid on the *San Antonio* to Matanzas under the care of Mr. James K. Elwell and Dr. E. W. Egan from their staff, as Clara was too behind on her executive duties to go.¹⁰⁸

While still trying to get relief supplies to Western Cuba, the Red Cross continued during the fall of 1898 to deliver humanitarian aid to the towns in Eastern Cuba under control of the U.S. Army. On September 27, the *Mary E. Morse*, chartered by the Red Cross, brought a large shipment of humanitarian relief to Gibara on Cuba's northeastern coast.¹⁰⁹ The Red Cross also received a request from Wood in October for another large shipment of medicines and food to be delivered to Santiago on the now regularly departing steamers out of New York.¹¹⁰ The request surprised the Red Cross Committee because they had believed that they had dropped off enough supplies to end the humanitarian crisis there. Wood's request and the report from Mr. Warner accompanying the *Morse* that much more was needed in Gibara made the committee begin to realize that solving the humanitarian crises in Eastern Cuba would be a long-term effort, one that its diminishing resources could not support. The Red Cross decided to stop sending chartered ships to small ports, and to meet any additional requests by sending relief supplies as freight on board the Ward Line vessels running regularly between Cuban ports. Fully understanding the limited resources available to her, Barton wrote McKinley on October 25 asking if he still

¹⁰⁷ Clous Secy. U.S. Commission to Clara Barton, September 29, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 115.

¹⁰⁸ Clara Barton to Jarvis, October 11, 1898, Reel Number 36, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁹ Chairman to Schieren, October 5, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 145.

¹¹⁰ Steve to Clara, October 1, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 135.

believed it necessary for the Red Cross to continue its work in Cuba, and if so, in what role. The President urged the Red Cross to continue to help, especially in providing clothes and medicines to the Cubans, but McKinley had the War Department shoulder the majority of the load for feeding the suffering in Cuba, especially the eastern part already under U.S. Army control. From November 1898 through most of the four-year occupation the Red Cross downsized its efforts in Cuba, focusing primarily on running and supplying charitable hospitals and clinics.¹¹¹

The Army Takes Over the Humanitarian Mission

In the month following the Spanish surrender, the U.S. Army needed the Red Cross to take the lead in distributing food and medicines to the Cubans, while Shafter's soldiers focused on evacuating the Spanish prisoners and caring for their sick. The Red Cross received \$446,311.21 and supplies from individual donors, businesses, and social groups in the United States eager to assist the Cuban people.¹¹² Even so, the charity did not have the means to provide long-term relief to the Cubans. By August the Red Cross was running low on funds and its American volunteers were eager to return home. Only the U.S. government had the resources to provide long-term relief to people of Cuba, and it gradually assumed that responsibility from the Red Cross in the fall of 1898. The Red Cross hoped that a few weeks of aid would end the humanitarian crises in eastern Cuba for good. With the countryside and economy devastated by

¹¹¹ Red Cross Committee to Clara Barton, October 7, 12, and 18, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 165, 204, and 234. Clara Barton to William McKinley, October 25, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 273-274. To Schieren, November 28, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 443. Stephen to Clara Barton, November 14, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹¹² *American National Red Cross Relief Committee Reports, May 1898, March, 1899* (New York: Knickerbocker, 1899), 8-9, 279-320.

three years of war, however, it would take months before farmers cultivated crops and replenished their livestock. The Army found that despite its best efforts, it would need to continue providing food to the most needy Cubans for the foreseeable future.¹¹³

Before assuming the humanitarian mission in Santiago from the Red Cross, the Army had to receive permission from the McKinley administration. Lawton took command of the newly formed Department of Santiago after Shafter departed with the last regiments of the Fifth Corps on August 25. He had over a million surplus rations left behind by the Fifth Corps and knew that the Red Cross's stockpiles of food were running low. Knowing he needed official approval before giving away government-owned rations, Lawton asked the War Department the day following Shafter's departure for authorization to distribute government meat, rice, and condensed milk to destitute Cubans and charitable institutions in the province. The Secretary of War approved the request "to issue fresh meat, condensed milk, and rice to sick and starving" Cubans on August 28 but was unsure of the legality of his order. The next day, Lawton's aide forwarded the authorization to the Department of Santiago's Chief Commissary, Lieutenant Colonel Henry B. Osgood, so that he could begin issuing the food. Henry Osgood's son Winchester died fighting with the Cuban insurgents before the U.S. entered the war, and because of this his father seemed to have a great sympathy for the suffering Cubans.¹¹⁴

After the War Department researched further the legality of donating government rations to foreign civilians, Alger clarified his previous authorization that government rations could be

¹¹³ C. D. Cottrell to Major Fitch and Daid Lewis Cobb to Dr. O'Reilly, August 1, 1898, Reel Number 95, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹¹⁴ C. G. Starr to Headquarters Department of Santiago, August 29, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 91. H. C. Corbin to Commanding General Santiago, August 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 219. Lawton to Corbin, August 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 78.

issued to Cuban civilians under U.S. law, but only to those “who are destitute and in immediate danger of perishing.”¹¹⁵ Concerned about being reprimanded for violating regulations, Lawton and his subordinate officers closely followed the letter of the law by distributing only the types of rations specifically mentioned in the order and gave them only to the most impoverished Cubans. Each time they encountered a Cuban village that needed rations or medicines they cabled the War Department for written approval to help. Growing tired of the constant requests to provide humanitarian aid and reports that not all the needy were being taken care of, McKinley directed the War Department to tell Lawton that he could provide any “necessary food and medicines until otherwise ordered” to suffering Cubans, including “those who cannot earn a living.”¹¹⁶

McKinley’s humanitarian order gave the officers the freedom to give out government rations as they saw fit to any Cubans in need, and not just those on the brink of death. The President did qualify his order by saying that the Cuban “people should be encouraged to go to work and earn a living,” but he made it clear that all those in need should continue to receive government rations.¹¹⁷ The president wanted the American people and the press to know that the U.S. Army was doing everything it could to end the suffering in Cuba, thereby justifying the war and occupation, but he also seemed to genuinely care about the condition of the Cuban people.

Another way that McKinley demonstrated his concern for the Cuban people was to lift the tariff duties on food supplies entering the island, so they would be cheaper for Cubans to buy

¹¹⁵ H. C. Corbin to Commanding General, August 30, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 269.

¹¹⁶ H. C. Corbin to Commanding General Santiago, September 16, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 788.

¹¹⁷ H. C. Corbin to Commanding General Santiago, September 16, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 788.

and so aid societies sending relief would not be taxed. Assistant Secretary of War George de Rue Meiklejohn left it to the discretion of local U.S. Army authorities to determine which imported luxury food items should still be taxed.¹¹⁸ The occupation government received all of its income from tariffs, and lifting the duties on some food products greatly reduced the government's coffers. Only charitable items and official government supplies entered the country duty free. In August, the Massachusetts Volunteer Aid Society sent supplies aboard the *S.S. Alfred Dumois* and in September they sent more parcels aboard the *Barnstable* to Santiago to be given free of charge to the soldiers for their care and comfort. The War Department authorized only containers marked with a red cross and listed on the official invoice to avoid paying duties and government charges.¹¹⁹

When Barton left Santiago de Cuba on August 22 for Havana, she left the residents in a much better situation than when she had first encountered them on their return from El Caney. The local Cuban Red Cross commissioners still had a surplus of food, medical supplies, and clothing, and they continued to distribute it to the needy. Lawton and Wood reported to the War Department on 2 September that the death rate in Santiago de Cuba had fallen by 75% from where it had been in July, and that no one was starving as "food and medicines [were] being freely and systematically distributed" according to General Order No. 110.¹²⁰

In Santiago de Cuba the American soldiers used this order to determine the specific types and quantity of food to distribute to needy civilians and hungry Cuban soldiers. Those people in

¹¹⁸ Meiklejohn to Commanding General, September 7, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 226. Meiklejohn to Commanding General, September 7, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 510.

¹¹⁹ Massachusetts Volunteer Aid Association to Lyman J. Gage, Secretary of the Treasury, July 22 and August 11, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 846 and 1132.

¹²⁰ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 2, 1898, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 156.

need received a daily government ration consisting of eight ounces of bacon and either twelve ounces of flour or sixteen ounces of corn meal. Additionally, the Cubans received a small amount of unroasted coffee, sugar, salt, pepper, vinegar, and soap. They received their rations from the non-commissioned officers running the relief stations in rented buildings throughout Santiago de Cuba. The sergeants reported the number of rations distributed each day to the Commissary of Subsistence and placed their requests for the following day. Similar to the Red Cross model, two Cuban *comisionados* and one doctor employed by the military government determined who needed to receive rations in each of Santiago de Cuba's six neighborhood barrios (Catedral, Dolores, Belen, Santo Tomás, Trinidad, and Cristo).¹²¹

While the Army fed the needy, local doctors assigned to each neighborhood and the civilian hospitals continued to use Red Cross-supplied medicines. The occupation troops still did not have legal authorization to use Army medical supplies and medicine on sick Cubans. As the medicines left behind by the Red Cross began running low in mid-September, Wood asked permission to distribute to the civilian hospitals in Santiago de Cuba the medicines captured from the Spanish Army.¹²² In October, medical supplies once again started running low and Wood wrote to the Red Cross committee asking for more, which were sent.¹²³ In December, Wood sent smallpox vaccinations donated by the Red Cross to the U.S. Army garrison commander in

¹²¹ Circular No. 1, City of Santiago de Cuba, October 22, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2300. Adjutant General to Wood, September 10, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 663.

¹²² Leonard Wood to Adjutant General, September 10, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 634.

¹²³ Red Cross Committee to Clara Barton, October 7, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 165.

Songo, a town fifteen miles north of Santiago de Cuba, to prevent an outbreak of the disease.¹²⁴

Eventually, however, Wood was forced to use money collected from tariffs at the port of Santiago to purchase a consistent supply of medicines for the civilian hospitals in the city.

With the humanitarian crisis in Santiago de Cuba over and an effective system in place for distributing rations to those still in need, Lawton began sending rations to the surrounding towns and villages that begged him for assistance. The mayor of Songo, Jose F. Diaz, wrote a letter to Lawton summing up the problem faced by the people in these inland towns. He complained that “the fields, farms, and small plantings [were] entirely destroyed” by both the Spanish and Cuban armies and asked that the American government supply the 12,000 inhabitants with food “to prevent their death, ruin, and desolation, helping them until they can gather their first crop.”¹²⁵

Similarly, 92 citizens of El Caney petitioned Lawton “in the name of charity and humanity” to send medicine and food because the town fell into a terrible state after Lawton’s division attacked it and refugees fleeing the siege of Santiago de Cuba subsequently overran it.¹²⁶ Lawton dispatched Second Lieutenant Jefferson D. Rooney from the 3rd U.S. Volunteer Infantry (U.S.V.I) to deliver food to El Caney. Within 72 hours he had issued rations to 1,158 people.¹²⁷ Rooney realized that there was still great need in the town and received permission to return at the end of September. He delivered another 5,000 rations to feed the 1,089 needy Cubans living

¹²⁴ Commanding officer Songo to Adjutant General Headquarters Department of Santiago, December 22, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4326.

¹²⁵ Jose F. Diaz to Commander in Chief of the American Army, August 27, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 266.

¹²⁶ Citizens of Caney to Headquarters Department of Santiago, September 12, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 665.

¹²⁷ Santiago Soto to H. W. Lawton, September 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1304.

in El Caney and gave rations to another 458 people who had come down from their mountain farms on news of his arrival. He reported that there had been “quite a number of deaths since [his] last visit” and that people in that area desperately needed medicines and clothing.¹²⁸ Rooney volunteered to return the next day with a doctor to provide for their medical needs.

After completing his first trip to El Caney, Rooney received an order to proceed to El Cobre, 11 miles west of Santiago. His mission was to “report upon the condition of the inhabitants,” determine what humanitarian assistance they needed, and “report upon the best means of transporting supplies” there.¹²⁹ Rooney learned that there were 632 people living in El Cobre and 600 more people in the farms surrounding the town. The roads were of such poor quality that Rooney determined he needed a pack train of mules to deliver the supplies.¹³⁰ After providing his report, Rooney gathered rations from the Chief Commissary in Santiago and departed for El Cobre with a Cuban physician named Dr. Rico, who brought medicines for the sick.

Rooney delivered five days of rations to 1,265 people from the area, while Dr. Rico treated 200 patients. The lieutenant admired the Cuban doctor because “he works hard and is willing to go.”¹³¹ Dr. Rico left his surplus medicines in El Cobre, so the people could take care of themselves until he returned. Rooney reported that to remedy the hunger situation the people needed farming tools and seeds. Also while in El Cobre, the lieutenant witnessed a religious

¹²⁸ J. D. Rooney to Adjutant General, September 30, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 762. Santiago Soto to Lawton, September 30, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1338.

¹²⁹ Special Order No. 29.2, Adjutant General’s Office, *Special Orders for 1898*, Department of Santiago, 1898.

¹³⁰ Bartlett to Adjutant General, September 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 985.

¹³¹ J. D. Rooney to Adjutant Santiago, September 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1174.

feast. The number of Cuban soldiers, especially officers, still armed that had not returned to peacetime pursuits perturbed Rooney because they admitted they had received the order to “disarm and get to work,” but instead he grumbled that they had decided to be a “burden on our government.”¹³² Disarming the Cuban Liberation Army was the next major task for the U.S. Army to accomplish. Rooney did so well on his humanitarian relief missions that on September 22 the Adjutant General in Santiago permanently assigned him to the headquarters, so he could continue delivering supplies to the towns surrounding the city.¹³³

Unlike El Cobre and Songo, the town of San Luis had received a large shipment of supplies from the Red Cross because a railroad ran to the city from Santiago de Cuba. The three regiments of African American soldiers that arrived to garrison the town still found the 6,000 people in San Luis and the 4,000 residents twelve miles up the road in the town of Palma Soriano in dire straits and took charge of distributing the remainder of the rations sent by Barton. The Colonel of the 8th Illinois, John R. Marshall, a successful black contractor in Chicago, described to the Illinois Governor how the poor people of the town had “nothing to eat and no clothes to wear” and that the children up to the age of seven “go about the streets naked.”¹³⁴ Some Cubans were so emaciated from hunger “they could not stand up,” and Marshall asked for the governor to have people send clothes and other charitable items to Cuba.¹³⁵

¹³² J. D. Rooney to Adjutant Santiago, September 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1174.

¹³³ Special Order No. 34.9, Adjutant General’s Office, *Special Orders for 1898*, Department of Santiago, 1898.

¹³⁴ William B. Gatewood Jr., *“Smoked Yankees” and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 189.

¹³⁵ William B. Gatewood Jr., *“Smoked Yankees” and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 189.

Similarly, Captain W. B. Roberts of the 23rd Kansas Infantry, another African American regiment of volunteers with black officers, described the Cubans in San Luis as “merely skeletons, walking around” in nothing but rags, who besieged their camp each day “begging for something to eat.”¹³⁶ He asked the readers of *The Parsons Weekly Blade* to send “clothes, food, and medicine” to be distributed in San Luis. Captain John L. Waller, an African American politician who secured a commission in the 23rd Kansas Infantry, observed that even two months after the fighting stopped thousands of Cubans were still returning to their homes from the jungle after fighting with the Spanish and the *reconcentrado* policy drove them from their villages and farms. The returning refugees were, according to Waller, “fed and cared for by our government as carefully as the soldiers of our own army.”¹³⁷ Marshall’s 8th Illinois Regiment had 35,000 Red Cross rations to distribute but was going through thousands of rations each day in San Luis. Once the Red Cross rations ran out, the government sent another 20,000 rations by rail to the towns to continue feeding the destitute. In Palma Soriano about 500 needy Cubans received rations each day, but gave the black soldiers “oranges, bananas, cocoanuts, boniatos [sweet potatoes] or cigars” in thanks for their hearty rations and donated Red Cross clothing.¹³⁸ Roberts probably only meant that the refugees received the same Army ration as soldiers did.

Well east of Santiago de Cuba, Colonel Patrick H. Ray’s 3rd U.S.V.I. arrived to occupy Guantanamo and found the population in a desperate state, despite receiving earlier shipments of Red Cross rations from the *State of Texas* and the *Resolute*. Ray was a long-serving regular who

¹³⁶ William B. Gatewood Jr., “*Smoked Yankees*” and the *Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 194.

¹³⁷ William B. Gatewood Jr., “*Smoked Yankees*” and the *Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 188.

¹³⁸ Corporal W. T. Goode, *The “Eighth Illinois”* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 184.

began his career in the Civil War. He had gained experience providing humanitarian relief during his time serving in Southeast Alaska during the Klondike Gold Rush. In October 1897, Ray seized the warehouses of the North American Transportation Company, Alaska Commercial Company, and the Trading Company under congressional authority and issued all their stores to the destitute people trying to reach the Klondike. The War Department compensated these three companies over \$230,000 for their losses.¹³⁹

Less than a year later, Colonel Ray and his regiment of “immunes” distributed approximately 2,000 rations a day in Guantanamo. People lined up each morning to receive a ration ticket that entitled them to collect a day’s worth of food. The soldiers of the 3rd U.S.V.I. guarded the line and forcibly removed those who cut the line and “push[ed] their way into the office.”¹⁴⁰ To implement a long-term solution to the hunger crises, Ray successfully worked to open the customs house in Guantanamo in order to reopen the city to international trade and allow for the speedy delivery of food items.¹⁴¹ But despite Ray’s best efforts to make the *Guantanamo* self-reliant, his unit requested another 100,000 rations on October 11.¹⁴²

With the towns and villages near Santiago de Cuba having all received government rations to alleviate the hunger and starvation, Lawton turned his energies to feeding the coastal towns of Eastern Cuba surrendered to the United States. Residents in these towns wrote Lawton with desperate pleas for food and told of the famine among the people. Jose H. Perez wrote to the

¹³⁹ P. H. Ray and W. P. Richardson, *Alaska—1897: Relief of the Destitute in Gold Fields* (Facsimile, 1970), 498.

¹⁴⁰ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Truth of Condition of Ray’s Regiment,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁴¹ P. H. Ray to Lawton, August 28, 1898, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 108.

¹⁴² Beacom to Commanding Officer, Guantanamo, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 4, 1898, 81.

U.S. Army describing the “awful conditions of the inhabitants” of Baracoa and asked that immediate assistance be sent; no ship of any kind, with the exception of the *San Juan* carrying Red Cross food and clothes, had entered the harbor since the war began.¹⁴³ Lawton received a similar letter from David del Riego in Sagua de Tánamo, asking for help because no merchant vessels had arrived at the port and the people had not received any kind of humanitarian assistance or outside goods since Hubbell arrived with aid aboard the *San Juan*.¹⁴⁴ In October, the *Los Angeles* departed almost weekly from Santiago to make regular stops to the coastal towns of Eastern Cuba in order to deliver mail, soldiers, and humanitarian rations. Major Charles G. Starr and Lieutenant Edward C. Brooks supervised the distribution of the relief supplies. In one such trip in October, the *Los Angeles* carried 300,000 rations for these towns.¹⁴⁵ In November, the *Los Angeles* again left the port of Santiago de Cuba with 250,000 rations: 30,000 for Guantanamo, 50,000 for Baracoa, and 70,000 for Gibara. Captain A. E. Fatje had the authority to decide where to disseminate the remaining 100,000 rations.¹⁴⁶ The number of rations distributed slowly decreased when the U.S. Army stopped feeding armed Cuban soldiers and working-age males, but left this decision to the discretion of the distributing officer. By December the *Los Angeles* carried only 75,000 and 100,000 rations respectively on its last two voyages to the north and east coasts of the province that year.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ Jose H. Perez to Shafter, September 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 323.

¹⁴⁴ David del Riego to the Civil Governor of the Province of Santiago, September 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 641.

¹⁴⁵ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁴⁶ Adjutant General to The Department Commissary, Department of Santiago, November 25, 1898, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January, 1898, 63.

¹⁴⁷ Adjutant General to The Department Commissary, Department of Santiago, December 22, 1898, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January, 1898, 155.

The most difficult people to bring relief to were the many rural farmers who lived in the mountainous jungles in the deep interior of the province. Wood explained to a concerned McKinley that the people there had their homes and farms destroyed during the war, and that it would take time for them to clear the growth from their old fields, plant crops, and rebuild their homes. Rural Cuban farmers would need government assistance until they finished these life-sustaining tasks. To get these people food, couriers rode into the interior each time the *Los Angeles* dropped supplies at the coastal towns to notify them to bring donkeys and mules down to carry food up to the needy.¹⁴⁸ Wood hoped that by providing food for the interior in this way, the “idle element” would leave the seaport towns and begin cultivating their farms.¹⁴⁹

Of all the inland towns, Holguín provided Wood and the occupation troops with the most difficult humanitarian crisis during the initial occupation. A smallpox epidemic devastated the town and surrounding villages, including the port town of Gibara, killing thousands. Colonel Duncan N. Hood, son of Confederate General John B. Hood, landed at Gibara with six companies from the 2nd U.S.V.I. and eventually moved one company to Holguín as the Spanish army evacuated all of their soldiers healthy enough to move from the region on November 10, 1898. On arrival he found a filthy town in complete chaos and a three-year-old smallpox epidemic that had killed thousands still raging. He felt sick to the stomach at observing “persons who do not seem to be human, with sores all oozing with blood and matter.”¹⁵⁰ Many of the

¹⁴⁸ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁴⁹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 29, 4.

¹⁵⁰ Duncan N. Hood to Leonard Wood, November 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 3413.

homes and villages, and all the government offices, were simply abandoned by their former inhabitants. Hood estimated that the smallpox virus infected well over 9,000 people in the entire district.¹⁵¹ Wood requested that the Army Medical Department expedite the shipment of 10,000 smallpox vaccination kits, 10 tons of chloride lime disinfectant, and 5,000 sulfur candles to Gibara, so they could be moved to Holguín.¹⁵² The commanding general also asked the Red Cross to send on the next departing government ship from New York 200 additional bottles of vaccines, syringes, 1,000 cots with blankets, 500 pounds of sulfate, 4 refrigerators, 500 scrub brushes, 200 benches, and 2,000 sets of eating accouterments.¹⁵³

At first, the Red Cross denied Wood's request because of an incident that occurred in Gibara. Hood and his head doctor, Assistant Surgeon R. S. Woodson, waited helplessly for the vaccines and disinfectants to arrive by ship to Gibara, so they could begin helping the people of Holguín. Mr. Warner, the Red Cross agent in Gibara, had smallpox vaccines and other medical supplies sitting in storage and refused to issue them because, according to Hood, Warner "feared some of it might be stolen by the Cubans."¹⁵⁴ Hood ordered Captain Woodson to seize the medical supplies, and he "considered the seizure an absolute military necessity owing to the grave situation."¹⁵⁵ When Mr. Warner vigorously protested, the soldiers detained him. The Central Cuban Relief Committee of the Red Cross complained bitterly about the theft and

¹⁵¹ Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 527.

¹⁵² Wood to Adjutant General, November 2, 1898, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 4, 1898, 291.

¹⁵³ Wood to Adjutant General and Wood to Red Cross, November 5, 1898, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 4, 1898, 333 and 334. Wood to Red Cross, November 5, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. H. C. Corbin, November 3, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2734.

¹⁵⁴ Hood to Leonard Wood, November 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 3413.

¹⁵⁵ Duncan N. Hood to Leonard Wood, November 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 3413.

imprisonment to the President through Secretary of State Day and demanded an explanation for the seizure before considering sending any more humanitarian supplies to Wood's subordinates in Holguín.¹⁵⁶ Stephen Barton sent telegrams directly to Wood asking for an explanation.

Stephen accepted Wood's assurances that there would be "no further friction" between the Army and the Red Cross in Gibara and Holguín.¹⁵⁷ Wood alerted Hood that more supplies were forthcoming but to "avoid all further confliction with the Red Cross, especially his good acquaintance Mr. Warner."¹⁵⁸

Woodson led the U.S. Army's medical efforts. He worked closely with Dr. Felipe Veranes, who represented the large team of doctors and nurses working for the Cuban Health Commission that assisted the soldiers of the 2nd U.S.V.I in quarantining Holguín, vaccinating the entire population, and isolating all the smallpox patients in guarded camps. Woodson used the confiscated Red Cross supplies to set up isolation hospitals in Gibara and Holguín, being careful to separate "white and colored, and male and female" patients.¹⁵⁹ The Cuban and American medical teams treated 1,300 infected patients and vaccinated another 12,000 people. Even though American soldiers typically received a smallpox immunization upon entering the service, all the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I received a second vaccination.¹⁶⁰ Not a single American contracted

¹⁵⁶ Chairman, The Central Cuban Relief Committee to John Hay, November 28, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Stephen to Clara Barton, November 14, 1898, Reel Number 96, Clara Barton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁵⁷ Barton to Leonard Wood, November 9, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 3043. Barton to Leonard Wood, November 8, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2849.

¹⁵⁸ Leonard Wood to Duncan N. Hood, November 21, 1898, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 4, 1898, 494.

¹⁵⁹ R. S. Woodson to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, November 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2782.

¹⁶⁰ Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 188-89. Mary C. Gillett, *The Army Medical Department, 1865-1917*, Army Historical Series (Washington D.C.: Center of Military History, 1995), 3, 39, 133, 231, 237-38.

the disease while combating smallpox in the district of Holguín. The American soldiers and Cuban workers disinfected every house with lime and burned thatched huts in the towns and surrounding villages that were believed to be contaminated with smallpox, but only after receiving Wood's approval. They also burned over 8,000 cartloads of furniture, trash, and other potentially infected material. Within a month the soldiers and doctors had checked the spread of the disease, and within two months there were only 1,200 cases of smallpox left in the isolation camps.¹⁶¹

Although the U.S. Army wanted to end its humanitarian mission in Eastern Cuba as quickly as possible, it understood that it would have to continue issuing food and medicine for the foreseeable future. The Chief Commissary officer for Santiago was still issuing over 500,000 rations a month by December 1898, the final month of the initial occupation, to the civilians in the Department of Santiago.¹⁶² Major James H. McLeary, Wood's Inspector General, conducted a tour of inspection and explained in his report why the distribution of rations must continue. He saw that many families had "lost their bread-winners in the struggle for liberty," few adults had more than a single set of raggedy clothes, and the children "go entirely without clothing."¹⁶³ Most people had grown enough sweet potatoes and wild fruit to survive, but McLeary thought

¹⁶¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 3, 52. Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 527. Adjutant General to Duncan N. Hood, November 2, 1898, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 4, 1898, 365. Leonard Wood to President, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. H. Y. Grub to Adjutant General, Dept. Santiago, December 20, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4219. Duncan N. Hood to Leonard Wood, November 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 3413. James H. McLeary to Adjutant General, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325:6-7.

¹⁶² National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 29.

¹⁶³ James H. McLeary to Adjutant General, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325:6-7.

that “the dictates of humanity require that the issuance of indigent rations should be continued for at least a short time longer, in order to give everyone an opportunity to procure work or to plant crops.”¹⁶⁴

Conclusion

While dealing with an epidemic of fevers and guarding tens of thousands of Spanish prisoners, the U.S. Army’s occupation forces in Santiago de Cuba also had to deal with a humanitarian crisis among the civilian population in Eastern Cuba. Three years of fighting and a policy of *reconcentraci3n* devastated the countryside and left the people hungry and impoverished. The siege of Santiago and the evacuation of the civilian population caused hundreds of already weakened civilians to perish. The American soldiers did what they could within their limited means to help, but the Red Cross under Clara Barton provided the majority of the assistance during the first month of the occupation of Eastern Cuba. Justifying the war with Spain to the American people, and probably himself, as a humanitarian effort, McKinley asked the Red Cross to take the lead in providing food, medicine, and clothing to the suffering people of Cuba both before and immediately following the fighting.

Because of the President’s emphasis, the War Department made providing relief to the destitute of Cuba its highest priority, save taking care of its own sick soldiers. The Red Cross could not have succeeded in relieving the immediate humanitarian crises in Eastern Cuba without the generous donations of American citizens, the work of its Cuban and American volunteers, and the assistance of the U.S. military. Even though there was some friction between

¹⁶⁴ James H. McLeary to Adjutant General, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325:10.

the U.S. Army and the Red Cross—especially with the incompetent quartermaster Humphrey in Santiago de Cuba and well-intentioned Hood in Gibara— overall these two organizations worked exceptionally well together to relieve the humanitarian crises they faced in Eastern Cuba during the initial occupation. With limited resources, however, the Red Cross could not provide the sustained relief that the Cubans required. The Red Cross shifted its focus to providing medical supplies and clothing to the *reconcentrados* in parts of Cuba still under Spanish control. After receiving legal authorization from the U.S. government, the War Department took over the humanitarian mission in Eastern Cuba, using Army rations to feed the needy and tariff revenues to buy medicines for civilian hospitals.

As the U.S. Army began to occupy the rest of Cuba from December 1898 to February 1899, the American soldiers found similarly deplorable humanitarian crises to the one in Santiago. Major General James H. Wilson found that the province of Matanzas had lost about a third of its populations during the three years of fighting, while Santa Clara lost about a seventh. Civilians continued to die of hunger in both central provinces because almost ninety percent of the livestock had disappeared during the war and almost all the farms and many of the plantations had been destroyed.¹⁶⁵ Generals Fitzhugh Lee and William Ludlow found humanitarian conditions nearly as disastrous in Havana and western Cuba.

The measures devised in Santiago to relieve the humanitarian crises were immediately emulated in the other provinces. Major General John R. Brooke, commanding the Division of Cuba, authorized the free distribution of U.S. Army rations to alleviate hunger until the military government collected enough customs revenue to purchase food for the poor. Army supply trains

¹⁶⁵ James H. Wilson, *Under the Old Flag: Recollections of Military Operations in the War for the Union, the Spanish War, the Boxer Rebellion, Etc.* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1912), 2:485-7.

distributed the rations to the interior. U.S. Army doctors worked with Cuban doctors to provide medical care for the diseased. Also similar to Wood's efforts in the city of Santiago de Cuba, Ludlow divided Havana into wards for the distribution of emergency food and medicine. Furthermore, he adopted Wood's method of creating a sanitation department to clean the city and conduct inspections of every building to ensure they adhered to the new sanitation regulations. By the summer of 1899 the humanitarian crisis was largely over in Cuba, and the U.S. Army turned its focus on the next important task of the occupation: controlling the towns and disarming the Cuban soldiers.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 63-4.

CHAPTER 5: THE U.S. ARMY ESTABLISHES CONTROL IN SANTIAGO

The President directs that you be informed that the United States is responsible for peace, and must maintain order in the territory surrendered and in your department, and must protect all persons and their property within said jurisdiction. Interference from any quarter will not be permitted. The Cuban insurgents should be treated justly and liberally, but they, with all other, must recognize the military occupation and authority of the United States and the cessation of hostilities proclaimed by this Government.

- Adjutant General H. C. Corbin to Major General H. W. Lawton, Official Correspondence (August 16, 1898)

Introduction

After two months of dealing with several emergencies that followed the capture of Santiago de Cuba on July 17, 1898, the U.S. Army slowly began to gain control of the province. On August 26, the last remnants of the disease-ridden 5th Corps finally embarked for Camp Wikoff at Montauk Point, Long Island. Although the eight regiments of soldiers who arrived to garrison the Department of Santiago continued to suffer from high rates of malaria and yellow fever until the end of the rainy season in late October, the worst of the epidemic had passed. Meanwhile, the Army finished the evacuation of all the Spanish prisoners in Santiago, freeing the American soldiers who had been guarding them. The Army and the Red Cross distributed over a million rations and large quantities of medicines to alleviate the disease and hunger

among the suffering Cubans. This American charity helped to lower the high death rate among the Cubans from malnutrition and preventable diseases like smallpox and dysentery.

Unfortunately, after three years of war in which both the Spanish and Cubans waged campaigns of devastation against Cuba's farms and plantations, compounded by a month-long U.S. blockade, many Cubans required at least some humanitarian assistance throughout the initial occupation.

As officials in the War Department and the officers in Santiago slowly solved the major problems of disease, starvation, and the evacuation of the 5th Corps and the Spanish prisoners, they turned their attention to controlling the newly established Department of Santiago. The commanders of the department, Major General Henry W. Lawton and later Brigadier General Leonard Wood, understood that their purpose was to enforce President William McKinley's policy decisions, and they closely followed his orders and those passed to them from the War Department. The department commander and his subordinates rarely made a major policy decision without careful consultation with and formal approval from the War Department. Before making policy decisions, however, the War Department still consulted frequently with field commanders and staff officers. In fact, officers on the ground in Cuba proposed many of the War Department's policies. During the initial occupation, the McKinley administration's policy concerning the future of Cuban independence remained uncertain and intentionally vague. Nonetheless, the President and the War Department made it perfectly clear that the garrison in Santiago must maintain order, protect individuals and property from harm, reestablish the rule of law under the old Spanish institutions, end the current state of violence, and avoid any formal recognition of the Cuban Liberation Army.

In order to provide the stability that McKinley wanted in Santiago, the U.S. Army understood that it had to gain control by garrisoning the population centers and securing a monopoly of military force by neutralizing and then disbanding the unrecognized Cuban “insurgents.” The U.S. Army had to do this in a manner that would not incite rebellion. Garrisons provided the threat of military force that compelled the Cuban Liberation Army and private civilians to accept, however reluctantly, the laws and policies of the U.S. military government.

Not all the Cuban soldiers wanted to stand by passively while the U.S. Army garrisoned the province, and a few advocated resisting the American occupiers just as they had defied the Spanish Army. Yet most Cubans believed that the occupation would last only a short time and that the United States would follow through with its pre-war promise of granting Cuban independence. The hope of speedy independence, combined with the exhausted and destitute state of the Cuban Liberation Army and civilians, led the majority of Cubans to offer the U.S. military government their compliance in exchange for rations and jobs.

The process of garrisoning the Department of Santiago did not occur uniformly across the province. It started on July 17, 1898, in Santiago de Cuba, Guantánamo, and the surrounding towns that the 5th Corps had held when General José Toral surrendered. For the first few weeks, Major General William R. Shafter and Major General Henry W. Lawton consolidated their control over this area and focused on alleviating the humanitarian crisis before they established garrisons in the rest of the department. In many cases, the Red Cross and U.S. Army sent humanitarian supplies to the more remote towns and villages in the province weeks and even months before American troops came to establish garrisons. In effect, the U.S. Army conducted a rolling occupation, shadowing the Spanish government’s withdrawal of its soldiers. The Army administered Santiago by using its existing organizational structure and bureaucracy. Although

the majority of regular officers in the U.S. Army departed with the 5th Corps, the generals, the staff officers, most of the regimental commanders, and some of the company and field grade officers who occupied the Department of Santiago had decades of experience acting as a frontier constabulary and enforcing federal policy on less than willing civilian populations.

The War Department implemented a strategy for controlling Cuba, and also the Philippines, by monopolizing military force and placing garrisons at strategic points, an approach borrowed from the U.S. Army's strategy to assert its dominance over its North American empire. Robert Utley, an eminent historian of the frontier U.S. Army, has described how the Army conquered the trans-Mississippi West by systematically advancing a series of forts that were "visible to the Indians" and "close enough to help prevent trouble and react to it promptly when it broke."¹ Besides intimidating and controlling Indian populations, Army forts on the West and in Cuba also guarded supply depots, settlements, lines of communication, and border crossings.² Additionally, Utley contends that the Army under Commanding General Nelson A. Miles had mastered how to use a "careful mix of diplomacy and the threat of force" to control Native Americans, deal with border conflicts, and police the nation's two national parks and lawless territories.³ In his study of the Philippine War, historian Brian Linn observed that from their "experiences in the Civil War and the Indian Campaigns, the Regular Army had derived an

¹ Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1984), 49; for examples of forts being used in this manner in *Frontier Regulars*, see 177, 182, 193, 244, 252, 288, 290-91, and 340. Also see Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 222. Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1963), 15.

² Paul H. Carlson, "Pecos Bill:" *A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 46-7, 55, and 115. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1984), 94, 120-21, 150, 163-64, 252, 290, and 345. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 113-14.

³ Harvey Meyerson, *Nature's Army: When Soldiers Fought for Yosemite* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 170. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1984), 409.

informal but widely accepted pacification doctrine that balanced conciliation and repression.”⁴ Linn also commented how the American officers pacified the Philippines by first defeating the guerillas and then restoring “order through garrisoning towns, protecting the populace, and creating a working civil government.”⁵ Diplomacy, forts, and the threat of force were the tools the U.S. Army brought from the American West to control the Philippines and Cuba.⁶

Within months of the formal occupation beginning in January 1899, Major General John R. Brooke, commanding the Division of Cuba, established garrisons in every major town and city in Cuba using the methods first developed by Lawton and Wood. Moreover, after much political wrangling, the McKinley administration convinced the commander-in-chief of the Cuban Liberation Army, General Máximo Gómez, to disband his army after receiving a guarantee that the U.S. government would pay its soldiers a total of three million dollars. With no Cuban army left to oppose their plans and garrisons controlling every town, the McKinley administration and War Department were free to take their time in developing a Cuban policy without facing serious military opposition from the Cubans.⁷

⁴ Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 9.

⁵ Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 33. Also, see 170.

⁶ Edward M. Coffman argues against the claim that officers relied extensively on their frontier experience. He concedes the “Scott, Wood, and Pershing...could draw parallels between the small outposts, the patrolling and sweeps, the ambushes, and, in general, the characteristics of guerilla war that they experiences in the American West and the Philippines.” However, he argues that the terrain was different, the Filipinos had more Spanish influences, more settled villages, and there were no American settlers pushing the frontier. Furthermore, he argues, “the junior officers who commanded the small garrisons, led the patrols, and fought most of the battles were too young to have experienced those earlier campaigns.” See *The Regulars: The American Army, 1898-1941* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004) 46-7.

⁷ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 73-77. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 263-266.

The Formation of the Department of Santiago

Even before the U.S. Army could establish garrisons to control eastern Cuba, it first had to create a geographic command that fit within the Army's existing administrative structure. To do this President McKinley and Secretary of War Russell A. Alger established the Department of Santiago, which was structured in the same manner as each of the eight geographical departments within the continental United States. The authority of department commanders extended over all the garrisons within their assigned geographical boundaries, and they ensured the implementation of the War Department's orders and policies. Additionally, the department commander was responsible for the health, discipline, training, and supply of the troops under his command. To assist the commander in administering and supplying his forces the War Department assigned staff officers from each of the Army's ten staff bureaus. Finally, the War Department assigned regiments to each department commander to accomplish their assigned missions.

In early August 1898, Secretary of War Alger and Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin began consulting with Shafter, commander of the 5th Corps. The group needed to identify an officer among those already in Cuba to command the forces arriving to garrison eastern Cuba. The War Department sought to appoint one major general to command the soon-to-be-created Department of Santiago and two brigadier generals to command the two brigades of soldiers they intended to send there.⁸ The next day, Shafter cabled back to the War Department that he recommended Major General Lawton, commander of the Second Division of the 5th Corps,

⁸ H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, August 5, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 206.

noting that Lawton “desires very much” to take command of the department.⁹ Shafter also reported that “General Wood is by far the best man to leave in command” of the city of Santiago de Cuba.¹⁰ Shafter also made a case for a third Brigadier General in the department, giving Wood command within the city, and then selecting two brigadier generals—either John D. Miley, Ezra P. Ewers, William Ludlow, or William H. Bisbee—to command four regiments of garrison troops.¹¹ After a week of deliberation, the Secretary of War and President created the Department of Santiago with Lawton in command. Shafter temporarily remained in Santiago to continue evacuating his corps, while Lawton took control of the garrison and the convalescents from Shafter’s command who were too ill to make the trip back to the United States. Listening to Shafter’s advice, the War Department kept Wood “in command of the city” and also assigned Ewers to the department, but it did not assign a third brigadier general to Lawton’s command.¹²

Lawton emerged for many reasons as the first choice of Shafter, McKinley, and the War Department to command the Department of Santiago. First, as the 2nd Division Commander of the 5th Corps, Lawton repeatedly distinguished himself as a capable leader during the Santiago

⁹ Shafter to Adjutant-General, August 6, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 210. See also Shafter to Corbin August 6, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰ Shafter to Adjutant-General, August 4, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 204-5. See also Shafter to Corbin August 4, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹¹ Shafter to Adjutant-General, August 6, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 210. See also Shafter to Corbin August 6, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹² H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, August 11, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 218. See also, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 1. See also, *Annual Report Adjutant General of the Army to the Secretary of War 1898*, Folder 5, Container 2, Henry Clark Corbin papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Campaign through his timely reinforcement of Major General Joseph Wheeler's Cavalry Division at Las Guásimas and his less-than-impressive but still victorious capture of El Caney against the most stubborn of the Spanish defenses. Second, he had remained healthy, while most other senior commanders succumbed to fever and dysentery during the campaign. Finally, Lawton was a regular officer with more than 32 years' experience. Boasting a tall and slender figure, as well as a bristly mustache, he cut a swath as a typically charismatic general, yet he exuded humility—a characteristic severely lacking among his peers in Cuba.¹³

Assuming command on August 14, 1898, Lawton had to overcome the challenge of having practically no staff.¹⁴ In 1898, ten staff bureaus handled all the War Department's administrative and supply needs. At the head of each staff bureau sat a brigadier general who assigned subordinates to the large field commands and geographical, administrative departments to provide necessary support. Without a staff, Lawton had no way to communicate with, receive orders from, or make requisitions to the War Department in Washington. Moreover, he could not manage the military government or efficiently administer humanitarian relief. For example, the Adjutant General in Washington issued all official orders and coordinated the actions of the others staff officers to meet the commander's intent. In the ensuing occupation, the Adjutant General of the department also issued and published civil orders and laws, and he synchronized the different bureaucratic offices in the military government. Similarly, the Chief Commissary officer of the department not only requisitioned and issued rations to the soldiers, but also assumed the responsibility of distributing relief rations to destitute Cubans.¹⁵

¹³ Timeline, The Papers of Henry W. Lawton, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁴ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 1, August 14, 1898.

¹⁵ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 11-14.

After assuming command, Lawton continued to use the staff officers of his division. Unfortunately, his long-serving and experienced staff officers suffered from the same fevers and illnesses that plagued the rest of the invading army. On August 15, Lawton urgently wrote Adjutant General Corbin in Washington requesting an entirely new staff, stating that all of his “old staff [are] sick and not capable of further service here.”¹⁶ Less than a week later, Lawton repeated his request, noting that even “under most favorable conditions the administration of the Department would be difficult and trying,” and that therefore, “only able experienced and trustworthy staff officers should be sent me. It would be worse than folly to select them from the command now with me if untried officers of the volunteer staff.”¹⁷ Because the health of the U.S. Army and the occupation of Santiago were two of the War Department’s highest priorities, Corbin allowed Lawton to select the best officers from the 5th Corps to remain as his staff, urging him to “ask for anything you need it will be given you.”¹⁸ Corbin immediately assigned the most senior staff officers currently in Santiago de Cuba to Lawton’s staff until permanent replacements were found.¹⁹ Corbin’s sensible solution allowed Lawton and his staff to administer the Department of Santiago effectively.

Although key staff officers continued to come and go from the Department of Santiago throughout the initial occupation, by October 4, most of the permanent officers had arrived. In almost every case these officers had years of experience serving at isolated posts on the American frontier. Lieutenant Colonel John H. Beacom, a West Point graduate from the class of

¹⁶ Lawton to Corbin, August 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 1.

¹⁷ Lawton to Corbin, August 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 33.

¹⁸ Corbin to Lawton, August 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 162.

¹⁹ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 3, August 25, 1898.

1882 who commanded a company of Native American soldiers in the Dakotas and accompanied the British expedition to the Sudan as an observer, took over as the Adjutant General of the department.²⁰ His capable assistant, Captain R. G. Mendoza, was a volunteer who spoke Spanish fluently and was born in Cuba.²¹ Chief Ordnance Officer Lieutenant Colonel Henry D. Borup graduated from West Point in 1876 and served in the 2nd Artillery at Fort Reno in Indian Territory. After subsequent frontier duty based in San Antonio, Borup passed the Ordnance Examining Board in 1879.²² On 19 September, Major George T. Bartlett, commissioned in 1881 from West Point as an artillery officer, arrived in Santiago de Cuba to relieve the exhausted Lieutenant Colonel H. B. Osgood as Chief Commissary of Subsistence.²³

Similarly, on October 3, Corbin replaced Lieutenant Colonel J. W. Jacobs, who as a lieutenant served as a quartermaster in Brigadier General John Gibbon's Montana Column during the 1876 Sioux campaign, with Major John T. Knight as the Santiago Department's Chief Quartermaster.²⁴ Corbin allowed Lawton to keep as his chief surgeon Lieutenant Colonel Valery Havard, a graduate of New York University's medical school. In 1871 Havard joined the U.S. Army as an acting assistant surgeon. Before landing at Siboney with Shafter's invasion force, he accompanied expeditions to fight the Sioux and Nez Perce and explore western Texas. Other new staff officers included Lieutenant Colonel Charles H. Ribbel as Judge Advocate, Major

²⁰ Obituary, *New York Evening Post*, September 23, 1916.

²¹ Fitzhugh Lee, *Cuba's Struggle Against Spain with the Causes of American Intervention and a Full Account of the Spanish-American War, Including Final Peace Negotiations* (New York: The American historical press, 1899), 400.

²² Obituary notice in Annual Report, Association of Graduates, 1916, United States Military Academy.

²³ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 7, September 19, 1898.

²⁴ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 11, October 3, 1898. John S. Gray, *Custer's Last Campaign: Mitch Boyer and the Little Bighorn Reconstructed* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 138.

Robert S. Smith as Chief Paymaster, Charles G. Starr as Inspector General, and Jasper E. Brady Jr., as Chief Signal Officer.²⁵

As Lawton's staff evolved into an efficient administrative organization, he suddenly left—ostensibly due to illness. This story appeared plausible to the American public, given the high rate of disease among American soldiers in Cuba; however, the only sickness this popular general suffered was from alcoholism. In late September, Lawton went on a weeklong drinking binge and, in the process, ransacked a bar and assaulted the police chief in Santiago de Cuba. A reporter for the pro-administration *New York Evening Sun* sent the story of Lawton's abuses to his editor, William Laffan, who did not publish it and confidentially notified President McKinley. Laffan's loyalty earned McKinley's lasting gratitude. Hardly needing another scandal in Santiago, McKinley relieved Lawton by giving him a "confidential leave of absence on account of sickness, for sixty days."²⁶ He replaced Lawton with his former personal doctor, Brigadier General Leonard Wood.²⁷ On October 7, Corbin notified Wood that "during the absence of General Lawton, on sick leave, you are by direction of the President assigned to the command of the Department of Santiago."²⁸ Three days later, Wood assumed command, and Lawton left for Washington to recover not from illness, but from a tarnished reputation.²⁹

During his brief tenure, Lawton did much to bring order and stability to the Department of Santiago. He repaired the fractured relationship with the U.S. Army and the Cuban generals,

²⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 12, October 4 1898.

²⁶ Corbin to Lawton, October 7, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1832.

²⁷ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 64-65.

²⁸ Corbin to Wood, October 7, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁹ Corbin to Lawton, October 7, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1834. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 1.

becoming close with Calixto García. He supervised the successful withdrawal of the 5th Corps and the Spanish prisoners, and set the foundation for the reestablishment of civil government. The Spanish merchant Antonio Battles spoke for many of his peers and high-ranking officials when he wrote to Lawton that the Spanish element lamented his departure “because we looked to you as a worthy governor, a true friend, a lover of peace and good order, and a firm protector of the working class.”³⁰ Word spread as far away as Havana of the Cubans’ satisfaction with Lawton’s military administration of Santiago.³¹ While Lawton strictly adhered to the President’s guidance, asserted his control over the department, and maintained order, he simply could not control his excessive drinking.

Lawton’s replacement, Wood, owed his new position to high energy, good fortune, and, perhaps most importantly, his ruthless pursuit of promotion through carefully cultivated political relationships. After graduating from Harvard Medical School in 1884, Wood joined the Army as a surgeon and spent his first decade on the western frontier. Soon after his arrival, Wood earned the Medal of Honor for bravery during an expedition with his first commander, then Captain Henry W. Lawton, chasing Geronimo. However, on at least one instance during the pursuit, on August 22, 1886, in Fronteras, Sonora, Wood had to cover for Lawton when he was too intoxicated to perform his duties.³² In 1895, after using his influence to get to Washington, the young surgeon attended to President Cleveland and cabinet members before becoming the personal physician for the new president’s invalid wife, Ida Saxton McKinley. While in Washington, Wood formed close relationships with territorial expansionists, such as Senator

³⁰ Battles to Lawton, October 19, 1898, Folder 2, Box 5, The Papers of Henry W. Lawton, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³¹ “De Hoy, Santiago de Cuba,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, August 30, 1898.

³² Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 207.

Henry Cabot Lodge and publisher Whitelaw Reid. His closest and most important friendship, however, was with Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt. During long hikes and hunting trips, the two became close friends, and Wood soon embraced Roosevelt's expansionist ideas. When war with Spain broke out in 1898, Roosevelt and Wood used their close relationship with Alger and Lodge to maneuver Wood into the command of the 1st Volunteer Cavalry, known as the Rough Riders. Roosevelt became the lieutenant colonel of the regiment. In Cuba the Rough Riders were under the command of Brigadier General Samuel B. M. Young, who fell ill with malarial fever after the fight at Las Guásimas. Wood took command of the brigade, moving Roosevelt into command of the 1st Volunteer Cavalry in time for the fight on San Juan and Kettle Hill.³³

Three days after the Spanish surrender, Shafter needed someone to administer the city of Santiago de Cuba. With approximately a hundred civilians dying every day from disease and starvation, Wood, a proven leader and still technically an Army surgeon, seemed the natural choice to sanitize the city and restore order. Also, unlike many of the other senior regulars officers in Santiago, who despised Shafter, Wood kept his criticisms of Shafter private.³⁴

Wood's rapid promotion to Brigadier General of Volunteers and appointment as commander of Santiago de Cuba angered these same long-serving regulars and West Point graduates who despised Shafter for his obesity, mismanagement of the campaign, and membership in the anti-West Point clique of Civil War volunteer generals. These regular officers who had waited years, if not decades, for promotions based on seniority detested Wood's rapid promotion, which they rightly credited to his political connections. First Lieutenant J. H. Reeves,

³³ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 23, 26-28, 47.

³⁴ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 55-56.

who as General Samuel B. M. Young's aid-de-camp, kept a journal for the general at his request and who worked closely with Wood during the Santiago campaign, best described Young's and other senior regular officers' sentiments towards the upstart Wood. Reeves wrote that "Wood is in a certain way a good man, extremely energetic and all that, but he is now beyond his proper limit and talks a great deal and does nothing."³⁵

Wood continued to use his political connections to advance his cause once he assumed command of the Department of Santiago. He maintained a regular correspondence with Alger, Roosevelt, and Lodge. All three assured Wood that they praised him in front of the President and showed McKinley the general's letters.³⁶ Wood also served an important purpose for his powerful political patrons. For instance, Lodge wrote to Wood about how he invoked Wood's success in Santiago in his campaign speeches. Lodge attributed Wood's popularity as a major contributing factor in bringing about the "great Republican victory, something very remarkable for a midyear" election, including the election of Wood's friend Roosevelt as the governor of New York and a fifteen-seat majority in the U.S. Senate.³⁷ As long as Wood maintained order and control over the Department of Santiago, garnering popular support for the Republican administration, his friends in Washington would continue to reward him with further promotions and higher positions. All Wood had to do was concentrate on controlling and bringing order to the province.

³⁵ Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, Entry from July 31, 1898, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

³⁶ Alger to Wood, November 18, 1898, and Lodge to Wood, September 28, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Also, Roosevelt to Wood, October 8, 1898, Container 27, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

³⁷ Lodge to Wood, November 11, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Bringing Order to Santiago de Cuba and Ending the State of War

Four days after the Spanish surrender, General Young's aid, Reeves, commented on the utter chaos in the city of Santiago de Cuba. Thousands of sick and starving refugees returned to the city, and an uneasy peace existed between the fearful Spanish, the cautious Americans, and the eager Cubans. Reeves warned that more soldiers were required to ensure order in the city.³⁸ By July 23, Reeves noted in his diary that the city was "orderly considering the conditions and business [was] resuming" with the increased presence of U.S. soldiers. However, he urged that the U.S. Army "must occupy the territory we have conquered and not leave it in absolute chaos, and this can only be done by our soldiers."³⁹

Reeves's sentiments on the method required to bring order to the chaotic situation matched both those of the senior commanders on the ground in Santiago and the decision-makers in the War Department. The Department's preferred strategy for controlling local populations and enforcing U.S. policies on the American frontier had long been to establish garrisons, and the U.S. Army did not deviate from its institutional methods in Santiago. When Corbin asked Shafter how many troops would be required to maintain order in the province, Shafter replied that "a battalion of four companies is sufficient for any" town, "except Santiago. The presence of troops will be sufficient to preserve order."⁴⁰ Shafter justified his relatively "small estimate" by

³⁸ Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, Entry from July 21, 1898, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

³⁹ Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, Entry from July 23 and 26, 1898, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴⁰ Shafter to Adjutant-General, August 4, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 204. See also, Shafter to Corbin, August 4, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

explaining that “all the [Spanish] guerrillas are disarmed, and the only fear that the people apprehend is from the [Cuban] insurgents, and they (the insurgents) assure me that they will not interfere with any of them, though in many cases this promise will not be kept from inability to control the men.”⁴¹ Clearly, the only serious threat that concerned Shafter was from Cuban soldiers challenging his authority. As long as the “insurgent” leaders controlled their men, or as long as the Cuban soldiers feared the strength of the U.S. Army, Shafter expected that the mere threat of force alone would be sufficient to maintain order in the province, enforce U.S. policy, and keep the peace between the Spanish loyalists in Cuba and their bitter Cuban enemies.

Reeves chastised those officers who were so eager to leave and who did not realize the difficulty of occupying the province and the “size of the job we have on our hands.”⁴² The exhausted 5th Corps, as is so often the case with armies after the fighting ends, showed little interest in the work of administering the recently surrendered province. The War Department understood that, given the mental and physical condition of the soldiers and officers of the 5th Corps, they could not be expected to garrison the province. Because the 5th Corps suffered extensively from malaria and yellow fever, the War Department issued orders for five of the ten “immune” regiments to relieve the 5th Corps. On May 10, 1898, at the request of the War Department, Congress authorized the enlistment of 10,000 soldiers, whose prior exposure to tropical diseases allegedly made them immune to reinfection. These newly recruited soldiers were to be mustered into ten regiments of United States Volunteer Infantry, U.S.V.I., or more

⁴¹ Parenthesis in original quotation, see Shafter to Adjutant-General, August 4, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 204. See also, Shafter to Corbin, August 4, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁴² Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, Entry from July 26, 1898, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

commonly known as immunes.⁴³ The 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 9th Immune Regiments arrived in August 1898 to replace the 5th Corps. The 4th U.S.V.I. did not arrive until October 12. The 9th U.S.V.I. differed from the other immune regiments sent to Santiago because it consisted of black soldiers and lieutenants with white senior officers, whereas all of the members of the other immune regiments were white. In addition to the five immune regiments, the War Department, under pressure from black Republican constituents, ordered the 8th Illinois Infantry and 23rd Kansas Infantry to Santiago. African Americans completely manned and led these Regiments, and the War Department incorrectly hoped that these black soldiers would resist the diseases in the tropical climate better than their predecessors had.⁴⁴

After the first two immune regiments to arrive showed ill discipline in Santiago de Cuba, the embarrassed Shafter requested the War Department send Lawton at least one regiment of regulars to garrison the city. The War Department, eager to avoid additional negative press, dispatched two battalions from the 5th U.S. Infantry, not to be confused with the immunes of the 5th U.S.V.I.⁴⁵ The War Department hoped that seven of the eight regiments chosen to garrison the Province of Santiago would have at least some immunity to tropical diseases. Based on the two partially correct notions in the late-nineteenth century medical community that African Americans were resistant to malaria and other fevers and that people in the southeastern United States who had previously suffered from tropical fevers were immune to reinfection, Corbin picked the units he thought best suited to relieve the 5th Corps.

⁴³ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 127.

⁴⁴ National Archives; Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood*, U.S. Volunteers, *Commanding Department of Santiago*, 1899, 20.

⁴⁵ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 17, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 236.

On arriving in Santiago de Cuba, these replacement regiments took over responsibility for maintaining order in the city and guarding the Spanish prisoners. Colonel Duncan N. Hood's 2nd U.S.V.I. arrived first in Santiago de Cuba on August 2. Hood, the son of the Confederate General John B. Hood, recruited his regiments of immunes out of Louisiana and eastern Texas.⁴⁶ After disembarking, the 2nd Immunes marched to the Parque Alameda promenade next to the Santiago de Cuba's docks.⁴⁷ There, it replaced the 9th U.S. Infantry, patrolling the city center "in the preservation of order and protection of life and property."⁴⁸ Colonel H. H. Sargent's 5th Immunes arrived next on August 12. Wood, now in command of the two replacement regiments in the city, ordered the 5th U.S.V.I. to act "in conjunction with the 2nd U.S. Volunteer Infantry in preserving order during the withdrawal of the 5th Army Corps."⁴⁹ A notable moment occurred on August 18 when the 8th Illinois Infantry landed in Santiago de Cuba. For the first time in American history, a regiment completely manned and officered by African Americans deployed overseas. On arrival, the 8th Illinois's Colonel John R. Marshall received written guidance that his duties were to "preserve the peace, maintain order, and protect lives and property of individuals."⁵⁰

⁴⁶ Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 257-265. "Una guarnición immune," *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, July 29, 1898.

⁴⁷ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 49.

⁴⁸ Quote from National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 1. Replacement of 9th IN from Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, Entry from August 2, 1898, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴⁹ Quote from National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 1. 5th and 2nd Immunes assigned to Wood see Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 8, August 25, 1898.

⁵⁰ Roach to Commanding Officer, 8th Illinois Volunteers, August 18, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 15.

Some of the lives they had to protect were the former *guerilleros*, members of the militia loyal to Spain. The *guerilleros* waged an especially unrestrained war against the Cuban Liberation Army and both sides committed many atrocities against one another. After the war, a despised *guerillero* leader named Carvajal returned to Santiago from Spain, where he fled after the Spanish surrender. But when he landed on the docks a crowd of angry Cubans gathered around him and threatened to kill him. To save himself from lynching, Carvajal ran to a building guarded by American soldiers. The soldiers escorted him back to the ship he arrived on, and “advised him to effect a landing in some other safer place.”⁵¹ Another former *guerillero* named Francisco Castellanos Casanovas tried to return to Santiago de Cuba later that afternoon. Again U.S. Army soldiers had to save him from a mob of angry Cubans. The soldiers placed him in the city’s prison for his own protection until they could escort him to safety. The U.S. Army soldiers strictly followed McKinley guidance to maintain order and protect the lives of all individuals, regardless of who they had fought for during the war.⁵²

While the first three regiments to arrive maintained order in Santiago de Cuba, the next two regiments of immunes to arrive relieved the regiments guarding the Spanish prisoners, secured the abandoned camps of the 5th Corps, and guarded the supplies that were strewn across the deserted battlefield.⁵³ These two immune regiments consisted of Colonel Patrick H. Ray’s 3rd U.S.V.I., recruited from Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida, and Colonel J. Crane’s 9th U.S.V.I. of African American soldiers and lieutenants.⁵⁴ Both regimental commanders had

⁵¹ “Local,” *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Havana, December 28, 1898.

⁵² “Local,” *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Havana, December 28, 1898.

⁵³ Mendoza to Commanding Officer, 3rd U.S. Vols., National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 30.

⁵⁴ For 3rd U.S.V.I. see The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. For

fought extensively in the Indian Wars. Ray maintained the peace and represented U.S. authority in the Alaskan Territory, while Crane did the same on the Mexican border and with disgruntled Mormon settlers in Utah.⁵⁵ The 3rd U.S.V.I. also sent a company to Siboney, the site of the first U.S. landings in June to relieve the 24th U.S. Infantry that was still working at the Yellow Fever Hospital and guarding the large stores still sitting on the landing beach.⁵⁶ At the end of August, the two battalions of regulars from the 5th Infantry arrived, but Lawton quarantined the battalions because some of the soldiers reportedly had yellow fever.⁵⁷ After their quarantine, these more disciplined regulars replaced the unruly 2nd U.S.V.I. in garrisoning Santiago de Cuba.⁵⁸

In early August, as the first replacement regiments arrived and the 5th Corps began to depart for Montauk Point, the United States and Spain had yet to sign an armistice. Most of the members of the 5th Corps believed that after spending the remainder of the summer recuperating at Camp Wikoff they would return to Cuba in the dry season and seize Havana.⁵⁹ This all changed when news arrived on August 12 that the President had signed the Peace Protocol between Spain and the United States, ending hostilities until a peace commission from the two countries could meet in Paris to negotiate the full details. The War Department immediately forwarded the text of the protocol and expected the generals in Santiago to begin implementing the agreement, yet the generals received no specific guidance on how to do so. The agreement

⁹th U.S.V.I. see Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 257-275.

⁵⁵ Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 70-236.

⁵⁶ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 1, August 17, 1898.

⁵⁷ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 2.

⁵⁸ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 24, September 13, 1898.

⁵⁹ Matthew Steele to Wife, August 5, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, 1898, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

made it clear to Shafter and Lawton that Spain was to “relinquish all claim of sovereignty over and title to Cuba.”⁶⁰ These generals and the War Department also understood that the Teller Amendment, which was added to the joint resolution of Congress for declaring war on Spain, ensured Cuban independence after pacification of the island. But the commanders did not receive any specific plan from the McKinley administration for when, how, or even if this transfer to Cuban sovereignty would take place. Only the sixth clause of the protocol, which immediately suspended hostilities, gave the commanders in Santiago a clear directive to enforce.⁶¹

Lawton immediately took calculated steps and used symbolic gestures to signal the end of hostilities in the Department of Santiago. For example, on August 24 he noted that “as the state or condition of war no longer exists, and as there is no armed enemy in this vicinity, the necessity of carrying arms as a measure of self-protection has passed away.”⁶² Furthermore, he ordered that no soldiers could carry weapons unless on official duty, and even sentries could not carry loaded weapons unless an officer deemed it necessary.⁶³ Lawton clearly sought to create a climate of stability and peace, rather than one of war or hostile occupation. His purpose is evident in Lawton’s September 2 order to Wood to remove all the sentries he had placed on the street corners in Santiago, writing that they could only guard public property.⁶⁴ On the same day, Lawton ordered Crane, commander of the 9th Immunes, to investigate a report that a detail of his soldiers confiscated a machete from a Cuban laborer. If the charges of an unlawful seizure were

⁶⁰ Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 222.

⁶¹ Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 221-222.

⁶² Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 2, August 24, 1898.

⁶³ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 2, August 24, 1898.

⁶⁴ Starr to Wood, September 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 145.

true, Lawton insisted that Crane prefer charges “against each and all of them.”⁶⁵ Lawton, a professional officer for more than thirty-five years, strictly adhered to McKinley’s instructions to end the state of hostilities by making it illegal for soldiers to confiscate personal weapons or property.⁶⁶

Besides removing visible signs of war and occupation, Lawton knew from experience that one key way to prevent disorder in the department was to keep armed people of any nationality out of the cities and towns so the local police and sentries could maintain law and order without armed opposition. The largest threat to order and stability in Santiago de Cuba after the Spanish surrender came not from the Cubans or Spanish, but from the ill disciplined and recently arrived men in the 2nd Immunes who became inebriated and indiscriminately fired their weapons in the city. These acts “mortified and embarrassed” Lawton and forced him to use “every possible lawful means ... to maintain order” by confining those responsible.⁶⁷ It is no coincidence that Lawton enacted his ban on U.S. soldiers carrying arms in the city only days after the incident with the 2nd Immunes.

Drunken off-duty U.S. soldiers were not the only armed group that Lawton targeted with his August 24 order. His order also confirmed Shafter’s contentious decision of July 14, which prevented the Cuban soldiers, who had carried the entire burden of fighting the Spanish for three

⁶⁵ Starr to Crane, September 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 165.

⁶⁶ William McKinley to The Secretary of War, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 160-162. Also see 221-222.

⁶⁷ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 17, 1898, and H. W. Lawton to Adjutant-General, August 21, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 236 and 247. Also, Lawton to Adjutant General, August 21, 1898, National Archive, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 34.

years before the arrival of the U.S. Army, from entering the city armed, participating in the surrender ceremonies, or administering the city. Calixto García fumed when he learned of the Spanish army's surrender only through "public rumor," and he resented Shafter's decision to leave in office "the very same Spanish authorities against which [he had] fought three years as enemies of the independence of Cuba."⁶⁸ He dismissed as absurd Shafter's argument that he could not allow García's forces to enter Santiago over fears of reprisals against the Spanish and their sympathizers, arguing that his men "are not savage people that are not aware of the principles of civilized war."⁶⁹ Insulted, García marched his 5,000 Cuban soldiers north of the city, and offered his resignation to General Máximo Gómez. Cuban residents in Santiago gathered to protest Shafter's decision to keep the Cuban Liberation Army from entering the city.⁷⁰ Shafter's, and later Lawton's decision to keep armed Cuban soldiers out of the towns controlled by the U.S. Army, thereby denying them local self-determination after three years of fighting, creating lasting animosity.⁷¹

Why did the uncompromising Shafter and the more diplomatic Lawton choose to alienate their Cuban allies? They acted in response to President McKinley's specific guidance and an obsession with order and stability deeply imbedded within the U.S. Army's institutional culture.

⁶⁸ "La Carta Del General Calixto Garcia," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Santiago de Cuba, August 1, 1898. Translated by author.

⁶⁹ "La Carta Del General Calixto Garcia," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Santiago de Cuba, August 1, 1898. Translated by author. Also see "El disgust de Calixto Garcia," *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, July 30, 1898.

⁷⁰ "Extranjeros de Ayer," *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, July 26, 1898.

⁷¹ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 33. Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:367-72. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983) 208-210. "La Carta Del General Calixto Garcia," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Santiago de Cuba, August 1, 1898. Translated by author. "Los Primeros rozamientos," *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, July 29, 1898.

The day after the Spanish surrender the President proclaimed the Province of Santiago as “conquered territory” and the “powers of the military occupation are absolute and supreme and immediately operate on the political condition of the inhabitants.” He then declared “severance of the former political relations of the inhabitants and the establishment of a new political power.” Additionally, the President made clear that the U.S. Army’s primary mission was to protect the rights and property of all the inhabitants of Cuba, including the wealthy Spanish merchants and European and American plantation owners who feared retaliatory attacks after three years of bitter war. Finally, McKinley ordered that the “municipal laws...judges, and constabulary” [remain] in force.”⁷² The President’s clear mandate combined with the fact that the President and the War Department consciously denied the Cuban Liberation Army or the Cuban provisional government anything resembling formal recognition gave Shafter and then Lawton no other choice but to exclude armed members of the Cuban Liberation Army from entering Santiago de Cuba, and to use the preexisting municipal government and their own forces to maintain order and administer the city.

Falling back on his upbringing as a lawyer, McKinley based his detailed instructions to his commanders within the accepted norms of international law, especially the right of conquest. There was almost universal consensus among Western legal scholars of the nineteenth century that any state that captured and held territory through military means had sovereignty over it and the inhabitants living there once the opposing state ceases trying to recapture the territory. The right of conquest in Western tradition probably originated in the Middle Ages, when war between two opponents who both believed they had legal title to land was the norm, and war

⁷² William McKinley to The Secretary of War, July 18, 1898 Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 160-161.

served as a judicial procedure where God determined who had legal claim by ordaining their victory. After the Treaty of Westphalia Europeans saw war as a legitimate and legal means of settling disputes over land and advancing national interests. Enlightenment thinkers later justified the right of conquest by arguing that it limited the duration of wars, it created international stability, and there was no international body to adjudicate differences between countries. While Western states in the 1890s agreed that conquest provided legal title to captured territory, they did not go far as to believe that it meant the conqueror had rightful possession or a just cause.⁷³ Therefore, McKinley believed that by defeating Spain in Santiago and by occupying eastern Cuba international law gave the United States legal sovereignty over the territory. The United States legal title to Cuba by right of conquest could only be challenged by a recognized Cuban state under international law; therefore, it was imperative that McKinley and the War Department did not recognize the existence of the Cuban revolutionary government or the Cuban Liberation Army. If the United States did acknowledge their existence, the Cuban revolutionaries could also claim legitimate title over Cuba by right of conquest.

In addition to legal maneuvering, the military administration also made symbolic gestures to mark the severance of Spanish authority and the “establishment of a new political power.” Symbols representing the Spanish monarchy were removed from official documents and from the facades of the building.⁷⁴ For example, Wood ordered the Spanish coat of arms that adorned the governor’s palace and other public buildings in Santiago to be taken down and replaced with

⁷³ Henry Wheaton, *Elements of International Law*, 8th ed., ed. Richard Henry Dana (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1866), 165-66. Sharon Korman, *The Right of Conquest: The Acquisition of Territory by Force in International Law and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 8-29, 80-93, 100-131.

⁷⁴ Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 13-14.

the shield of the United States.⁷⁵ Earlier, to signify the new political order, Lawton ordered the U.S. flag flown at all “buildings occupied for official purpose, either military, civil or municipal, throughout the department.”⁷⁶ Conscious of McKinley’s order “not to make war on the inhabitants of Cuba, nor upon any faction of them, but to protect their personal...rights,” Lawton did not consider removing the Cuban flags that adorned most private residences and nongovernmental buildings, such as private clubs in Santiago de Cuba.⁷⁷

Besides installing symbols of Cuban national identity, or *Cubanía*, the Cubans also sought to celebrate significant days in Cuban history. In October 1898, more than 10,000 Cubans gathered in Santiago de Cuba’s central plaza to commemorate the “Grito de Yara,” which marked the moment when Carlos Manuel de Céspedes first declared Cuban independence in the town of Yara in Santiago Province, starting the Ten Years’ War (1868-1878). Despite the fact that Wood prohibited the Cubans’ petition to hold their first large-scale celebration of a Cuban national hero, the Cubans held the celebration anyway.⁷⁸ Instead of suppressing the Cubans first act of national agency, Wood took steps to control it. He permitted the Cubans to give several speeches from the “portico of the San Carlos Club,” so long as they spoke glowingly of the

⁷⁵ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁷⁶ Starr, August 25, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 49.

⁷⁷ William McKinley to The Secretary of War, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 161. And for the Flying of Cuban flag on Nongovernmental locations see Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 13.

⁷⁸ Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 45.

American administration.⁷⁹ In one speech, General Calixto García, “cautioned the people not to be led astray by demagogues, and declared that the Americans meant to guarantee a stable government in Cuba, to restore industry, and to protect lives and property.”⁸⁰ To prevent disorder and dissention, Wood placed companies of the 5th Regulars and the 5th Immunes in view of the celebration. He used these troops to clear a group of anti-American Cuban soldiers from a drinking establishment where they were “indulging in incendiary talk.”⁸¹ The American soldiers removed the Cuban dissenters without major incident, because Wood maintained his monopoly of military force within the city by continuing to prohibit Cuban soldiers from carrying arms in the city, even during the large parade of Cuban Clubs and soldiers that took place on October 17.

While Wood maintained the force necessary to preserve order in the city of Santiago de Cuba and could demonstrate U.S. supremacy by placing symbols on public buildings, the McKinley administration’s strict guidance to preserve individual rights prevented him from suppressing the peaceful march of the Cuban clubs and soldiers or the decorating of the streets and private establishments with Cuban flags and nationalistic decorations.⁸² Shafter, Lawton, and Wood never received explicit guidance from McKinley or the War Department on the long-term U.S. policy towards Cuba during the initial occupation, probably because the politically cautious

⁷⁹ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁸⁰ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁸¹ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁸² The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

and pragmatic President was still measuring Cuban and American public opinion before taking any definitive action. Nonetheless, his short-term guidance to his commanders was clear: they were to maintain order, protect individual and property rights, establish the rule of law, and end the state of war in the department. As long as the Cuban Liberation Army remained mobilized, however, the series of department commanders could not guarantee long-term stability or uncontested American supremacy in Santiago.

Neutralizing the Cuban “Insurgents”

American supremacy in the Department of Santiago depended on the Cuban Liberation Army’s acquiescence to U.S. authority. Cuban soldiers could have fought the occupying U.S. Army for immediate control of their affairs and made the occupation of eastern Cuba as untenable as it had been for the Spanish army, but there was little reason for the Cubans to resist the U.S. initial occupation in 1898. Exhausted, starving, and desperate to end the last in a series of three bloody wars of independence from Spain, the Cubans knew that the Teller Amendment guaranteed their independence. And in 1898, the Cubans still believed that the United States would honor its commitment to Cuban independence and leave quickly. Similarly, the Spanish merchants and foreign landholders had no reason to resist the American occupation because it guaranteed the protection of their property and the maintenance or order necessary to resume economic activity. The American soldiers, officers, and press understood within months of occupying Santiago that the majority of Cubans were “in favor of the immediate evacuation of

the island by the Americans and the establishment of a Cuban republic.”⁸³ The War Department and the American commanders in Santiago thus immediately sought to neutralize and disband the Cuban Liberation Army in order to eliminate the only threat to its ability to dictate the policy and pace of the occupation.

Outside every Spanish-occupied town and village in Eastern Cuba, soldiers of the Cuban Liberation Army, also known as *mambises*, camped just a few hundred yards away from the Spanish pickets. Fighting occasionally erupted when the Spanish columns left the protection of the fortified towns to do battle with the Cubans or to try to fight through the sieges to move to another town.⁸⁴ *Mambises* throughout Cuba waited impatiently for the Spanish soldiers to depart for Spain under the terms of the Treaty of Paris so they could establish their own municipal governments, achieving one of the major objectives of the 1895 Cuban War of Independence. But time was not on the *mambises*’ side. The Cuban Liberation Army soldiers and their families suffered severe shortages of supplies, food, and clothing. During the Cuban War of Independence, the *mambises* provided for themselves by foraging and stealing food, while their families were caught between two equally unfortunate options: either face disease and possible starvation as *reconcentrados* in Spanish concentration camps or risk the same possible fate hiding out in the countryside from often-vengeful Spanish patrols. With the cessation of hostilities, Cuban soldiers and their families eagerly awaited the opportunity to return to their communities and assert their claim to local governance. Wealthier Spanish merchants and shop owners in the towns and villages, however, feared reprisals and chaos, which they assumed

⁸³ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁸⁴ “Los sucesos del día, Oficiales de hoy, Manzanillo,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, August 4, 1898. “Lo de Manzanillo, Oficial, de Anoche,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, August 6, 1898.

would ensue if the Cubans dictated the terms of the new municipal governments. The U.S. Army sought to maintain peace between these two factions, as well as to ally with the members of each party who shared similar political views with the McKinley's administration.

Throughout the initial occupation, the relationship between the U.S. Army and the Cuban Liberation Army ranged from friendly to extremely tense. To alleviate hostile feelings, the American commanders worked with conservative Cuban army officers to convince them to disarm and disband their formations of soldiers. In return for their cooperation, the Americans offered these Cuban officers lucrative positions in local government and gave their disbanded soldiers rations and public works jobs. Wood succinctly summarized his policy toward the Cuban Liberation Army in a letter to the President at the end of the initial occupation. His simple plan to deal with the *mambises* was "getting them to disband, getting them to work, and impressing upon them the necessity of recognizing the absolute authority of civil law."⁸⁵

Disarming potentially hostile forces by coercion or by the denial of resources had been one of the primary missions of the Regulars during reconstruction and on the American frontier, which if not done carefully could lead to bloodshed, as at Wounded Knee Creek. Threatening to use force also worked well to break-up strikers, remove white settlers from Indian lands, and reopen railroads during the Pullman Strike of 1894.⁸⁶ Offering food was another effective weapon in the U.S. Army's arsenal to compel Indians to return to reservations or accept peace

⁸⁵ Wood to McKinley, November 27, 1898, Container 27, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁸⁶ Mark L. Bradley, *Bluecoats and Tar Heels: Soldiers and Civilians in Reconstruction North Carolina* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011), 29-32. Paul H. Carlson, "Pecos Bill:" *A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 155. Charles J. Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 143-44, 169, 205-6. Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 178, 196-97, 204-212, 260. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 266. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 49-50, 167, 193-5.

offers on the trans-Mississippi West.⁸⁷ In the Sioux campaign, the U.S. Congress compelled members of the Northern Cheyenne to return to their Missouri River reservations and sign the Black Hills treaty by delivering the rations they appropriated for the Cheyenne to survive the winter to the Missouri reservations.⁸⁸ The denial of rations convinced many Sioux to give up the Ghost Dance before Miles's Army arrived to quell the rebellion.⁸⁹ During the 35-year-long war against the Apaches, the U.S. Army repeatedly coerced Apache raiders to return to reservations in Arizona and New Mexico by offering them rations.⁹⁰

In the immediate days and weeks following the Spanish surrender of the city of Santiago de Cuba, the U.S. Army acted cautiously toward the Cuban “insurgents,” as the Americans called them, and for good reason: it respected the Cuban Liberation Army's military capabilities. For three years, Cuban armies controlled most of eastern Cuba. They kept the Spanish forces confined to fortified towns and cities and restricted their inland movements. While the Cuban Liberation Army rarely took and held any important population center or defeated a large Spanish field Army, the *mambises* excelled in guerrilla tactics. Their ambushes and raids prevented the Spanish from dispersing sufficient troops to control the smaller towns and from moving units or supplies through the countryside except when marching with overwhelming force or along a few fortified lines of communications known as *trochas*.

⁸⁷ Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1984), 282, 285, 361, and 406. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 49-50, 77, 130, 167, 193-5.

⁸⁸ Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1984), 272, 281-282.

⁸⁹ Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 94, 102, 138, 147, 178,.

⁹⁰ Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 29-35, 101, 108. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 210.

Lawton and Wood knew that if the Cuban Liberation Army contested the U.S. occupation, they would soon confront the same dilemma that Spain had faced, and they might find themselves forced to fight a similarly costly war requiring a huge field army. At the time of the Spanish surrender, Wood estimated the Cuban Liberation Army had about 11,000 soldiers in eastern Cuba; of these, about 5,000 were in the vicinity of the city of Santiago de Cuba.⁹¹ The veteran 5th Corps, concentrated around the city, greatly outnumbered the Cuban soldiers and maintained a tremendous superiority in machine guns and artillery. Also, their Krag-Jorgenson rifles were roughly equivalent to the Spanish Mauser rifles that most Cubans carried. Once the War Department replaced the 5th Corps with volunteers, the balance shifted. Fewer than 8,000 recently mustered volunteer soldiers made up all but one of the regiments sent to garrison the Department of Santiago. With the exception of the 5th U.S. Regulars, these soldiers carried the inferior Springfield rifle and brought almost no artillery. Private Mack H. Brinkley of the 3rd Immunes remembered fearing both the Mauser, which “shot 5 times to our one,” and the Cuban three-foot long machete that was “as sharp as a razor.”⁹² With superior weaponry and numbers, and by using irregular tactics, the Cuban Liberation Army could have challenged the occupation forces for control of the Department of Santiago.

War Department officials and the commanders in Santiago did not just fear the Cuban Liberation Army’s military potential; they also worried that the desperate situation of its soldiers might force them to commit acts of violence out of pure necessity. The Chief Commissary in Santiago, Lieutenant Colonel H. B. Osgood, noted that the thousands of Cuban soldiers still

⁹¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 4.

⁹² 2nd Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Scott, Duncan N., Company G, Spanish-American War Veterans Questionnaire, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 66, Folder Number 11, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

armed in the department were “observing [the] law while their families are naked and starving. It is asking too much of human nature to expect its continuance.”⁹³ Unless the soldiers and their families received food, jobs, and farming tools, Osgood explained, the Cuban soldiers might be forced to violence. He believed that giving aid to the *mambises* was wiser in the long run than using “expensive force to repress” them.⁹⁴ The 5th Corps commander, Shafter, concurred. Observing that “there is nothing for men to do in the country” as “it has absolutely returned to its wild state,” Shafter reasoned that because the Cubans soldiers “show no disposition to disband and go to work, and until they do there will be trouble, for they have got to live, and they will have to live by robbery— there is no other way.”⁹⁵ Shafter also warned that “a dual government can’t exist here; we have got to have full sway over the Cubans... as war is no longer possible to them except with ourselves.”⁹⁶ Both Shafter and Osgood believed that the lack of employment opportunities and the devastation to the farmland inhibited Cuban soldiers from returning to work and giving up their arms. They urged the McKinley administration to formulate a specific policy for handling the Cuban Liberation Army, because the Army clearly lacked the capacity to implement American policy freely while an armed Cuban force asserted its right to dictate at least some of the policy decisions in the occupied province.

Shafter feared more than Cuban soldiers’ lack of opportunities. He also thought that Cuban generals might be scheming to challenge U.S. authority by taking control of the towns

⁹³ Osgood to Adjutant General, October 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2024.

⁹⁴ Osgood to Adjutant General, October 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2024.

⁹⁵ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 232-33.

⁹⁶ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 232-33.

outside of the city of Santiago de Cuba and then refusing to yield them to the U.S. military authorities. On August 17, he read in the local newspapers that Gómez, the commander-in-chief of the Cuban Liberation Army, and García departed for the town of Cobre, four miles from Santiago de Cuba, and issued orders for the Cuban Soldiers to meet him there. Shafter warned Corbin that “the assemblage of such a force may lead to complications of a grave character.”⁹⁷ Before he departed for Santiago, Shafter received permission from the War Department to work with “any of the insurgent forces in the area,” but Miles cautioned him not to put “too much confidence in persons outside your forces.”⁹⁸

Shafter’s racial prejudices toward the Cubans blinded him from recognizing the valuable assistance the Cuban Army provided to his forces by isolating the city and preventing it from being reinforced by other Spanish garrisons, and in scouting, providing guides, and performing other auxiliary work for the U.S. Army. Despite his racial prejudices, Shafter sincerely believed that if he did not keep the Spanish and Cubans separated a massacre might ensue. He became convinced of this after numerous conversations with both surrendering Spanish officers and wealthy Spanish-born citizens, and after receiving numerous reports concerning Cuban maltreatment of the Spanish.⁹⁹ For all these reasons, and because the War Department specifically ordered him to avoid recognizing the insurgents or any so-called Cuban government, Shafter angered the Cuban soldiers by keeping them out of the city of Santiago de Cuba. As Shafter explained, he made the Cuban soldiers “very sore because they were not permitted to

⁹⁷ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 17, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 236.

⁹⁸ Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 19.

⁹⁹ Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, Entry from July 23, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

take part in the conference leading to the capitulation and because I will not permit them to go into the city armed.”¹⁰⁰ He continued: “they expected and claim as their right to take possession of the city and control affairs.”¹⁰¹ The Cubans’ claim was justified, but given Shafter’s orders, prejudices, and fears, impossible for him to permit.

On August 14, 1898, Lawton assumed command of the Department of Santiago, and the problem of disbanding the Cuban Liberation Army without starting another insurgency became one of his biggest concerns. Only two days after taking command, he urgently sought firm policy guidance. “These people still maintain their organization, are scattered through the country in [the] vicinity of city, are threatening in their attitude, and keep the inhabitants stirred up and panicky by threats and acts of violence.”¹⁰² Only three hours later, Corbin replied that the President and Secretary of War ordered him not to tolerate hostile acts from the Cubans or anyone else. Lawton, they wrote, was “responsible for peace, and must maintain order in the territory surrendered and in your department, and must protect all persons and their property within said jurisdiction.”¹⁰³ The War Department urged Lawton to treat the “Cuban insurgents...justly and liberally,” but made it abundantly clear that “interference from any quarter will not be permitted,” and that the Cuban Liberation Army “must recognize the military

¹⁰⁰ Shafter to Adjutant-General of the Army, July 23, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 176.

¹⁰¹ Shafter to Adjutant-General of the Army, July 23, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 176.

¹⁰² H. W. Lawton to H. C. Corbin, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 231. Lawton to Corbin August 16, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 6.

¹⁰³ H. C. Corbin to Commanding General Department of Santiago, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 232.

occupation and authority of the United States and the cessation of hostilities.”¹⁰⁴ Lawton now had the authority he required to assert U.S. Army control over the Cuban Liberation Army. According to his instructions from Washington the Cuban insurgents were not an allied army, but instead were simply armed Cuban civilians.

Lawton did not act aggressively or hastily against the Cuban forces. Instead, the wise diplomat with decades of experience on the American frontier cooperated with the Cuban generals and slowly established his authority over the Cuban forces in Santiago Province. The day after he received the policy guidance, Lawton sent his aide, the Spanish-speaking Captain R. G. Mendoza, to deliver a copy of the telegraph to the local Cuban Army commander, General Demetrio Castillo Duany. The War Department’s policy might have inflamed tensions between the two sides, but the language in Lawton’s cover letter was conciliatory and humble.¹⁰⁵ Rather than assert supremacy of the U.S. Army over Cuban internal affairs and its armed forces, as the administration directed, Lawton asked to meet Castillo so they could “work together and in harmony for the mutual interest of Cuba and the United States.”¹⁰⁶ Lawton also sought Castillo’s advice on local affairs and added that if Castillo needed anything from him “personally or otherwise” to “please command me.”¹⁰⁷ Lawton’s effort to include the Cuban officers in his

¹⁰⁴ H. C. Corbin to Commanding General Department of Santiago, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 232. Corbin to Commanding General Department of Santiago, August 16, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 21. Corbin to Commanding General Department of Santiago, August 16, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 9.

¹⁰⁵ Lawton to Castillo, August 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 16.

¹⁰⁶ Lawton to Castillo, August 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 16.

¹⁰⁷ Lawton to Castillo, August 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 16.

administration and his friendly attitude enabled him to diffuse some of the tension between the Cuban and American armies.

Besides using diplomacy, Lawton also capitalized on the Cuban Liberation Army's desperate need for food and basic supplies to compel the *mambises* to disarm and return to civilian pursuits. On September 3, Lawton received a note from Cuban Lieutenant Colonel M. Belanzo desperately requesting food for Cuban soldiers in the towns of Dos Caminos and El Cobre. Because Army regulations prevented anyone from giving away government property, including food, without approval from the War Department, Lawton asked Corbin for permission to distribute rations to these "insurgents, called Cuban Army."¹⁰⁸ Lawton had appealed to the War Department in a similar situation twenty years earlier, when he advocated for the distribution of government rations to the starving Northern Cheyenne under his charge.¹⁰⁹ In Santiago, Lawton placed some of the blame for the Cuban soldiers' destitution squarely on their very existence as a concentrated military organization, telling Corbin that the Cuban soldiers "could soon, if disbanded secure work and become self supporting."¹¹⁰ Additionally, Lawton blamed the Cuban soldiers for stifling local economic recovery, because local planters "hesitate to reclaim their farms, fearing loss from pilfering of their crops by these bands."¹¹¹ While Lawton waited for McKinley and Alger to return to Washington from vacation, he sent a return

¹⁰⁸ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 174. Lawton to Adjutant General, September 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 381.

¹⁰⁹ Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1971), 333-36.

¹¹⁰ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 174. Lawton to Adjutant General, September 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 381.

¹¹¹ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 174. Lawton to Adjutant General, September 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 381.

note to Belanzo kindly asking how many rations he required.¹¹² On McKinley's return, Corbin reconfirmed that according to congressional law "no subsistence...will be issued to any armed troops other than the United States."¹¹³ With the President confirming Lawton's preferred policy, the general politely informed the Cubans that because the "war is practically over and further resort to arms cannot be contemplated," he endorsed an early disbanding of the forces, "that they may return to their plantations and other civil avocations."¹¹⁴ Not wanting to seem unsympathetic or brash, Lawton sent Belanzo the necessary rations, but insisted that he did not have the authority to do so again.¹¹⁵ Additionally, Lawton promised to help the Cuban soldiers after they disbanded "by the issue of rations to them individually until they can secure employment or mature a crop on their plantations."¹¹⁶ Lawton's strategy worked. He successfully appealed to the War Department for a policy that forced the Cuban Liberation Army to disband. Then, in dealing with the Cuban officers in his vicinity, he acted as if the McKinley administration's policy had tied his hands while treating the Cuban officers cordially and still giving them a few necessary supplies, seeking their counsel, and promising to aid the *mambises* after they disbanded.

The U.S. Army soon began employing these tactics across the Department of Santiago. On September 9, Circular Number 3, stated "No subsistence or other stores will be issued to any armed troops other than that of the United States, the law providing that issues be made only to

¹¹² Mendoza to Belanzo, September 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 177. On awaiting the President and Secretary of War's return Corbin to Commanding General Santiago, September 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 405.

¹¹³ Corbin to Commanding General Santiago, September 9, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 846.

¹¹⁴ Lawton to Belanzo, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 186.

¹¹⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 18, September 5, 1898.

¹¹⁶ Lawton to Belanzo, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 186.

‘inhabitants of the Island of Cuba who are in immediate danger of perishing unless they receive the same.’”¹¹⁷ Only after the War Department decided to compel the Cuban Army to disarm and disband did it start strictly enforcing this law. In his annual report, Wood reported on the success of this tactic in compelling the destitute soldiers of the Cuban Liberation Army to disband in September and October. He exaggerated when he bragged that by “the end of October there were no Cuban soldiers under arms anywhere in the province.”¹¹⁸ In fact, some western parts of the province still remained outside of American control and contained both Spanish and Cuban units, yet within weeks these Cuban formations also disbanded. Wood’s patron, Lodge, lauded Wood’s success in “breaking up the Cuban Army.”¹¹⁹ Thus, Lawton and Wood established an effective policy of using food as a weapon to compel the Cuban formations to disarm and disband as the U.S. occupation expanded.

Ever diplomatic, Lawton incorporated the local Cuban Army commanders into the military government, first as paid advisors and later as officials in the military government. By late August, Lawton established a close working relationship with Castillo, the Cuban Liberation Army commander of the troops in the Santiago Province. Castillo’s soldiers lost 67 of his men fighting alongside Lawton’s troops against the Spanish. Now, Castillo and Lawton each approached their superiors for approval to have Castillo placed in a paid position under Lawton’s command. Lawton assured Corbin that Castillo favored the U.S. policy of “disbanding the Cuban

¹¹⁷ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, Circular No. 3, November 11, 1898. See also Starr to Post Adjutant, Guantánamo, September 16, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 350.

¹¹⁸ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 4.

¹¹⁹ Lodge to Wood, September 28, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

force.”¹²⁰ After Lawton’s sudden departure, Castillo became Wood’s closest Cuban advisor, and Castillo eventually became the first civil governor of the province during the military government. Lawton’s technique remained the norm even after Wood assumed command of the department. By maintaining excellent relations with Generals García, Gómez, and Castillo, Lawton assuaged their fears of an uncompromising or lasting American occupation. Unlike his predecessor, he assured Corbin that he expected that “no serious complications will arise” from the Cubans.¹²¹

Lawton’s conciliatory measures went a long way in limiting the possibility of the Cuban Liberation Army waging a new war against the American occupation army, but General Gómez played the largest role in ensuring that the Cuban officers and soldiers cooperated with the U.S. Army. Historian John Lawrence Tone describes how Gómez used his reputation and prestige to suppress any talk among his subordinates of renewing the Cuban War of Independence. Gómez believed the U.S. would honor the Teller Amendment and understood that the extreme destitution of his army eliminated any other course of action.¹²² To repair relations with the U.S. Army after García’s falling out with Shafter, Gómez relieved García of command of the Eastern Department but did not accept his resignation, knowing that he held too much influence over the soldiers in Santiago and hoping not to make a powerful enemy. Gómez sent Division General Pedro A. Pérez to replace García, with instructions to obey orders from U.S. Commander in

¹²⁰ Lawton to Adjutant General, August 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 77.

¹²¹ Lawton to Adjutant General, August 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 60.

¹²² John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 284.

Chief in Santiago.¹²³ Nonetheless, Lawton held less ill will against García than Shafter or even Gómez. On September 6, Lawton invited the old Cuban General to visit him in Santiago de Cuba to discuss matters in person, saying, “that any small cause for resentment should be forgotten.”¹²⁴

Perhaps out of economic desperation or a sense that the Americans were the new power brokers in Cuba, García soon visited Lawton. He found García “warmly in accord with our policy and is giving me the support of his influence.”¹²⁵ García’s friends let Lawton know in private of the Cuban generals’ destitution. Lawton understood García’s influence and recommended to Corbin that the War Department appoint the impoverished general to an important commission. Lawton remarked that “his influence is great and we will purchase it cheap by giving him a good salary and a position commensurate with his former rank.”¹²⁶ The War Department took Lawton’s advice and placed García on the five-man commission sent to Washington in December to negotiate compensation for the soldiers of the Cuban Liberation Army across all of Cuba, so they would disband. In the negotiations García insisted, against the vehement protests of the other commissioners that only three million dollars would suffice to pay off the Cuban soldiers. This dollar figure was the exact amount remaining in the discretionary funds Congress appropriated to the President to fight Spain and not nearly what the Spanish commissioners were sent to request. Clearly Lawton and Wood did purchase García’s

¹²³ Perez to Commander in Chief of the U.S. Army, September 6, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 658.

¹²⁴ Lawton to Garcia, September 6, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 217

¹²⁵ Lawton to Corbin, September 27, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 445.

¹²⁶ Lawton to Corbin, September 27, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, page 445.

cooperation cheaply. Unfortunately, the U.S. lost its new ally when García contracted pneumonia while in New York and died on December 11.¹²⁷

In order to receive their seventy-five dollar share of the three million dollars, each *mambise* had to give up his rifle to the U.S. Army, a requirement that caused much consternation among the Cuban soldiers. The *mambises* had an intimate attachment to their weapons. Many Cuban soldiers refused to turn their rifles over and whole units stockpiled their weapons in case they needed them to fight the new occupiers. The Cubans refused to compromise in most circumstances, so the War Department reluctantly allowed the *mambises* to turn over their weapons to their officers or local mayors, where Cuban officials guarded them. Once again, the U.S. Army's conciliatory measures prevented open conflict with the Cuban Liberation Army.¹²⁸

During the initial occupation of Cuba, the U.S. Army feared that the Cuban Army might wage a guerrilla war against the U.S. occupation or launch vengeful attacks against native-born Spanish merchants and planters. After encouraging the War Department to authorize the U.S. Army to force the Cubans Army to disband and accept U.S. supremacy in the Department of Santiago, the U.S. Army began to force the destitute Cuban soldiers to disperse in order to receive necessary rations, and the U.S. Army neutralized the Cuban Army's leadership by incorporating their officers into the military government by appointing them into official positions.

¹²⁷ "Informacion, El ejercito Cubano," *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, August 22, 1898. Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 255-57.

¹²⁸ Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 114-15.

Taking Physical Control of the Towns in the Department of Santiago

The same process of withholding rations and offering employment to compel the Cuban Liberation Army in Santiago de Cuba repeated itself across the department. Just as in Santiago de Cuba, the local Cuban insurgents and U.S. Army commanders initially struggled for dominance, but with more force and food, and the support of the top Cuban generals, the garrison commanders soon disbanded the rival Cuban forces and asserted control over these small communities. In return, the U.S. Army's garrison commanders incorporated the local Cuban insurgent leaders into official positions in the municipal government. Lawton and subsequently Wood gave these garrison commanders the same guidance that they received from Washington. They were to end hostilities, protect personal property and rights, and treat the Cuban soldiers kindly, but also ensure that all recognized the supremacy of the U.S. government in the Department of Santiago. After the Spanish surrender, Lawton first established garrisons in towns already under his control. Subsequently, he took control of those towns immediately under Toral's command, which the general had ceded to the Americans in the surrender negotiations. Other towns in the province not immediately under Toral's jurisdiction, such as Manzanillo, Holguín, and Gibara, remained occupied until the Spanish troops departed for Havana or Spain after the commissioners formally ended the war by signing the Treaty of Paris. But accessibility also mattered. Until the rainy season ended in late October, the U.S. Army's forces could reach those towns only by transport ships or rail. Not until the few roads and footpaths dried out enough for pack trains could garrisons move into these interior towns.

Once the U.S. Army began to relieve the immediate humanitarian crises and started to evacuate both the 5th Corps and Spanish prisoners, the U.S. forces started to garrison the other major towns in the vicinity of Santiago de Cuba. One of the first towns occupied was the

Province of Santiago's third largest city: Guantánamo. The U.S. Navy landed marines in Guantánamo Bay as early as June 10, 1898; however, the actual city of Guantánamo remained under Spanish control, and was fourteen miles of rail away from the port of Caimanera.¹²⁹ In late July, Secretary of the Navy John D. Long relayed important information from Rear Admiral William Sampson to the War Department concerning the unsettling conditions in the town of Guantánamo. Not only were a third of the 5,000 Spanish soldiers there sick, but a Spanish cavalry detachment under General Antonio Pareja also dispersed a force of loyalist militia vigilantes who tried to storm the city jail and execute the Cuban political prisoners there. Fortunately, the fast-acting Spanish commander promised to continue protecting the political prisoners until the arrival of U.S. or Cuban forces enabled their safe release.¹³⁰

Ewers, in his first duty after being assigned to the Department of Santiago, arrived in Guantánamo in early August with his staff to reconnoiter the city for the purpose of determining the number of troops necessary to pacify and control the city. Ewers had experience over his career bringing order in troubling situations, spanning from the Civil War to the War with Spain. He managed displaced Navajo at Fort Sumner, New Mexico, until they returned to their homeland after signing a treaty. During the Ghost Dance episode of 1890-91, Ewers arrived at Cherry Creek, South Dakota, to convince Chief Hump and his 400 Minniconju followers to abandon the movement and return to Fort Bennett.¹³¹ After his arrival in Cuba, Ewers noted that the countryside around Guantánamo offered good prospects for a quick economic recovery

¹²⁹ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 174.

¹³⁰ John D. Long to the honorable the Secretary of War, July 30, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 189.

¹³¹ William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 53, 106-8.

because none of the sixteen major plantations around the city were destroyed during the war. He thought a regiment should garrison the city to protect the nearby plantations and that the Cuban political prisoners held in prison for “several years without trial” by the Spanish should be released as soon as U.S. troops arrived to ensure their safety.¹³² To send his critical report, Ewers relied on two mounted Cuban soldiers whom he furnished with food and fodder. He asked that they be resupplied in Santiago for the difficult return journey. This suggests that Ewers initially worked well with the Cuban Liberation Army outside of Guantánamo.¹³³

On August 21, a battalion of Colonel Ray’s 3rd Immunes arrived to garrison Guantánamo.¹³⁴ The troops immediately disarmed the volatile loyalist militia forces, relieved the Spanish Army, and released the Cuban political prisoners in the city jail.¹³⁵ As Lawton had done in Santiago de Cuba, Ray prohibited anyone except municipal police and U.S. military patrols from carrying arms in Guantánamo and the nearby town of Jamaica. He authorized these patrols and police to confiscate weapons from anyone who violated this order and to turn the violators over to the civil magistrates.¹³⁶ Symbolically, this order marked the end of hostilities and allowed the U.S. Army to assert undisputed control over Guantánamo by monopolizing military force in the city.

¹³² Ewers to Adjutant General, Santiago, August 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 114.

¹³³ Ewers to Adjutant General, Santiago, and Ewers to Commanding Officer, Santiago, August 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 113-4.

¹³⁴ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 3.

¹³⁵ Shafter to Adjutant-General of the Army, August 2, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 195. “Informacion,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, August 6, 1898.

¹³⁶ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1756, Guantánamo, General and Special Orders, 1:2.

The timing of Ray's order was no accident. The very day he issued it, two regiments of Cuban soldiers gathered outside the city and threatened to enter it, after allegedly hearing a rumor that the Spanish prisoners, awaiting shipment to Spain, planned to rebel.¹³⁷ Since almost all of the Spanish prisoners were well behaved and happy to be returning to Spain, Ray and Lawton had good reason to question the Cuban Liberation Army's motives. Their suspicions seemed justified when the Cuban Liberation Army's intention to march into Guantánamo with the Cuban Flag became known. Asserting that Guantánamo was territory of the United States, Ray responded to the Cuban proposition by stating, "he would look upon this action as hostile and call out his men."¹³⁸ After the Cubans backed down from their legitimate right to control the city that they had fought for three years to run, they asked Ray for 4,000 rations to prevent themselves from starving. Ray quickly forwarded their request to Department Headquarters and soon after learned that the law stated he could issue rations "to all who were destitute," including Cuban soldiers.¹³⁹ Of course, the War Department used the same wording of the law to deny Cuban soldiers rations a month later. This pragmatic approach enabled Ray to offer a carrot as well as a stick to the Cuban battalions in Guantánamo. In light of his orders to maintain control, treat the Cubans kindly, and ensure that they respected the supremacy of U.S. authority, Ray handled the situation skillfully.

Ray's Immunes not only feared the Cuban soldiers camped outside Guantánamo but they also worried about militias still loyal to Spain. A patrol searching for these loyalist militiamen in

¹³⁷ Lawton to Corbin, August 29, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, page 100.

¹³⁸ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, "A Dispatch to *The Herald* from Santiago," The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹³⁹ Starr to Ray, August 31, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, page 119.

the dark jungle one night became alarmed at the sound of troops moving to their front and fired into the shadows. Private Mack H. Brinkley recalled that the men he was with kept firing “to keep them from advancing on us.” Unknowingly, the soldiers on Brinkley’s patrol were shooting at their own men who had become separated in the dark uneven terrain. Fortunately, the fire from their .45 caliber Springfield rifles was ineffective and they realized their mistake “before anyone was killed.”¹⁴⁰ Besides these two potentially dangerous incidents, the battalion from the 3rd Immunes had no other problems in maintaining order in Guantánamo for the rest of the initial occupation.

After completing his reconnaissance of Guantánamo, Ewers took command of the U.S. garrison in and around San Luis.¹⁴¹ This town of 6,000 lay on a railroad line running 20 miles south into Santiago de Cuba.¹⁴² The 8th Illinois Infantry reached the city eight days before Ewers.¹⁴³ On arrival the commander of the 8th Illinois wrote his governor in Springfield that the “the Cuban Soldiers want to take possession of everything. They still carry arms, but do not come into the city armed.”¹⁴⁴ Just as in Santiago de Cuba and Guantánamo, the local insurgents around San Luis wanted to have a say in administering the town they spent years fighting to control. And, just as before, the local U.S. Army commander compelled by the War

¹⁴⁰ 2nd Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Scott, Duncan N., Company G, Spanish-American War Veterans Questionnaire, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 66, Folder Number 13, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁴¹ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 9, August 26, 1898.

¹⁴² William B. Gatewood Jr., “*Smoked Yankees*” and the *Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 189.

¹⁴³ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 2, August 8, 1898. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 1-2.

¹⁴⁴ Marshall to Tanner, published in *The Parsons Weekly Blade*, September 24, 1898, as quoted in William B. Gatewood Jr., “*Smoked Yankees*” and the *Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 189.

Department's policy kept the armed *mambises* out of the town to maintain order and establish the supremacy of the U.S. government in the Department of Santiago. As in the other towns, the U.S. Army initially fed the starving Cuban soldiers and gave some conservative Cuban officers positions in the new municipal government. On August 31, the 23rd Kansas Infantry arrived, easing the burden on Ewers and the 8th Illinois.¹⁴⁵ Finally, on September 9, the last remaining regiment of African Americans not already in San Luis, the 9th Immunes, was assigned to Ewers and formed the third regiment of his brigade.¹⁴⁶

Soon after arriving in San Luis, Ewers received reports of about 1,500 Spanish loyalist guerrillas in the mountains above San Luis. The general posted a notice that they had just a few days to surrender before the U.S. Army would come up and clear them out. As a precaution the 8th Illinois posted an extra line of pickets around their camp and issued ammunition. Moreover, Colonel Marshall had his men sleep under arms. The rumor of Spanish militia in the mountains proved later to be false, but to the sentries on duty each night, the threat of an attack was very real. One night, an unsuspecting farmer drove his ox cart through the picket line and a jittery sentry shot the poor ox in the darkness. Hearing the first shot, other sentries discharged their weapons, raising the general alarm. Soon an entire battalion of soldiers was formed in the darkness awaiting the expected Spanish attack. Company H observed movement to its front and unleashed a volley of fire into the darkness. Regrettably, for privates Smith and Blakes, two sentries on duty to the company's front, the soldiers of H company shot both of their comrades

¹⁴⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 14, August 31, 1898. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 2.

¹⁴⁶ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 21, September 9, 1898. Starr to Ewers, September 9, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 251. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 1-2.

from over a quarter of a mile away in the darkness. Private Smith received a fatal shot through the neck and his lifeless body lay undiscovered until morning, while Private Blakes received a wound through the thigh. Major Charles G. Starr, sent to investigate the tragedy, blamed the mishap on a “nervous and green sentry” and Company H, which was “equally frightened but was stopped by the officers as soon as they could reach the Company.”¹⁴⁷ The friendly-fire incident caused a stir in the press about the competence of African American officers, but Lawton shrugged off these opinions, commenting that the black officers controlled their men admirably. The episode illustrates how seriously the U.S. Army soldiers perceived the threat of Spanish militia attacks in the first month of the initial occupation.¹⁴⁸

Ewers’s brigade of African-American soldiers not only garrisoned the town of San Luis, but also occupied smaller towns and villages in the vicinity. The largest, Palma Soriano, boasted a population of 4,000.¹⁴⁹ E and F Companies of the 8th Illinois garrisoned the town. One of the few African American officers to hold an independent command of a garrison during the initial occupation, Major Robert R. Jackson commanded the detachment. His garrison got along well with the Cubans in this community. A few of his soldiers even married local women. The small patrols and details also felt little threat from the local *mambises*. Corporal Goode in Company F went on a patrol with a squad of soldiers but soon became separated in the thick jungle. After hours of wandering hopelessly through tall grass and streams, he encountered a small formation

¹⁴⁷ Starr to Adjutant General, Santiago, August 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 62.

¹⁴⁸ Miles V. Lynk, *The Black Troopers, Or Daring Heroism of the Negro Soldiers in the Spanish-American War* (Urbana, NY: AMS, 1971, reprint of 1899 ed.) 137-138. Corporal W. T. Goode, *The “Eighth Illinois”* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 133-138. Starr to Adjutant General, Santiago, August 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 62. William B. Gatewood Jr., *“Smoked Yankees” and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 184, 192.

¹⁴⁹ William B. Gatewood Jr., *“Smoked Yankees” and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 189.

of Cuban soldiers on their way to Santiago to turn in their weapons and disband. Goode's fear of these Cuban soldiers quickly turned into admiration as the helpful *mambises* told the hapless corporal that there were "mucho American soldou [sic] over there," reuniting the corporal with his squad. If the Cuban Liberation Army had resisted the American occupation, it would have become impossible for small patrols, like Goode's, to retrieve water and wood or to send supplies to small outlying posts without the backing of larger units to provide security. The soldiers in Palma Soriano cooperated so well with the local Cubans that they were more offended than anything else when they heard that Cuban guerrillas might attack the garrison over a small charge of mistreatment by a soldier against a local. Despite the fact that these African-American soldiers favored the Cubans in their area more than the wealthier Spanish-born elites, they strictly followed their orders to protect all individuals and property and to end the state of hostilities. For example, when the Cubans turned over a man who spied for the Spanish during the war, Major Jackson quickly released him. And Company K, commanded by Captain Leon W. Denison, a black law student in Chicago, guarded the largest sugar mill in the area, owned by a hated foreign-born Spanish sympathizer named Creausau. Company K prevented attempts to burn the plantation and mill. Soon after the 8th Illinois left Cuba, the mill was left unguarded, and the Cubans quickly put it to the torch.¹⁵⁰

Later, Wood assigned the 2nd Immunes to Ewers' brigade in order to garrison the towns of Songo, El Cristo, and El Cobre.¹⁵¹ With populations of only a few thousand each, these towns lay scattered in the rugged countryside north of Santiago de Cuba. Wood ordered garrisons sent

¹⁵⁰ Corporal W. T. Goode, *The "Eighth Illinois"* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 69-70, 159, 198-99, 202, 259. Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 4, August 22, 1898.

¹⁵¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 3.

there after receiving a report from Second Lieutenant Jefferson D. Rooney on his return from delivering supplies to the destitute in El Cobre by mule train. Rooney encountered many armed Cuban soldiers and officers in the town celebrating a “feast day.” The Cuban soldiers had received only heard rumor that they were to “to disarm and get to work.”¹⁵² Still treating armed Cubans as a challenge to U.S. authority in the department, Wood sent the 2nd Immunes to garrison these towns as soon as the trails became dry enough to supply them.

After only a month in these towns, the 2nd Immunes established the supremacy of the military government. Wood then abruptly ordered Ewers to replace these 2nd U.S.V.I. garrisons with other companies from his three regiments of African American soldiers. Wood specified that the relief of the 2nd Immunes should be done so that “these points will not be left without a garrison” for even a moment. Wood planned for the 2nd U.S.V.I. to move by transport ship to occupy towns on the north coast of Cuba, soon to be abandoned by the Spanish Army. He sought to have U.S. troops in the towns before the Spanish soldiers departed to prevent disorders from occurring and Cubans from dictating local policy decisions to the U.S. military government.¹⁵³

The Spanish first surrendered the towns of Baracoa and Sagua de Tánamo on the north coast of Santiago. The soldiers there belonged to Toral’s command, and he surrendered these garrisons at the same time he surrendered Santiago de Cuba under the same condition that they be shipped to Spain. On August 29, Lawton ordered a battalion from the 3rd Immunes under Major Thomas S. Wylly to take the transport *San Juan* to Baracoa and Sagua de Tánamo. Wylly arrived in Baracoa on September 5 with two companies and Captain Marion W. Harris steamed

¹⁵² Rooney to Adjutant, Santiago, August 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1174.

¹⁵³ Beacom to Ewers, October 29, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 254.

off with the remaining two companies, arriving to garrison Sagua de Tánamo the next day.¹⁵⁴

Later, the 3rd Immunes kept only a single company in Sagua de Tánamo under Captain Harris who reported to Baracoa.¹⁵⁵ On arriving to Baracoa, Major Wyllly found 500 Spanish soldiers in fortifications facing 600 *mambises* awaiting their departure. Just as the U.S. Army did elsewhere, Wyllly prohibited the Cubans from entering Baracoa until all the Spanish prisoners departed for Guantánamo to meet transports from Spain. Once they left, the Cuban soldiers could enter without arms. Wyllly maintained the peace and affirmed that the U.S. Army set policy, not the Cubans. As an inducement for cooperation, Wyllly came equipped with 10,000 rations to feed needy Cubans and *mambises* who disarmed and submitted to U.S. authority.¹⁵⁶

Wyllly (recently promoted to lieutenant colonel) tolerated no opposition to U.S. authority. When the Cuban brigadier general in command of the area refused to allow workers to cross his lines to work on the plantations outside of the town, probably owned by Spanish loyalists, Wyllly arrested him the first time he entered the city and disarmed his 35-man bodyguard.¹⁵⁷ Similarly, a former major in the Cuban Liberation Army assaulted the foreman of a public works project, and Wyllly confined the attacker for thirty days on bread and water. Cuban officers approached Wyllly and demanded their former comrade's release. Although the Cuban Army in the area outnumbered his men by at least four to one, the brash Wyllly did not yield. He stated that their comrade would remain confined and that "any attempt to rescue him ... would be met with force

¹⁵⁴ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 12, August 29, 1898. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 2-3.

¹⁵⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 50, October 11, 1898.

¹⁵⁶ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 12, August 29, 1898.

¹⁵⁷ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wyllly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, "Our Flag at Manzanillo," The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

of arms.” Furthermore, if any of Cuban soldiers were found in the city with arms “they would be arrested and severely punished.”¹⁵⁸ No one challenged Wylly’s authority in Baracoa again, and soon thereafter Cuban Colonel Francisco Valiente, a conservative and pro-American officer, arrived from Santiago to help Wylly pick other conservative Cubans to run the civil administration and municipal police.¹⁵⁹

Despite the fact that the Cuban and U.S. armies did not fight each other during the initial occupation of Cuba, at times tensions between them almost boiled over. The U.S. coerced the exhausted and undersupplied Cuban Liberation Army to accept its authority and co-opted conservative leaders from the Cuban army. In his letter to Corbin on September 13, Lawton summarized his policy for garrisoning the major towns in the Department of Santiago and the necessity of continuing this strategy: “Troops will be required at these places so long as armed Cubans occupy the country or the United States retains control of the Island against the sentiment of a majority of the Cubans, or while it is necessary to distribute large quantities of sustenance.”¹⁶⁰ The U.S. Army physically controlled the province by establishing Army garrisons in the population centers and using the incentives of sustenance and jobs to disband the Cuban Liberation Army.

¹⁵⁸ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Restoring Order to Cuba,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁵⁹ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Flag Raising on North Coast: Maj. Wylly Unfurls Old Glory in the Town of Baracoa,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁶⁰ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 13, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 296.

Conclusion

The U.S. Army had garrisons in twenty-one towns and villages in the Department of Santiago by the end of the initial occupation, effectively controlling both the Cuban and Spanish-born populations. In January 1899, the garrisons in Santiago de Cuba and San Luis each consisted of more than a regiment of soldiers. Additionally, four other large towns had garrisons with at least a battalion (four companies), and an additional five towns had garrisons with at least two companies. Finally, ten villages had a single company garrisoning them. This distribution enabled the U.S. Army to maximize its influence and control over the population. Widely dispersed as they were, the garrisons were vulnerable to attack, but the U.S. Army could afford to keep their soldiers dispersed by first compelling the Cuban Liberation Army and Spanish loyalist militias to disband and disarm, and then by establishing a logistical system capable of sustaining them.¹⁶¹

To compel the Cuban soldiers to disband and pursue peaceful employment, the U.S. Army capitalized on the Cuban Liberation Army's persistent inability to supply, feed, or pay its troops. Once the U.S. Army established a monopoly of military force in the province, it was free to administer the province as it saw fit. Brooke later implemented the same method of establishing control over the population by placing garrisons in major population centers to pacify the rest of Cuba. With U.S. Army garrisons in every town and no significant armed force

¹⁶¹ Ewers to the Adjutant General, Division of Cuba, January 16, 1899, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 4 of 8, January 7, 1899 to March 1, 1899, 113. Disposition of troops across the Department of Santiago: 5th U.S.V.I. (ten companies in Santiago, Companies K and L at EL Morro); 8th IL (ten companies in San Luis, Companies E & F in Palma Soriano); 9th U.S.V.I. (HQ, Companies B, D, E, F, & G in San Luis, A & C in Cobre, K in Cristo, H, I, L, & M, Songo); 23rd KS (all eight companies in San Luis); 3rd U.S.V.I. (HQ, Companies B, C, & L in Guantánamo, A, G, & M in Baracoa; I at Sagua de Tánamo, D at Guasa, K at Solidad, E & F Jamaica, H at Santa Rosa); 4th U.S.V.I. (HQ, Companies C, D, E, G, K & I at Manzanillo, A at Campechuela, B at Bayamo, F at Nigarero, H at Jiquani, L at Vequitas), 2nd U.S.V.I. (HQ, Companies A, B, C, D, I, & K at Holguin, and Companies E, F, G, H, L, & M at Gibara), 5th U.S. Infantry (all eight companies in Santiago).

to oppose them, the McKinley administration could afford to develop a lasting U.S. policy toward Cuba, one that unfortunately denied it of much of its independence. Only Cuban public sentiments and anti-imperialist opposition within the United States prevented the expansionists in the McKinley administration and the Republican Congress from annexing Cuba outright.

CHAPTER 6:
POLICING CUBA: USING LOCAL PROXIES TO CONTROL THE BOUNDARIES OF
AMERICAN EMPIRE

Chaffee says that Wood told him in person that he was having alleged banditti killed without trial. When he sent his men out for them he expected them to bring back their heads, or an evidence of their death.

- Major General James H. Wilson to R. Suydam Grant
(September 14, 1899)

Introduction

On the night of October 1, 1898, Sergeant William L. Head of the 5th United States Volunteer Infantry (U.S.V.I.) walked through the streets of Santiago de Cuba to attend the bi-weekly band concert presented by the U.S. Army. The beauty of the city took him aback. Head thought the city was “most orderly for a place that has just emerged from” three years of savage warfare “concluded by a siege and a surrender.”¹ For the three hours the sergeant walked Santiago de Cuba on pass from his camp overlooking the city, he “heard no unusual noise, not even a loud voice, which speaks well for a place where entoxicants [sic] are sold at almost every corner.”² Streetlights were sparse, so he relied on the light emanating from the few larger businesses to outline the road for him and his friends. They noticed several young Cuban ladies

¹ Lee to Annie, October 2, 1898, 5th Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Head, William L., Company D, Spanish-American War Veterans Questionnaire, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 48, Folder Number 13, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

² Ibid.

peering at them through “the iron grating of their windows.”³ Head and his fellow Yankee soldiers “heard good music and singing in numbers of these homes and always stopped on the side walks to listen.”⁴ While U.S. Army soldiers did guard their camps and government buildings, the security that Head and his unarmed comrades so admired that October night was provided primarily by the local police. Some were police under the Spanish regime, but increasingly, former soldiers of the Cuban Liberation Army, known as *mambises*, filled the police ranks.

Many of the *mambises* who had fought in eastern Cuba found work in the construction and sanitation crews used by the U.S. Army to rebuild the roads and sanitize the towns in the province. Most Cuban officers hoped to be appointed to leadership positions in the military government. Other former Cuban soldiers found work policing the towns throughout the Department of Santiago. The most politically dependable *mambises* joined the Rural Guard, ranging the province in small groups to maintain order and guarding large plantations from bandits, often with little regard for the rights of the alleged offenders. Through careful selection, the U.S. Army and its conservative Cuban advisors ensured that the Rural Guard and Municipal Police were recruited from—and protected—the propertied class in Cuba. Army officers used former Cuban soldiers to police Santiago from the very beginning of the occupation because the practice of employing native constabulary was ingrained in the culture of the U.S. Army and the experiential memory of the War Department’s senior officers. Furthermore, the U.S. Army operated under the assumption that it would be in Cuba for many months or years, if not forever. The primary purpose of the infantry regiments assigned to occupy Santiago was to provide the

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

U.S. Army with overwhelming military superiority. The War Department, however, never intended to use American soldiers to police the province.

The Rural Guard and municipal Cuban police offered many advantages over U.S. soldiers when it came to policing the Department of Santiago. Most Cubans had developed immunity to yellow fever and malaria through prior exposure, but the two diseases devastated American troops during the summer months. The military government encouraged the Rural Guard to use extrajudicial means to handle the alleged criminals they captured, instead of going through the notoriously corrupt and inefficient Cuban courts or the onerous judicial procedures used by the War Department. Furthermore, by keeping most U.S. soldiers in barracks and focused on drilling, the occupation government could continue to train its regiments and have soldiers massed and ready to respond with overwhelming force to suppress any hint of insurrection and to assist small Rural Guard patrols and municipal police in emergencies. While in their barracks and camps, American soldiers were seldom seen by the Cuban people and were not a constant reminder of the unpopular occupation. To reduce tensions with the Cuban people, the best approach was one they had utilized in the U.S. South and with the Indians, to rely on local policing and keep the Army in their barracks, using them only at times of crisis. Leonard Wood, Henry W. Lawton, and the other Army officers who had served in the American West remembered the difficulty Regulars had pursuing hostile Native Americans off the reservations without the help of friendly Indian scouts. Wood preferred to have the mounted Rural Guard—who spoke Spanish and had familiarity with the backcountry trails—pursue bandits and thieves, rather than sending heavy columns of U.S. infantrymen stumbling through jungle trails in vain pursuits.

Frontier Legacy of Policing

The U.S. Army came away from Reconstruction with an institutional disdain for policing civilian populations, and sought to avoid performing the mission again on the Trans-Mississippi West. When scouting or policing became absolutely necessary, the Army preferred to conscript Indian allies or assist local law enforcement officials. The Army exported these institutional habits to Cuba, where it preferred to use local police to maintain law and order after it had established control of a town.

The U.S. Army quelled violent insurrection, riots, and strikes on several occasions under the President's constitutional authority throughout the nineteenth century. Much more commonly, local Army commanders assisted local officials to bring order to lawless portions of the American frontier, even without permission from the War Department. Acting as a *posse comitatus*, Army units sometimes made arrests on their own authority, but more often, they provided armed escorts to local and federal authorities serving warrants. The U.S. Army also temporarily held and transported civilian prisoners to local courts. Because of the questionable legal authority they had to perform these law enforcement functions, Army officers often found themselves the target of civil suits by those they arrested. Faced with serious legal repercussions, officers disliked their unofficial policing mission, and they used discretion before providing military assistance to local law enforcement officials.⁵

Moreover, the U.S. Army's experience in the South during Reconstruction led to strong institutional contempt within the Army for acting in a law-enforcement role. Soldiers stationed in the South disliked policing their seemingly ungrateful countrymen and became frustrated by their

⁵ Paul H. Carlson, "Pecos Bill:" *A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 88-90. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 80-92.

inability to secure convictions in Southern courts, especially for crimes against former enslaved African Americans and Northern carpetbaggers. Out of revenge for a decade of military occupation of the South, the Democratic majority in the U.S. House of Representatives added the *posse comitatus* amendment to the 1878 army appropriation bill, which prevented the use of federal forces for policing duties except in specific cases authorized by the president or Congress.⁶

The Army continued to perform some law enforcement missions after Reconstruction, but usually did so only with presidential approval, inside the newly created National Parks, or in extreme emergencies and at their own risk. For instance, Captain Ezra P. Ewers—one of the three generals left to occupy Santiago after the departure of Shafter’s Fifth Corps—led Indian scouts under his charge to arrest horse thieves in the vicinity of Fort Keogh, Montana in 1880. Just a year after the passage of *posse comitatus*, Charles Crane, who later commanded a regiment during the initial occupation of Cuba, led a troop of cavalry to assist a peace officer with an arrest. If the column ran into trouble, he did not see how he “could escape laying myself liable to civil suit,” but he supported the lawman anyway.⁷ President Rutherford B. Hayes used the U.S. Army during the Great Strike of 1877, as other presidents did to maintain law and order during large social disturbances. Ewers’s battalion and many other Army units guarded public property and helped to arrest lawbreakers in Chicago during the Pullman Strike of 1894. The Federal government sent the U.S. Army to Washington and Wyoming in the 1880s to protect Chinese miners from lynching by mobs of hostile white miners. The Army brought law and order to

⁶ Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 93-110. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 243-46.

⁷ Charles J. Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 88.

Alaska in 1897 due to the lack of any local police to control miners heading to the Klondike. When a mob of masked miners seized and demolished a nonunion mine in the Coeur d'Alene region of Idaho, President Benjamin Harrison sent the 24th Infantry to support state law enforcement and protect the property rights' of the mine owners. In these violent labor disputes, the Federal government almost always sided with business interests.⁸

On the Indian Reservations, the Interior Department began using local Native Americans to police their own people in the early 1880s.⁹ Sioux police tried unsuccessfully to break up the Ghost Dances in 1890, but Standing Soldier and other native lawmen did help to convince many other Indians to return to the reservations after the tragedy at Wounded Knee.¹⁰ In Arizona, White Mountain Apache policed their own reservation and even arrested Geronimo and his band on April 21, 1877.¹¹ The U.S. Army went on the reservations only to preserve order when beleaguered Indian agents asked for help after their native constables were unable to handle the situation. Several presidents also ordered the War Department to send troops of cavalry to perform law enforcement to protect Sequoia, Yosemite, and Yellowstone National Parks from herders, loggers, and miners, and to monitor tourists.¹² Fearing civil suits and further unpopularity, the Army exercised great restraint in all of its policing missions. Besides its limited role of protecting the parks, the U.S. Army did not consider policing a primary duty before 1898.

⁸ Edward M. Coffman, *The Regulars: The American Army, 1898-1941* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 21. William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 79, 123. Robert M. Utely, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 26.

⁹ Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 35.

¹⁰ Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 142. Robert M. Utely, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 91-98, 146-66, 241-43.

¹¹ Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 88.

¹² Harvey Meyerson, *Nature's Army: When Soldiers Fought for Yosemite* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 170.

Following this institutional norm, the series of U.S. Army commanders in the Department of Santiago left municipal policing to the Cubans, but did not hesitate to use their soldiers to assist overwhelmed local law enforcement officials and to prevent the possibility of a Cuban insurrection against the occupation government.¹³

Cubans Policing Santiago

Cuban police offered several advantages over American soldiers in maintaining civil order. They spoke the language; they knew the people; they understood the local laws; and they did not create an image of a foreign occupier in the minds of Cubans. When Lawton observed that U.S. Army soldiers guarded every street corner in Santiago de Cuba, he ordered Wood, the city's commander, to remove them at once.¹⁴ American soldiers limited their security duties to guarding government buildings, property, and military camps, and helping the Cuban police when situations required additional manpower. Lawton did not want the U.S. Army to appear to be an army of occupation to the Cubans or to get involved in police work. Instead, he wanted the local police to bring order to the towns of the province.

To help the native police maintain order in Santiago de Cuba against unruly Cuban and even American soldiers, Wood prohibited anyone from carrying firearms except U.S. Army soldiers and Navy sailors on official duty, watchman employed by the occupation government,

¹³ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 246-254. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 250.

¹⁴ Starr to Wood, September 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 145.

members of the Rural Guard, and the city's police officers.¹⁵ Those who defied the order faced a twenty-five dollar fine or thirty days in the city jail, plus the confiscation of their weapon.¹⁶ Wood did not allow even his sentries to carry loaded weapons.¹⁷ Other garrison commanders in the Department of Santiago enacted similar laws prohibiting civilians, Cuban soldiers, and off-duty American soldiers from carrying weapons in towns.¹⁸

Before he could rely on the police to maintain order in Santiago de Cuba, Lawton needed to hire more constables. Shafter had reduced the city's police force of two hundred to a mere ten lawmen in a reckless attempt to save money. Within days, it became readily apparent that ten police officers could not maintain order in a city of approximately 50,000 people. Shafter admitted his mistake and hired fifty more officers.¹⁹ This small police force struggled to keep the city of refugees, hungry citizens, and soldiers under control, and they relied on the U.S. Army to help keep order. As Lawton tried to turn over the policing mission entirely to the Cuban police in Santiago de Cuba, he had Wood hire twenty-six more police in late September.²⁰ Even with the additional manpower, the municipal police continued to struggle.

Wood allowed the city's police to use brutal force to maintain order. Wood employed the police to round up civilians and, if necessary, forcefully impress them into work gangs to clean

¹⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 7, Office Acting Civil Government, December 16, 1898.

¹⁶ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 8, Office Acting Civil Government, December 16, 1898.

¹⁷ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 2, August 24, 1898.

¹⁸ General Order 4, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1756, Guantánamo, General and Special Orders, 1:2.

¹⁹ Shafter to the H. C. Corbin, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 232.

²⁰ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 34.1, September 23, 1898. Leonard Wood, September 23, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1027.

the city after the war, although he did pay and feed the workers for their service. The police had the authority to shoot anyone resisting arrest, committing a theft, or suspected of looting in the city after the siege ended. By keeping the city under strict martial law, Wood gave the municipal police the authority to quickly and ruthlessly restore order.²¹

Wood wanted to limit the use of American soldiers in policing the city. His goal “was to uphold the civil authority, not to supplant it” with the U.S. Army.²² He did not want Cubans or the American press to see “uniformed troops of the United States chasing petty offenders through the street.”²³ Cubans could tolerate local police arresting residents for crimes, but if American soldiers regularly detained Cubans it would create an image of the American as ruthless foreign occupiers, which Wood, Lawton, and the War Department wanted to avoid. U.S. Army soldiers did assist the police when necessary, guard important government buildings, and prevent civil disturbances. Typically, the Army tried to break up protests before they became violent, especially any anti-American gathering. Wood concluded that to use American soldiers for anything other than garrison duty and to help “civil authorities over rough places...would be a mistake.”²⁴ He believed that American soldiers made bad policemen because of the language and cultural barriers between them and the Cubans. Moreover, he believed that if the U.S. Army assumed policing duties, instead of reviving local police forces, then the moment the U.S. Army departed the province “chaos would follow.”²⁵

²¹ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 522.

²² Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 522.

²³ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 522.

²⁴ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 3.

²⁵ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 3.

Lawton and Wood also wanted to remove the Army from the business of trying and imprisoning Cubans by turning over all charged citizens to Cuban judicial authorities. On October 29, American sentries discovered a Cuban named José Maso trying to steal a large blanket from the military hospital by wrapping it around his body and putting his clothes on over it. The hospital commander, Major L. C. Carr, ordered Maso placed in the guardhouse. Cubans complained about his arrest and confinement, and Wood ordered Carr to deliver Maso to the city jail immediately with charges.²⁶ No longer were Cuban civilians to be tried by court martial or held indefinitely in military guardhouses.

Bringing order to the cities and towns proved relatively easy for the U.S. Army garrison commanders during the initial occupation. The Spanish controlled all the towns and cities in the province, and when the U.S. Army arrived to relieve the Spanish garrison, they found town police already maintaining a semblance of order. The U.S. Army simply kept in place the municipal police forces that had kept law and order during the Spanish regime. The military government also kept garrisons in all the larger towns to control the province, and to provide soldiers to assist the local police when necessary.

Establishing order over the lawless interior of the province proved far more difficult. The Spanish Army failed to control the rural interior of eastern Cuba during the war and the *mambises* placed their safe havens in these remote areas. Because the U.S. Army refused to give food or jobs to the Cuban soldiers who remained armed, most veterans reluctantly turned in their weapons and returned to civilian pursuits. Ordinary bandits, starving *mambises* who did not find jobs in the occupation government, or those Cuban soldiers who remained armed for both

²⁶ L. C. Carr to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, November 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2708

honorable and dishonorable reasons continued to pillage the countryside and break into shops and homes to find food.²⁷ Foraging in peacetime is theft, and the distinction between ordinary bandits and the veterans of the Cuban Liberation Army quickly blurred. The U.S. Army had to find a way to stop these armed marauders to bring stability to the Department of Santiago. Not wanting to start another war by directly confronting the remaining armed *mambises* or to chase outlaws through the mountainous jungles that they knew all too well, the U.S. Army fell back on its frontier experience of using local auxiliaries familiar with the terrain to track and defeat the armed marauders.

The U.S. Army's Long Tradition of Using Native Scouts

The U.S. Army had relied heavily on allied Native American scouts to pursue their traditional native enemies during their conquest of the trans-Mississippi West in the decades after the Civil War. Native American scouts excelled at tracking and often had knowledge of the waterholes and campgrounds favored by the hostile Indian groups that they pursued.²⁸ Congress authorized the use of 1,000 Native American scouts in 1866.²⁹ Colonel Eugene A. Carr used Pawnee scouts to catch and destroy Tall Bull's Cheyenne at Summit Springs in 1869.³⁰ Two

²⁷ Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 257.

²⁸ Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 270-71, 78. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 34-5, 140.

²⁹ Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 53.

³⁰ Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 155-57.

years later, Ranald B. Mackenzie used Seminole-Negro scouts to pursue renegade Apache and Kickapoo across the Mexican border.³¹

The U.S. Army officers who later served in Cuba also had extensive experience using Indian scouts. Shafter employed Seminole-Negro scouts in 1875 to help him explore the Llano Estacado of northwest Texas.³² While serving at Ft. Sill Oklahoma, Charles J. Crane commanded a company of Comanche and Kiowa scouts long before he commanded a regiment of Immunes in Santiago.³³ Miles also made extensive use of Sioux and Cheyenne scouts to track down the Nez Perce in their attempt to reach the Canadian border in the summer of 1877. No officer in Santiago used Native American scouts more than Ezra P. Ewers. He first employed Indian scouts during the Red River war of 1874-5. Later, Ewers recruited a company of Cheyenne fighters under Chief Hump to become U.S. Army scouts, to the dismay of the Nez Perce they later tracked down for Miles.³⁴

George Crook was probably the Army officer most adept at using Indian allies as scouts after the Civil War. He used Shoshonis to catch the Paiutes from 1866 to 68, Maricopas and Pimas to catch Apaches in 1872, and Shoshonis and Crow to fight Sioux and Northern Cheyenne in 1876.³⁵ By the time he pursued Geronimo, Crook relied on San Carlos and White Mountain

³¹ Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 213.

³² Paul H. Carlson, "Pecos Bill:" *A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 75.

³³ Charles J. Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 160-61.

³⁴ William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 62, 70, 74, 78, 83, 119. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 282 and 289. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 238-9.

³⁵ Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 54, 180, 196, 253, 268. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 222, 226, 228.

Apache, and even other Chiricahua Apaches, as scouts. Usually reliable, Apache scouts did on occasion turn against their U.S. Army employers, as they did at Cibicue Creek on August 30, 1881.³⁶ With these Apache scouts, led by a few intrepid Army officers, and supplied by mule trains to maintain the column's operational mobility, Crook finally caught Geronimo's band in 1886.³⁷

Crook received criticism from other Army officers for his almost complete reliance on Apache scouts to capture Geronimo. After Geronimo's escape from the reservation, Lieutenant General Philip H. Sheridan transferred Crook from the Department of Arizona and replaced him with the confident and ambitious Brigadier General Nelson A. Miles, who promised to make better use of regular troops. Miles sent Captain Henry W. Lawton, accompanied by his Surgeon Leonard Wood, to recapture Geronimo. While still relying heavily on friendly Apache and Yuma scouts, Lawton, Wood, and a small number of regulars chased Geronimo's band deep into the Sierra Madre, where exhaustion and fear of pursuing Mexican soldiers bent on revenge for his past atrocities compelled Geronimo to surrender to the small American force.³⁸ Despite their heavy reliance on Apache scouts during the campaign, Miles, Lawton, and Wood argued that the second capture of Geronimo proved that well-conditioned regulars could pursue Indians just as

³⁶ Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 109.

³⁷ Charles B. Gatewood and Captain Emmet Crawford led the 193 scouts. Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 87-90, 134-38, 152-3, 163-66. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 378-9. Lieutenant Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 262-3. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 127.

³⁸ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1977), 4-12.

Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 168-181, 192-212. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 53. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 263-5.

well as scouts. Later, both Lawton and Wood avoided using American soldiers to chase Cuban bandits in the Department of Santiago. Instead, they reestablished the Cuban Rural Guard to perform this mission. They knew from their experience in Arizona that local auxiliaries were much more capable of successful pursuits because of their familiarity with the local terrain, language, and people.

The Rural Guard

Within a month of taking command of the Department of Santiago, Lawton was already pondering the use of former Cuban soldiers led by U.S. Army officers to patrol and secure the interior of the province, in a similar way to how the Army used Apache scouts in Arizona. Lawton knew that the entirety of the department needed to be occupied as long as armed bands of Cubans remained and as long as the “United States retains control of the island against the sentiments of a majority of the Cubans.”³⁹ After witnessing the Fifth Corps become debilitated by malaria, yellow fever, and dysentery, Lawton doubted whether “American soldiers [could] successfully withstand the climate.”⁴⁰ Instead, he believed that Cuban soldiers led by American officers should be used if the administration was contemplating a prolonged occupation. He wrote Adjutant General Henry Clark Corbin on his plan to use former Cuban soldiers, carefully vetted for their character and loyalty, as a rural police force. Lawton argued that if the former

³⁹ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 13, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 296.

⁴⁰ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 13, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 296.

mambises received regular pay and rations, they could be loyal, “tractable, patient and easily controlled.”⁴¹

When Lawton heard no reply from the War Department for two weeks, he again insisted that he be allowed to create a force of local auxiliaries. He further detailed his plan to raise a battalion of Cubans with the same organization and equipment as a U.S. Army battalion. Lawton insisted that he would recruit only the best and most loyal Cuban soldiers. If the War Department did not approve that scheme, then Lawton with General Garcia’s concurrence proposed an alternative plan; he would simply fill vacancies in the American volunteer regiments under his command with former Cuban soldiers. They believed that by putting former *mambises* in U.S. Army units the Cubans would eventually adopt American culture and U.S. Army drill and ceremony. Lawton believed that Cubans would eventually replace all the Americans within the regiments and become the new colonial army. Regardless of which course of action the War Department chose, Lawton implored it to take action soon. He reiterated, “Eventually we must have native troops here. I desire to attempt the scheme. Am sure I can make it successful.”⁴² Lawton’s sudden recall ensured that he never had time to implement his plan.

After assuming command of the Department of Santiago, Wood also saw the need to create a mounted auxiliary force of Cubans to patrol the interior. Unlike Lawton and Shafter, the confident Wood simply established the Rural Guard and then reported to the War Department of its creation as a *fait accompli*. He wrote to McKinley that he needed the local constabulary force to counter “the great danger of these tropical people” to drift toward militarism, “revolution, and

⁴¹ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 13, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 296.

⁴² Lawton to Adjutant General, September 27, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 428.

upheavals.”⁴³ He worked with Cubans loyal to the occupation government to hand-select former Cuban soldiers to fill the ranks of the new unit, ensuring that the Rural Guard would remain loyal to Wood and the conservative Cuban agenda. Wood lectured the new recruits on the importance of their mission to maintain order in the name of the civil government under Wood’s command, to arrest anyone who violated the civil laws of the province, and to conduct themselves with honor and integrity. Furthermore, Wood reminded them that their “failure will be, not a failure for them personally, but a failure for civil law in Cuba, and an advertisement to the world that they are unable to control and govern themselves.”⁴⁴

As he did in so many other facets during the establishment of a civil government in Santiago, Wood tried to limit the financial cost of the Rural Guard. The main reason Wood kept the Rural Guard small in number and poorly equipped was to save money. However, he also did not want to create a large force that could challenge his overwhelming advantage in military force. For uniforms, the Cuban troopers wore cool and rugged linen clothes with a small insignia on their collar to denote their occupation. Privates in the Rural Guard received \$36 a month in gold, which was slightly more than the American soldier, but they had to provide their own weapon, ammunition, uniform, food, horse, forage, and other equipment. Corporals received \$40 a month, sergeants \$46, lieutenants \$50, captains \$100, and Colonel Francisco Valiente, a former commander in the Cuban Liberation Army, received \$200 per month. Valiente organized his Rural Guard of 225 troopers into groups of eleven men. Led by a sergeant, a group also contained two corporals and eight privates. A lieutenant commanded three groups, and each of

⁴³ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 2.

⁴⁴ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 3.

the four captains was in charge of the Rural Guard in a military districts. Wood gave Valiente considerable leeway to administer the Rural Guard as he saw fit, but the troopers received missions from the U.S. Army commanders in their area.⁴⁵

In a further attempt to cut the cost of maintaining a mounted police force, Wood ordered Colonel Duncan N. Hood to reduce the number of existing mounted troopers in the military district of Gibara. Duncan arrived to find that the existing mounted police in his newly created military district outnumbered the Rural Guard in the other three districts combined. Wood had him trim the number to seventy-five by carefully selecting only the most trustworthy, and warned him to prepare to reduce the force to fifty within a few months. Furthermore, Wood ordered Hood to organize, uniform, and pay the existing mounted police in the same manner as the Rural Guard throughout the province and to put them under Valiente's command. Wood reiterated that the troopers were to be paid \$36 a month and that the government would provide nothing but their salary.⁴⁶ Wood bragged that despite their modest pay, the Rural Guard was "in fact entirely self sustaining."⁴⁷

Wood's inspector general, Major James H. McLeary, disagreed. During his December 1898 inspection tour, he reported that the Rural Guard troopers he encountered were "insufficiently equipped to perform their duties."⁴⁸ He blamed their inability to afford adequate fodder for their poor-quality mounts. McLeary also noted that the overworked animals were

⁴⁵ John H. Beacom to Colonel J. S. Pettit, January 19, 1899, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 4 of 8, January 7, 1899 to March 1, 1899, 125-26.

⁴⁶ Leonard Wood to Colonel Duncan N. Hood, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 491.

⁴⁷ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 2.

⁴⁸ James H. McLeary to the Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325.

“poorly shod and almost invariably sore backed.”⁴⁹ The Rural Guard used whatever weapon they could get their hands on and some of them did not even have ammunition for their rifles. Furthermore, the Rural Guard patrol of five troopers assigned to protect and guide the inspector general on his mission had no canteens, cooking utensils, or money. McLeary had to purchase rations from the U.S. Army garrisons along the route with his own money to keep his scout escort from starving. Even with these few meager rations, the five Rural Guards were reduced to “begging from people along the road or from my orderly, for something or other to appease the pangs of hunger.”⁵⁰

Despite their decrepit state, the Rural Guard performed its mission well and significantly reduced the levels of banditry in the province’s interior, though they often resorted to extrajudicial killings. Even the martinet McLeary confessed that Corporal Rafael Ramires and his four troopers performed their scouting and escort duty admirably despite their frail state. McLeary was impressed by their willingness to accompany the chief of police in Holguin into the interior to arrest five bandits that had been stealing horses. Ramires and his men pursued and captured the five marauders and turned them over to Hood and his police chief at the city jail without resorting to violence.⁵¹ Leonard Wood agreed with McLeary’s positive assessment of the Rural Guard’s devotion to their mission. Yet Wood avoided acknowledging to his superiors in the War Department that many of the highwaymen the Rural Guard pursued were former *mambises*, and instead claimed “the men engaged in this were old hands at it, and have returned

⁴⁹ James H. McLeary to the Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325.

⁵⁰ James H. McLeary to the Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325.

⁵¹ James H. McLeary to the Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325.

to it naturally since the end of the war.”⁵² He credited the Rural Guard with running down the bandits and almost entirely pacifying the countryside. Wood officially reported that the Rural Guard killed a number of the bandits while they resisted arrest, an allusion to the fact that he did not expect or want them to be brought in alive simply to be released shortly thereafter by the inefficient and corrupt Cuban courts.⁵³

Unfortunately, the extrajudicial killing of bandits was common practice among the Rural Guard, and the U.S. Army barely denied that they condoned and encouraged the killings. The orders from the U.S. Army was to “capture or kill the bandits wherever they were found” with “promptness and efficiency,” an obvious suggestion that killing the bandits was preferred to capturing them.⁵⁴ Ironically, the Rural Guard troopers that pursued and exterminated the bandits were usually killing comrades that they had fought with in the Cuban Liberation Army during the war. The Rural Guard returned with the spurs and machete of their victim as proof of the bandits “capture.” In Baracoa for example, the military district commander, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas S. Wylly, approved a list of names to be put upon a blacklist and sent it to the Captain Andriano Gallano, the district commander of the Rural Guard. Gallano then sent a Rural Guard patrol to hunt down each criminal on the list. In one instance, a former major in the Cuban Liberation Army organized a band of horse thieves that pillaged the interior near Baracoa. When Gallano discovered that two members of the gang had recently left town, he sent a group of his Rural Guard down each possible escape route, leading one squad himself. Gallano’s troopers

⁵² National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 4-5.

⁵³ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 4-5.

⁵⁴ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Must Keep Troops in Cuba,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

followed the bandits' trail for twenty-five miles before discovering the major and his accomplices hiding in a house in the jungle. Gallano surrounded the house and returned with a spur and machete, which Gallano collected from the major "whom he stated had been killed while endeavoring to escape."⁵⁵ The harsh methods employed by the Rural Guard allowed for the rapid pacification of the countryside through methods that the U.S. Army could not use.

Operational Mobility: The U.S. Army's Need for Mounted Soldiers

The Rural Guard did an excellent job securing U.S. Army officers as they traveled the countryside on official duties, securing large plantations, and pursuing bandits in the interior of the province. The mounted troopers of the Rural Guard performed these duties better than the U.S. Army could because of their familiarity with the terrain, language, and people, but also because they were mounted. The War Department sent only infantry regiments to occupy Santiago. These units effectively controlled towns, but did not have the operational mobility necessary to secure the rural interior. Wood and Lawton both knew that without cavalry their forces did not have the mobility to support the Rural Guard if they ran into large groups of bandits, or suppress a renewal of hostilities in the interior by former *mambises*, or worse, disgruntled Rural Guard troopers.

In order to ensure they could maintain control of the interior and effectively deal with a renewed insurgency, both Lawton and Wood requested that the War Department send a cavalry regiment. Even though he did not expect a renewal of hostilities, Lawton sought a squadron of

⁵⁵ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, "Restoring Order to Cuba," The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

cavalry just days after assuming command of the Department of Santiago in August.⁵⁶ A month later he continued to plead with Corbin in the War Department to send him cavalry. Lawton argued that a cavalry squadron would allow him to occupy the province with fewer men because the horse soldiers would allow him “to patrol a large territory, which need not then be garrisoned” by infantry.⁵⁷ To help convince the adjutant general, Lawton offered to give up three infantry regiments in exchange for a single squadron of cavalry.⁵⁸ Lawton never received his squadron of cavalry.

Wood continued to harass Washington for cavalry. After a drunk and belligerent African American soldier shot a Cuban police officer who tried to arrest him, Wood—who had a disdain for the African American regiments—used the incident to implore Corbin to reassign two of his three black regiments to another part of Cuba in return for a regiment of regular cavalry. Wood could not mount his troops on the horses left behind by the Spanish because a glanders epidemic forced the U.S. Army to put almost all of them down. Wood argued that he badly needed cavalry to act as couriers and to patrol the interior. He insisted “infantry cannot under any circumstances do this work in Cuba without great inconvenience and hardship” due to the toll that the tropical heat took on dismounted soldiers on the march and because the “vegetation [was] so dense that men on foot are practically buried under it while marching.”⁵⁹ Later in November, he made the same case to the President for a cavalry regiment. Wood told McKinley that if he could get a

⁵⁶ Lawton to Adjutant General, U.S. Army, August 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 60.

⁵⁷ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 13, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 296.

⁵⁸ Lawton to Adjutant General, September 27, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 428.

⁵⁹ Leonard Wood to Adjutant General U.S. Army, November 18, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 464-65.

regiment of cavalry, then he could easily spare two to three regiments of infantry “at anytime, absolutely do not need them.”⁶⁰ The problem was that the War Department had no regular cavalry regiments to spare. Almost all of them had fought in Cuba and were recovering from their ailments in Long Island or were deployed in Puerto Rico or the Philippines.

Nonetheless, Corbin found a way to get Wood mounted troops. He authorized the shipment of one regiment’s worth of horses, carbines, and horse tack to Wood in Santiago to mount one of his infantry regiments. Instead of using all the horses and tack to mount a single infantry regiment, the ecstatic Wood wanted to mount two companies of infantry from each of his five white regiments, his racist beliefs never allowing him to trust the martial abilities of his black soldiers. Wood’s plan allowed him to have two companies of mounted riflemen in each of his four military districts, with the extra two companies acting as his reserve in Santiago de Cuba. Wood also requested to the Adjutant General that no sabers be issued, since the infantrymen were not trained to use them, and he did not harbor any romantic notions that the sword was still useful in battle. Additionally, he wanted the War Department to send small and hearty horses from Texas to Cuba and not large northern horses, which struggled in the tropical climate.⁶¹ By 1899, Wood had his Texas mustangs, carbines, and horse accouterments; however, he did end up mounting two companies of African American soldiers from the 9th U.S.V.I. due to the disposition of his troops in the department. In addition to the 9th Immunes, 150 infantrymen from the 5th Infantry, and the 5th, 4th, and 2nd Immunes all received horses and carbine rifles between February and March of 1899. When the volunteers eventually departed Cuba later that

⁶⁰ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 6.

⁶¹ Leonard Wood to Adjutant General, U.S. Army, November 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 90.

year, they turned over all their horses and equipment to the 5th Infantry, enough to mount the entire regiment. The War Department replaced the seven departing volunteer regiments with the 10th U.S. Cavalry, giving Wood only two regiments of Regulars to garrison the Department of Santiago, both mounted.⁶²

Before the volunteers departed Santiago, Wood utilized their mobility to pursue some of the larger bands of banditti that were too large for the Rural Guard to handle on their own. The worst groups of marauders in the province operated around Mayarí. Troncon commanded this band of former *mambises*, and rumor had it that he had served as the former executioner for Lieutenant General Antonio Maceo y Grajales, where he “removed the heads of a hundred Spanish prisoners, each with one stroke.”⁶³ After the Rural Guard failed to defeat a large group on banditti operating near Mayarí, Wood ordered the 9th Immunes to assist them in tracking down the gang. Days of pursuit by Company I of the 9th Immunes, commanded by Captain Claron A. Windus, could not capture the bandits.

The fortune of Troncon and his gang changed after they ambushed Company I’s lightly guarded supply wagon left near the Santa Ana sugar plantation and killed a teamster. Sergeant Thomas Cohen escaped the bandits’ attack and notified the rest of the company of the Troncon’s attack. The hunters soon became the hunted as I Company found the murderers’ trail and began a nonstop ninety-six-hour pursuit. The mounted infantry company tracked down the gang to their mountain hideout, where, after a shootout, the Immunes captured most of the gang leaders. The commander of the 9th Immunes, Charles Crane, described Troncon as the largest man he ever

⁶² Flagler to General Wood, December 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 3664. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 4-5.

⁶³ Charles J. Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 293.

saw, “coal black, about six feet and two or three inches tall, exceedingly broad shouldered, and a finely proportioned giant.”⁶⁴ The triumphant African American troopers brought their prisoners “bound and gagged” to the Cuban authorities for trial.⁶⁵ A year later, Troncon was back on the rampage, ravaging the area until another unit of African American soldiers, the 10th U.S. Cavalry, caught him for the final time.⁶⁶

Wood tried to downplay the significant threat that the marauding bandits in the interior posed to the Cubans and his own soldiers. In an attempt to demonstrate control over the situation in Santiago, he reported to the War Department that the repeated press reports on the significant levels of brigandage in the Department on Santiago were “very largely exaggerations.”⁶⁷ Unfortunately, the threat posed by the numerous bands of bandits to Cuban civilians and even Americans were quite significant. Soldiers in the 9th Immunes recalled daily skirmishes with Troncon’s large gang of bandits in the interior where “murder and rapine were daily occurrences.”⁶⁸ Similarly, Private Andrew Paul of the 3rd Immunes remembered chasing bandits and cattle thieves in the vicinity of Sagua de Tánamo.⁶⁹

While the U.S. Army’s garrison troops in Santiago did assist the Rural Guard in neutralizing bandits in the interior of the province, American soldiers spent the vast majority of

⁶⁴ Charles J. Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 293.

⁶⁵ W. Hillary Coston, *The Spanish-American War Volunteer: Ninth United States Volunteer Infantry* (Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Printery, 1899), 53.

⁶⁶ William B. Gatewood Jr., “*Smoked Yankees*” and *the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 184.

⁶⁷ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 4.

⁶⁸ W. Hillary Coston, *The Spanish-American War Volunteer: Ninth United States Volunteer Infantry* (Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Printery, 1899), 53.

⁶⁹ 3rd Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Paul, Andrew, Company I, Spanish-American War Veterans Questionnaire, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 66, Folder Number 18, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 5, 9.

their time drilling and guarding their encampments, government installations, and private property. Private Willie L. Potts of the Fifth Immunes never fired his weapon in Cuba, and he recalled spending his months in Cuba in formation drilling, protecting Morro Castle, and securing the docks in Santiago de Cuba.⁷⁰ Potts's experience typified most American soldiers, who spent almost their entire stay in Cuba killing time between morning and afternoon drill and guard shifts. Very few experienced the excitement of chasing bandits.

More often than pursuing the troublemakers, American officers ordered their soldiers outside the garrisoned towns to protect private property from the marauders. The garrison commanders sent soldiers in response to pleas made by plantation owners desperate for protection. Many of the plantation owners had fled Cuba during the three-year conflict, and upon their return they asked the U.S. Army to protect them from the bandits in the countryside.⁷¹ For example, the son of the German Consul in Santiago, Young Shumann, complained to the occupation government that thieves continued to steal livestock from the sugar plantation he managed in San Luis, and that several of the other nearby plantations and sugar mills had similar problems with bandits.⁷² In response to pleas like these, Wood ordered his subordinate commanders to send soldiers to guard the plantations. In December, Wood ordered Colonel Patrick H. Ray of the 3rd Immunes to use his regiment to protect the sugar plantations in vicinity

⁷⁰ 5th Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Potts, Willie L., Company K, Spanish-American War Veterans Questionnaire, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 66, Folder Number 24, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 5.

⁷¹ Leonard Wood to the Commanding Officer, Holguin, Cuba, November 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 69.

⁷² Corporal William Habligel to the Commanding General, Department of Santiago, December 27, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4421.

of Guantanamo.⁷³ Similarly, Wood ordered the newly arrived garrison commander in January 1899 to consult with the plantation owners near El Cobre and find the best way to protect them from the marauding bandits.⁷⁴

The U.S. Army also tried to protect the property of the private telegraph companies, vital to their effective communication with their garrisons and the United States, and the U.S. Army allowed its soldiers to use lethal force to keep the lines from being tampered with. After unknown vandals broke into a building containing the English Cable Company's junction boxes and damaged with them, Wood ordered guards already posted near the building at Morro and Punta Blanca to protect it and prevent a further disruption to the telegraph lines used by the Department of Santiago to communicate with the outside world.⁷⁵ Wood ordered Ray to send regular patrols to protect the telegraph line running from Guantanamo to Macuriges after thieves repeatedly tampered with it and stole the copper wire and other components. When attempting to make an arrest, Wood had no problem if "extreme measures have to be resorted to by the patrol."⁷⁶ Desperate to keep his lines of communication open, Wood also authorized the garrison at Songo "to prevent in whatever way is necessary any and all interference with the line" running to the town.⁷⁷ The extreme measures worked, and the telegraphic lines of communication were restored.

⁷³ Wood to Col. Ray, December 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 297.

⁷⁴ John H. Beacom to Senior officer, January 3, 1899, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 450.

⁷⁵ John H. Beacom to Commanding Officer, November 30, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 117.

⁷⁶ John H. Beacom to Commanding Officer, Guantanamo, December 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 331.

⁷⁷ John H. Beacom to Commanding Officer, Songo, December 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 332.

Despite the fact that marauding bandits posed a significantly larger threat to the security of the telegraph lines, businesses, farms, and plantations in the interior than Wood first admitted, by the summer of 1899, the Army and its Cuban allies had largely neutralized bandits in the Department of Santiago. By the end of the initial occupation, Wood could report to President William McKinley that because of the work of the Rural Guard, his mounted soldiers, and the municipal police in the larger towns, “brigandage and robbery have virtually ceased in this department.”⁷⁸ Wood concluded that the work of the local constabulary, “combined with the re-establishment of the courts, [was] gradually and surely putting these people in the way of governing themselves.”⁷⁹

Policing Cuba

Wanting to demonstrate its overwhelming strength, discourage the Cuban Liberation Army from continuing its armed struggle, and ensure the Spanish peacefully departed Cuba, the War Department sent nearly 45,000 soldiers to occupy the island, arriving between December 1898 and March 1899. Lieutenant General John R. Brooke did not have this volume of soldiers for long. Most of the troops sent to occupy Cuba were volunteers called up in April and May of 1898. With the official conclusion of the War with Spain as the Treaty of Paris took effect on April 11, 1899, the citizen soldiers in Cuba clamored to return home, and the War Department struggled to find a political or legal justification to keep them under arms. Furthermore, the Philippine Insurrection began in February 1899, forcing the War Department to send the majority

⁷⁸ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 2.

⁷⁹ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 3.

of its regiments to the Pacific. The McKinley Administration had to disavow any plan for the outright annexation of Cuba in order to prevent another violent insurrection against the United States, a conflict it could not afford. Now a secondary concern to the War Department, Brooke had only 11,000 soldiers to occupy all of Cuba by the end of 1899, just slightly more than Wood had to occupy Santiago during the initial occupation. By 1902, the last year of the occupation and the Philippine insurrection, the U.S. Army only had 4,600 soldiers left to control Cuba.⁸⁰

McKinley sent Robert P. Porter as his emissary to Cuba, where Porter and General Máximo Gómez developed the first plan to supplement the scanty number of U.S. Army soldiers available to occupy the island. They considered the possibility of mustering several Cuban regiments manned by his former soldiers to supplement the few remaining U.S. Army occupation forces. Recruiting Cuban soldiers into formations controlled by the U.S. Army was part of McKinley's broader policy to demobilize the potentially hostile Cuban Liberation Army by providing *mambises* jobs and food in return for their weapons. The McKinley administration approved Porter and Gómez's plan in the fall of 1898 and hoped to recruit up to ten thousand former *mambises* into a new Cuban army, but the administration did not act on it yet.

Later, the new Secretary of War, Elihu Root, decreased the size of the proposed Cuban colonial army. He envisioned recruiting three regiments of Cubans soldiers and junior officers, with American officers holding the higher ranks, a similar command structure to that used by the War Department for Indian scout companies on the Western frontier, African American volunteer regiments, Philippine Scouts, and the Puerto Rican Provisional Regiment. Similarly,

⁸⁰ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 58, 71-2, 95. *Annual Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Commanding Department of Cuba, 1901*, Report of Lieut. Colonel H. L. Scott, Adjutant General, Department of Cuba, 1901" (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1901), 10. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 298.

McKinley and the War Department hoped the proposed Cuban regiments would look less like an army of occupation, and that service in the regiments would Americanize the Cuban soldiers and induce loyalty to the United States. Eventually, the McKinley administration abandoned the idea of fielding a colonial army after Gómez's ouster and the subsequent fall of the Cuban assembly. Furthermore, Brooke correctly argued that Cubans perceived the scheme of establishing a colonial army as further evidence of the United States intention to remain in Cuba indefinitely. The War Department dropped the plan and decided instead to extend Wood's Rural Guard mounted police to the entire island.⁸¹

The creation by department commanders across the island of mounted police similar to Wood's Rural Guard served several purposes for Brooke's military government in Havana and the administration in Washington. Heavy columns of U.S. Army soldiers could not possibly hope to chase local bandits efficiently through the jungles and mountains of rural Cuba. Conversely, mounted constables were familiar with the back trails of the interior, understood native language and customs, and often knew personally the bandits they chased, since both the armed gangs and the mounted police were usually former *mambises*. Most Cubans had also built up natural immunity to the malaria and yellow fever that ravaged the ranks of the U.S. Army during the rainy season. In addition, the rural police forces provided an economical way to supplement the ever-decreasing number of U.S. Army soldiers, who could not possibly occupy every town or patrol every rural road in Cuba. The Rural Guard and municipal police also allowed the U.S. Army to control Cuba without resembling an occupier, and to provide employment to former Cuban soldiers. The U.S. Army did not want to enforce local laws or act directly against the

⁸¹ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 69, 104-105. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 332-40.

Cuban people, at risk of direct conflict between Cubans and American soldiers. By avoiding law enforcement duties that smacked of outright conquest, the U.S. Army sidestepped missions that might lead to hostile feelings by the occupied people. Most importantly, by recruiting politically dependable *mambises* into the mounted and municipal police, the War Department neutralized the threat of armed insurrection against their administration of the island by hiring potential insurgents into the ranks of the military government. Without jobs in the rural police forces, municipal police, sanitation crews, or construction teams, former soldiers turned to brigandage for survival since there was no work on the sugar plantations devastated during the war.⁸²

While department commanders found rural police forces useful for chasing bandits, most questioned whether it was a good idea to have a constable force that did not directly report to civil authorities. Generals Fitzhugh Lee, William V. Ludlow, and Brooke all discouraged the creation of a national police force. However, Major General James H. Wilson, the department commander of Matanzas and Santa Clara, was the most outspoken critic of Wood's Rural Guard.⁸³ He believed more than other U.S. Army commanders did that Cuban civil officials could effectively run the island and that the creation of a national police force might be used later for undemocratic machinations. Wilson argued for the immediate absorption of all rural constables into the existing municipal police force. To him, the idea of a national police force not directly controlled by municipal authorities was neither republican nor American.⁸⁴ In an interview, Wilson said that the "the rural guard is not needed; the municipal police is sufficient,

⁸² Allan R. Millett, "The Rise and Fall of the Cuban Rural Guard, 1898-1912," *The Americas* 29 (October, 1972): 191-2. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 330-38.

⁸³ Allan R. Millett, "The Rise and Fall of the Cuban Rural Guard, 1898-1912," *The Americas* 29 (October, 1972): 191-2.

⁸⁴ James Harrison Wilson, *Under the Old Flag: Recollections of Military Operations in the War for the Union, the Spanish War, the Boxer Rebellion, Etc.* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1912), 2:489.

by being organized with unmounted together with mounted men, under the command of the mayors.”⁸⁵

Wilson and other U.S. Army department commanders also heavily criticized Wood for encouraging his Rural Guard to use extrajudicial killings during the formal occupation of Cuba, and Brooke threatened a formal investigation. Most murders of alleged criminals by the Rural Guard occurred under Wood’s watch in Santiago. Major General James H. Wilson confided to a friend that Brooke told him Wood was “in very deep water” for “hanging a lot of people without trial.”⁸⁶ He also noted Wood had supposedly admitted to Chaffee that he was “having alleged banditti killed without trial.”⁸⁷ Brooke ordered an impartial investigation into the killings by the Rural Guard, but Wood conducted the internal investigation himself. Wood’s handling of the investigation angered Brooke, but he refused to investigate his wayward subordinate further, fearing what would be revealed. Brooke’s, Chaffee’s, Wilson’s, and the other department commanders’ outrage over Wood’s methods suggest that other U.S. Army commanders in Cuba did not condone the extrajudicial killings of alleged bandits. It seems that only Wood in the Department of Santiago encouraged extrajudicial killings.

Wood was the only department head to advocate for the creation of a nationwide mounted constabulary based on his Rural Guard. He had support from Secretary Root, some other Army officers, and local planters because of the Rural Guard’s success in eliminating

⁸⁵ “La Lucha” at Matanzas, General J. H. Wilson,—Interview with our Special Correspondent—Important Statements, Container 52, The Papers of James H. Wilson, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 5.

⁸⁶ James H. Wilson to R. Suydam Grant, September 14, 1899, Letter number 121, Letters Sent from August 1, 1899 to September 30, 1899, Container 44, The Papers of James H. Wilson, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁸⁷ James H. Wilson to R. Suydam Grant, September 14, 1899, Letter number 121, Letters Sent from August 1, 1899 to September 30, 1899, Container 44, The Papers of James H. Wilson, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

banditry in the Department of Santiago, despite their methods. After Wood took command of the Division of Cuba, he consolidated his control over the disparate mounted police forces still working directly for the department commanders and created a national Rural Guard. On April 11, 1901, Wood issued the Organic Law of the Rural Guard, which placed the provincial units under his national control and created an artillery corps to assume responsibility for Cubans coastal fortifications from departing U.S. Army coastal artillery units. Wood, who was always opposed to centralized control from Havana while he served as commander of the Department, had no problem consolidating the several rural constabularies under his authority once he was in charge of the Division of Cuba. He appointed Captain Herbert J. Slocum, a forty-five-year-old and long-serving Regular, to oversee the national Rural Guard. A future Army commander, Robert L. Bullard, served with Slocum in Cuba and remembered that he would never “set the world on fire” with his intellect, but his “qualities as a ‘mixer’ and ability to make others work for him [were] really enviable, valuable.”⁸⁸ Slocum reported directly to Wood and worked very well with General Alejandro Rodríguez, a former Cuban Liberation Army officer, to oversee the lieutenant colonels who commanded the Rural Guard units in each of the six provinces. The provincial Rural Guard commanders no longer reported directly to the U.S. Army department commanders, but to Rodríguez and Slocum in Havana.⁸⁹

To the delight of Wood and local property owners, Slocum and Rodríguez’s Rural Guard of 62 officers and 1,342 troops did an excellent job of patrolling the interior, catching bandits,

⁸⁸ Entry, October 28, 1907, Diary Book 4, Robert L. Bullard Papers, Library of Congress. See also Hugh L. Scott, *Some Memoirs of a Soldier* (New York, 1928), 265.

⁸⁹ Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 340-41. Allan R. Millett, “The Rise and Fall of the Cuban Rural Guard, 1898-1912,” *The Americas* 29 (October, 1972): 193-6. Leonard Wood to Adjutant General, U.S. Army, *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 1:48.

and protecting the plantations. They no longer had to supply their own equipment, weapons, and uniforms, and the national Rural Guard troopers revived khaki uniforms, lived in government barracks, and received government mounts.⁹⁰ They also escorted Army officers and civil authorities and secured construction crews building a railroad across the island. The Rural Guard maintained a professional appearance and compared favorably to the U.S. Army cavalry regiments after whom they were modeled. They did not, however, Americanize themselves or others, or show the selflessness and devotion to duty that Wood had hoped. They also acted in a less than disinterested manner when it came to politics and were known to terrorize *campesinos* and other lower-class Cubans on behalf of their wealthy patrons.⁹¹

When selecting officers and men from the Cuban Liberation Army to serve in the Rural Guard, the U.S. Army typically chose Cubans of European descent who were from the higher classes. The selection process ensured that the Cuban Rural Guard protected the interests of the propertied class that wanted to avoid a social revolution and desired stronger relations with the United States. In return, the Rural Guard received land and other aid from the propertied class to establish outposts that enabled the Rural Guard to protect their plantations from the marauding bandits of former *mambises*. The Rural Guard never represented the social diversity of the Cuban Liberation Army. To ensure that more radical and less desirable classes of Cuban society did not join the Rural Guard, the Wood administration enacted literacy qualifications and required letters

⁹⁰ Leonard Wood to Adjutant General, U.S. Army, *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 1:48. Alejandro Rodríguez to Adjutant General, Department of Cuba, "Report of the Rural Guard of the Island of Cuba, Calendar Year 1901," *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 6:1-5, 17-8, 35-40, 62-5.

⁹¹ Allan R. Millett, "The Rise and Fall of the Cuban Rural Guard, 1898-1912," *The Americas* 29 (October, 1972): 195-6.

of recommendation, preferably from well-respected property owners. Like the Rural Guard, the municipal police recruited from “better” Cuban families, resulting in few black patrolmen. Similarly, the Artillery Corps accepted only white officers. The Rural Guard became inseparable from the propertied class and the occupation government it served. After the U.S. Army departed Cuba, the Rural Guard continued to protect the property and interests of the large plantation and mine owners.⁹²

Conclusion

As an economy-of-force mission for the War Department, Brooke and Wood had to rely heavily on native auxiliaries to control the island, just as the U.S. Army had relied on them on the Western borderlands of North America. Similarly to what Wood had done in Santiago, local police secured the urban areas, and the mounted Rural Guard patrolled the interior and protected plantations from bandits. The U.S. Army kept its troops in garrisons where they drilled and supported the Cuban police forces when they needed assistance. Primarily, however, the U.S. Army’s forces maintained the threat of overwhelming military force to ensure the Cubans had to accept the authority of the occupation government. The disbanding of the Cuban Liberation Army and the small size and dispersed nature of the Rural Guard ensured that even the reduced U.S. Army’s supremacy of military forces could not be seriously challenged.

Just as it did on the Indian reservations of the American Western frontier, the U.S. Army created a native constabulary in Cuba to maintain order, continuing the methods used by the U.S.

⁹² Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 341-43. Alejandro Rodríguez to Adjutant General, Department of Cuba, “Report of the Rural Guard of the Island of Cuba, Calendar Year 1901,” *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 6:41.

Army to keep control over newly conquered populations in North America and overseas. The process of using native auxiliaries commanded by American officers repeated itself in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, and in the twentieth century with the *Gendarmerie d'Haiti*, *Guardia Nacional Dominicana*, and the *Guardia Nacional de Nicaragua*.

CHAPTER 7:
SUSTAINING THE OCCUPATION: COLLECTING REVENUES, BUILDING
INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SANITATION

The capitulation of Spanish forces in Santiago de Cuba...render it necessary to instruct the military commander of the United States as to the conduct with which he is to observe during the military occupation. One of the important and most practical problems with which it will be necessary for him to deal is that of the collection and administration of the revenues. You will therefore at once arrange to collect customs duties and port charges on goods and ships entering Santiago or other ports or places coming under our control.

- William McKinley to The Secretary of War (July 18, 1898)

Introduction

To control the Department of Santiago, the War Department monopolized the use of military force by disbanding the Cuban Army and replacing it with a native constabulary that was too small to challenge the U.S. Army's occupation forces. The War Department also needed to create the necessary infrastructure to sustain its soldiers in the Department of Santiago. The roads across the eastern Cuba suffered from years of neglect and in most places had been reduced to overgrown footpaths. One of Wood's staff officers remembered that the so called "roads which we were compelled to travel...are of the worst possible description," and that "none of the roads, in scarcely any part of the country, appear to have been traveled by wagons

within a recent time.”¹ After examining the Department of Santiago, Wood concluded that the roads that once traversed the interior had ceased to exist.² Furthermore, almost all the bridges, telegraph lines, and railroad tracks that once connected the towns in eastern Cuba had been destroyed during the Cuban War for Independence. Fortunately, the U.S. Army regularly repaired roads, built barracks, ran telegraph wire, and supported railroad constructed on the American West, and the soldiers quickly set to work rebuilding the transportation network in the Department of Santiago. But before the War Department could rebuild the lines of communication across Santiago that it required to sustain its occupation soldiers, it needed to collect tariff revenues to pay for them. The U.S. Army immediately reopened the port of Santiago de Cuba so that it could begin collecting customs duties on imports. The military government used this revenue to rebuild the dilapidated lines of communication to its garrisons across the Department of Santiago, to pay for the sanitation of the towns and barracks, and to provide employment for many former Cuban soldiers.

Financing the Occupation

Deeply concerned about the cost of the War with Spain, McKinley and the War Department considered how to pay for the pending occupation even before the Spanish surrendered Santiago de Cuba. The solution they devised was simple: the Spanish government primarily used the tariff revenues collected on imported items and the export of raw material to pay for the cost of administering its Cuban colony, so the McKinley administration would simply

¹ McLeary to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325, 3.

² National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 9.

adopt and enforce the existing Spanish tariff laws to fund the occupation. McKinley still needed to go back to a sympathetic, but fiscally conservative, Republican majority in Congress to request additional funding for the expanded army of volunteers and the costs associated with delivering food and military equipment overseas. Congress even paid for the millions of rations given to needy Cubans. Yet almost all of the other funds used to make infrastructure improvements in Santiago and pay for the costs of administering the military government came from tariff duties collected on goods entering and raw material leaving Cuban ports.

The U.S. Army gradually expanded its control over the coastal towns in the Department of Santiago as ships became available to transport Spanish troops home and bring U.S. garrisons to take their place. But the War Department did not wait for the transition before collecting tariff revenues. It immediately sent representatives to take control of the customs houses and the funds in the surrendered territory. The satellite customs houses sent the collected tariff revenues to the department headquarters in Santiago de Cuba. After analyzing all the proposed monthly expenditures across the province, the department commander redistributed the collected revenues back to the local garrison commanders to cover the costs of local reconstruction projects and running the local municipal governments. The McKinley administration created a private banking entity run by U.S. investors for the military occupation to hold the collected tariff funds. Finally, to end the financial and administrative chaos of having numerous national currencies in use in Santiago Province, the McKinley administration and the War Department created policies that manipulated the currency making the gold-backed U.S. dollar the primary currency.

The day after the Spanish surrendered Santiago de Cuba, Major General William R. Shafter immediately opened the port to merchant ships to unload their urgently needed cargoes in the city, and he ordered the local customs collector to use the existing tariff schedules to collect

duties. Not wanting to overstep his authority, Shafter immediately cabled the War Department for further guidance. The reply did not take long. The President and his advisors had just finalized a plan that they had been working on for days to deal with this expected problem of financing the occupation. McKinley and his advisors instructed the Secretary of War to have Shafter immediately arrange “to collect customs duties and port charges on goods and ships entering Santiago or other ports or places coming under our control.”³ Furthermore, McKinley instructed the War Department to use the existing Spanish tariff schedules for goods imported from the Spanish mainland for all goods entering the country including imports from the United States, but he repealed an additional \$1 per ton tax on cargoes and replaced it with a more reasonable 20 cents per ton rate.⁴ McKinley’s new policy abolished the mercantile system of trade with Cuba, which had given Spanish goods favored rates for the previous 400 years. By requiring all nations, including the United States, to pay the same tariff rates, the McKinley administration upheld the free market principles its campaign ran on. The fact that the administration already had a clear plan for collecting revenue at the time of General José Toral y Vásquez’s surrender demonstrates that it had been pondering how to pay for the occupation for quite some time. Furthermore, the President authorized the newly created North American Trust Company of New York City to operate out of Santiago de Cuba as the official financial agent of

³ William McKinley to the Secretary of War, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 160.

⁴ William McKinley to the Secretary of War, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 160.

the U.S. government only three days after the capitulation.⁵ The creation of a banking entity and the election of board members was surely not the work of a mere three days.

Soon after the McKinley administration established its customs policy and sanctioned the North American Trust Company to act as a bank for the military government in Santiago, it ordered the Treasury Department to send a customs official to administer the customs house in Santiago de Cuba. The administration appointed Walter A. Donaldson to the position. He had more than twenty years of experience as a customs collector in various ports in the United States and a familiarity with the Spanish language and tariff system.⁶ Donaldson's experience allowed him quickly to establish an efficient customs service in the Department of Santiago. Although many Spanish customs officers resigned and returned to Spain after the occupation began, this did not hamper the efficiency of Donaldson's office. Following McKinley's explicit guidance, Donaldson allowed existing Spanish customs officials to retain their positions if they so desired, unless they were known to be exceptionally corrupt. The collector of customs in Baracoa, John López Chávez, typified the uncertainty the Spanish customs officers felt about retaining their old positions after the U.S. Army took control. López wrote Donaldson to ask if he should continue his duties, to which Donaldson immediately affirmed that he should carry on in his former position and specified the number of clerks, boatmen, and inspectors López was authorized to employ.⁷ Donaldson found the Spanish customs bureaucracy bloated with extraneous personnel, and he sought few replacements for the positions vacated by Spanish officials returning to Spain.

⁵ H. C. Corbin to Major-General Shafter, July 20, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 169.

⁶ Franklin Matthews, *The New-Born Cuba* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1899), 137-139.

⁷ Donaldson to Lopez, August 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 194.

The few vacancies that required replacements Donaldson easily filled with the many qualified applicants from both the United States and Cuba.

Unlike Donaldson, who had an excess of employees, Lawton found his own military staff insufficient to account properly for the increasing volume of funds turned over by Donaldson's collectors and the other staff work needed to run a military government. In the first five weeks of the occupation, Lawton's headquarters processed the collection and expenditure of \$90,000.⁸ Lawton requested a professional bookkeeper to account for every penny, knowing that auditors from the Inspector's General's Department would arrive to scrutinize all of his receipts and books. On August 29, Lawton wrote the head accountant of the Inspector General's Department, W. T. Kent, asking for the name of a "good accountant and book-keeper capable of superintending the receipt, disbursement and accounting of the revenues from duties, taxes and other sources."⁹ Kent recommended Lieutenant Colonel Frank A. Cook of the 1st Rhode Island Infantry, and Lawton immediately requested that Corbin reassign the officer to his staff.¹⁰

Fortunately for Lawton, the War Department sent him the necessary personnel to account for the department's finances, since the volume of funds that it processed grew substantially with increased imports and exports as the U.S. Army garrisons brought peace and order to the province. By November 1, the customs house in Santiago de Cuba alone had collected \$221,636.65, not to mention the equally large dues that other ports in the department brought

⁸ Lawton to Adjutant General, August 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 79.

⁹ Lawton to Kent, August 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 87.

¹⁰ Lawton to Adjutant General, August 31, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 139.

in.¹¹ Despite a reported plague at the ports of Baracoa and Gibara, which prevented commerce from arriving at those docks for months, the total revenue that Donaldson's custom officers collected across the province far exceeded Wood's expectations.¹²

Despite the efficiency of his administration of the customs house, Donaldson still struggled to eliminate a culture of corruption among local merchants and tenured customs officials. For centuries, Spain paid its colonial officials such low salaries as to essentially sanction corruption. Moreover, the debt crises in Spain forced its government to levy onerous tariffs on goods not only to pay for the Cuban colony, but also to send badly needed revenue to the treasury in Madrid. Absurdly high tariffs and the culture of corruption made the smuggling of goods common practice. Unfortunately, smuggling remained difficult to prevent.¹³ Donaldson employed revenue cutters to patrol the coasts in an attempt to stop smugglers from landing merchandise outside of the designated ports of entry. On November 29, he asked Wood to allow his customs officials to search passengers' personal baggage.¹⁴ Donaldson's strong suspicion that passengers were smuggling merchandise in their baggage to avoid paying customs proved to be correct. On December 14, his customs agents detained Magin Meléndez for smuggling merchandise in his sea trunks and turned him over to military officials while he awaited charges

¹¹ Wood to Secretary of War, November 9, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 375. Donaldson to Wood, November 7, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2841.

¹² Donaldson to Wood, November 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2637.

¹³ Franklin Matthews, *The New-Born Cuba* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1899), 137-157; John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 17.

¹⁴ Donaldson to Wood, November 29, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 3606.

in a civil court. According to regulations, Donaldson sold the confiscated merchandise and added the proceeds from the sale to the government's customs account.¹⁵

Just as Wood changed the regulations to allow officials to search personal baggage, the War Department made other modifications to the inherited Spanish tariff schedules. The President lifted the import duties in September on supplies of food “intended for the relief of starving inhabitants of the Island of Cuba,” thereby alleviating relief agencies from paying duties on their donations.¹⁶ On November 29, Wood ordered administrative reforms to ensure proper accountability of employee salaries and duties.¹⁷ A week later, Wood introduced additional reforms to the procedures that customs officials used to verify ship manifests in an effort to prevent smuggling by misrepresenting the actual goods on board a merchant ships and to standardize port procedures across the department.¹⁸

Meanwhile, the War Department moved a little too quickly in its attempt to regulate and standardize the currency in the Department of Santiago. The military and civilian officials in the department struggled to exchange and deposit the myriad of different currencies in circulation throughout the province and used to pay duties by foreign merchants in the customs house. The War Department responded to this situation by enacting a regulation on August 1 that declared the currency of the United States “obligatory for all transaction[s] which may take place in this

¹⁵ Donaldson to Wood, December 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4066.

¹⁶ Meiklejohn to Commanding General, Santiago, September 7, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 226.

¹⁷ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, Circular No. 7, November 29, 1898.

¹⁸ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, Circular No. 8, December 5, 1898.

territory.”¹⁹ The President of the Santiago de Cuba Chamber of Commerce, Elisio Ros, asked Wood to use his influence to delay the enactment of the law. Ros argued that the law was premature, as there was not enough American currency yet in circulation, and that it was “prejudicial to the interests of commerce and to public wealth on account of depreciation which it would cause in the present circulation medium of Spanish coinage, and would besides, cripple mercantile operations.”²⁰ It appears that the War Department either repealed the law or limited its enforcement, as Wood complained in December that the checks he received in *pesetas* from Spanish merchants were not being accepted by the Treasury Department.²¹ Wood asked the Secretary of the Treasury to have his department accept his checks in Spanish currency at the current exchange rate.²² To prevent people in the Department of Santiago from using the Spanish silver coinage that the Republican Party and administration so despised, Wood set the exchange rate of silver at 50 cents to the gold-standard dollar.²³ The exchange rate encouraged the holders of Spanish silver to spend it outside the occupied province, where they could get twice the goods or Spanish gold for their money. By the end of the initial occupation, almost all transactions in the Department of Santiago occurred in American currency, and while Spanish and French gold were still in circulation, Spanish silver disappeared from use.²⁴

¹⁹ Wood to Meiklejohn, October 11, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4258.

²⁰ Wood to Meiklejohn, October 11, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4258.

²¹ Wood to Secretary of the Treasury, December 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 152.

²² Wood to Secretary of the Treasury, December 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 152.

²³ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 18, December 21, 1898.

²⁴ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Report by Brigadier General Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, on Civic Conditions in the Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, In Response to Circular No. 10, Division of Customs and Insular Affairs, War Department, March 25, 1899* (Cristo Cuba: Adjutant Generals Office, September

After Lawton, and later Wood, established control over revenue sources and currency, they turned their attention to regulating expenditures. Besides the small accounts budgeted to district commanders for pre-approved reconstruction and sanitation projects and local municipal tax revenues kept to pay local officials, the Department Commander approved all other expenditures in Santiago paid from tariff revenues. Lawton and later Wood tried to act in a fiscally responsible manner by reducing the excessive number of government officials inherited from the Spanish government. The Spanish administration had appointed an unnecessarily large number of employees as an effective form of political patronage, but the resulting system was inefficient and lent itself to rampant corruption. Wood and Lawton also sought to reduce the use of expensive locally owned properties rented for military purposes. To make these cost saving reforms, Lawton issued an order in August requiring all current employees, rentals, future hires, and expenditures to be approved by his office. After Lawton's staff reviewed all of the proposed monthly budget, he cut unnecessary expenditures by releasing excessive government officials, limiting additional hires, and ordering U.S. troops to rent fewer private properties. Furthermore, Lawton strictly prohibited any military official from spending more than Lawton allocated them without his approval.²⁵

The cost-saving measures made by the War Department, Donaldson, Lawton, and Wood prevented the Department of Santiago from expending more than it collected from revenues and going into debt. Additionally, the stability and security provided by U.S. garrisons instilled in planters and merchants the confidence to increase the volume of trade in the province,

1899), 25. "The Value of Spanish Silver," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Havana, December 28, 1898.

²⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 4 and 9, August 26 and September 21, 1898.

consequently increasing the duties and taxes collected. Soon, the Department of Santiago was fiscally viable. Wood reported to President McKinley in late November that “the finance of the province will render it self-sustaining, and it will not be necessary for the United States to spend any money in the Province of Santiago, other than maintenance of its Army.”²⁶ That same month, Wood divided the Department of Santiago into four military districts and gave each district commander a few thousand dollars a month to supplement locally collected municipal taxes. When combined, these funds allowed the district commanders to pay municipal officials’ salaries, do sanitary work, and keep local schools and courts open.²⁷ The bulk of the customs funds collected in the province paid for larger construction projects, building repairs, and salaries and operating costs for provincial-level administrative services, including the rural police, the high courts, and state schools of higher education. Tariff revenues also funded the civilian doctors’ salaries, hospital repairs, and free medicines for needy Cubans.²⁸

Without controlling the collection of local tariff revenues the U.S. government would have lacked the means to fund the administration of the Department of Santiago. From the first day of the occupation, the McKinley administration adopted the former Spanish tariff schedules to pay for the cost of governing Santiago and established a bank to deposit the revenue collected in the province. The security provided by the U.S. Army garrisons in the province gave merchants and planters the confidence to resume normal economic activity in the U.S.-occupied

²⁶ Wood to President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁷ Wood to President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

²⁸ Wood to President of the United States, December 17, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Wood to Assistant Secretary of War, December 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 294-96.

parts of the island. The increasing revenues collected from customs dues allowed the War Department to pay for the cost of administering the military government and making necessary improvements to the province's infrastructure to support U.S. Army garrisons. Tariff funds also allowed Lawton and Wood to assert more control over the province. The processes of establishing military and economic control of the province were mutually reinforcing—both needed to occur simultaneously for the U.S. Army to exist in Santiago Province, allowing the War Department to avoid a costly occupation, in both lives and money.

Building Military Infrastructure and Establishing Lines of Communication

By maintaining a monopoly on military force, using local constabularies to secure the Cuban population, and collecting tariff revenues, the U.S. Army established firm control over the Department of Santiago. The next priority for the American generals was to build the necessary infrastructure to sustain the U.S. Army garrisons, which were disbursed to all the major population centers in the province to enforce the policies of the McKinley administration and the military government. After paying the monthly salaries of the civilian employees working for his military government, Wood and his garrison commanders spent what remained of their monthly revenue on public works projects that helped them supply their soldiers or directly facilitated their health. The construction of roads, port facilities, and the telegraph lines to the Army's outposts allowed them to control the province.²⁹

Perhaps the most difficult task Lawton and Wood faced during the initial occupation was the reconstruction of the destroyed road network in the Province of Santiago to supply and

²⁹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 5.

communicate with garrisons located in remote towns in the interior. Wood recorded in his annual report that “the roads throughout the province are wretched. In fact, it might almost be said that we have, with very few exceptions no roads.”³⁰ For the majority of the initial occupation, the Quartermaster’s pack trains were the only reliable means of supplying the interior garrisons. Mules were also the U.S. Army’s preferred method of supplying soldiers in restricted terrain on the Trans-Mississippi West.³¹ When the roads permitted it, quartermasters preferred to use wagons to haul supplies, but pack trains were often the only means of traversing the countryside on the West and in Cuba. The Spanish had maintained a road network in Santiago before the Wars of Independence but after almost thirty years of neglect and war these roads, especially in the mountainous and rainy jungles of eastern Santiago, had fallen into complete disrepair.³² During the war the Spanish and Cuban armies also destroyed bridges, further inhibiting the later use of roads by wagon trains. Western Santiago had a much better road system, but because these adobe clay roads contained no gravel, their surfaces turned into a thick, sticky mud in the rainy season, and were thus impassible to wagons until they dried in early November. At first, the Quartermaster Department suffered from a severe shortage of mules to run the necessary pack trains, but slowly they collected the many stray mules lost by the Fifth Corps during the fighting around Santiago de Cuba. Within weeks, the Chief Quartermaster had more mules than he

³⁰ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 9.

³¹ Brigadier General George Crook more than other utilized mules to give his columns the operational mobility necessary to pursue hostile Indians, see Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 126-27; and Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 48-9.

³² John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 26, 75.

needed, and with permission from the War Department he sold the extras to Cubans eager to buy livestock.³³

In December 1898, Inspector General Major James H. McLeary noted little improvement in the overall condition of the department's road network on his inspection tour. He found that wagons could travel only on the road between Santiago de Cuba and San Luis and the road between Holguín and Gibara. Army wagons could not traverse any of the other roads in the department for more than "five or ten miles consecutively."³⁴ His report continued to describe how "most of the highways are merely openings through the timber, and in wet weather seem to have been abandoned altogether by the pack trains, which have pursued narrow paths on the margin of the roads, or taken new routes generally parallel to the highway through adjacent timber."³⁵ As the pack trains crossed the muddy roads to stay on the drier high ground, the original roads became overgrown and the meandering footpaths that crossed back and forth across the highway increased the total length of any route "from twenty to fifty percent."³⁶ The pathetic state of the roads frustrated Wood, and he spent a great deal of money to improve the lines of communication to his isolated garrisons.

Fortunately, the U.S. Army had over a hundred years of institutional experience building roads. Throughout its history, most army soldiers spent far more time maintaining and building forts and roads than they spent drilling or conducting any other martial activities. Usually, the

³³ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 7-10.

³⁴ McLeary to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325, 3.

³⁵ McLeary to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325, 3.

³⁶ McLeary to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, December 19, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 4325, 3.

military roads they constructed linked forts to major population centers, the closest navigable river or railroad, or other forts. The Army also built national roads for the government as a form of free labor. As early as 1802, soldiers constructed a road from Nashville to Natchez. The U.S. Army constructed approximately 1,900 miles of road in the sixteen years following the War of 1812, including a road from Nashville to New Orleans and a road from Detroit to Fort Meigs, Ohio. In 1836, Congress approved the largest road project up to that time. Soldiers worked to build an 800 mile-long road to link a series of forts on the western border of the United States, completing work in 1841. Starting in the 1840s, the U.S. Army developed a system of road construction refined during work on for the Mormon Trail, the Honey Lake wagon road, the Southern Military Road, and the Oregon Trail, to name just a few. They later implemented this system in Cuba, where Army topographical engineers surveyed routes and supervised their construction, though contract workers—instead of soldiers—did most of the labor.³⁷

After the Civil War, the Army continued to use its soldiers and other laborers to build and repair roads in the trans-Mississippi West, and many of the officers who later served in Cuba gained valuable experience supervising these construction projects.³⁸ After taking command of the 1st Infantry Regiment at Fort Randall, Dakota Territory, in 1879, Shafter supervised the construction of a military road by his soldiers to Camp Keya Paha to protect settlers in the area from Sioux raids. The 1st Infantry deployed to Texas in 1880 during the Victorio War, but days

³⁷ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 44, 167-68, 171. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 51-2, 83, 106. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 42-3, 52-60. Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 352.

³⁸ Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 61. Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 93-4.

after the destruction of the Apache band at the hands of Mexican soldiers, Shafter put his regiment to work repairing roads in the Trans-Pecos region.³⁹ Colonel Charles J. Crane, who commanded the 9th Immunes during the initial occupation of Cuba, commented on the fine roadwork done by soldiers of the 24th Infantry on a trip to Fort Davis, Texas in 1880.⁴⁰

Not until the summer of 1899 did the road network in the Department of Santiago begin to show major improvements. Early in December 1898, Wood sent the recently arrived Colonel James S. Pettit, commander of the Military District of Manzanillo, a large number of picks, shovels, and other lightweight tools to begin improving the roads in his district. Meanwhile, Wood hired two work crews of 100 Cubans each to begin building roads from Santiago de Cuba to Guantánamo and to Holguín. Wood wanted to build a fork off the road to Holguín to connect Bayamo and Manzanillo to the road network.⁴¹ In San Luis, the 8th Illinois Infantry cut a 25-mile road from Palma Soriano directly to Santiago de Cuba to cut the distance supply trains traveled to Palma Soriano by more than half. The old route from Santiago de Cuba to Palma Soriano was 58 miles, because the road went through San Luis.⁴² Before the rainy season began in the spring of 1899, Wood's military government completed over 200 miles of road suitable for military wagons. Given the difficult terrain and climate, as well as the original poor state of the existing road network, Wood believed that every effort had "been made to repair these roads as rapidly

³⁹ Paul H. Carlson, "*Pecos Bill: A Military Biography of William R. Shafter*" (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 115-18.

⁴⁰ Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of Infantry* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1923), 112-13.

⁴¹ Wood to Pettit, December 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 138-40.

⁴² Corporal W. T. Goode, *The "Eighth Illinois"* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 174.

and systematically as possible.”⁴³ One unintended consequence of these long-term road construction projects was the peaceful dissolution of many Cuban army units; road construction required a large labor force, and this gave Wood an opportunity to hire a large number of the unemployed *mambises* of the Cuban Liberation Army. These long-term jobs provided added incentive for soldiers to disband and alleviated Wood’s fear of having a large body of armed soldiers with no means to support themselves or their families.⁴⁴

The same reasons that caused the highways to fall into a state of disrepair also led to the neglect of the streets inside the cities and towns of Santiago Province. Most of the streets lacked proper drainage, and the daily deluge of water running down the streets during the rainy season caused large ruts and cracks to form and littered old cobblestones across the road surface.⁴⁵ By the time U.S. soldiers arrived, the streets looked more like riverbeds than roads. The military government spent municipal tax funds and tariff revenue to improve the drainage and resurface municipal streets across the department. Santiago de Cuba, the capital of the province, received the greatest allocation of the province’s tariff revenues, and one of Wood’s top reconstruction priorities was paving the roads in this important city. Major C. L. Woodbury supervised the contract with the Barber Asphalt Company to pave more than five miles of asphalt boulevards and another five miles of macadam streets in the Santiago de Cuba city center. The subtle angles on these new streets whisked water into grated drainage ditches, and they had curbs made of

⁴³ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 9.

⁴⁴ Wood to The Adjutant General, November 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 3065. Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 524.

⁴⁵ Corporal W. T. Goode, *The “Eighth Illinois”* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 175.

concrete and blue stone.⁴⁶ Although the city did not have a modern sewer system, Wood insisted that sewer lines be placed under the newly paved streets so they would not have to be destroyed later if a sewer system was added.

These slow and costly road improvements would not have been necessary to establish garrisons in the interior if a railroad network had existed within the Department of Santiago. Unlike the extensive railroad network spokes originating from Havana in western Cuba, the Department of Santiago only had a few privately owned railroads running from ports to large plantations and mines. These antiquated tracks were all built before 1878, as recession, war, and government debt prevented the building of new lines.⁴⁷ The Sabanilla and Maroto line linked Santiago de Cuba to San Luis and Songo. Another line leaving Santiago de Cuba passed through Siboney on its way to the Juragua Iron Mines. A privately owned line linked the Brooks plantations around Jamaica and Guantánamo to the port at Caimanera. Likewise, the large agricultural town of Holguín was connected to the coast by well-maintained tracks to Gibara. Unfortunately, the line running from Manzanillo to the equally important farming valley of Bayamo deteriorated and was not repaired during the initial occupation.⁴⁸ The exorbitant rates charged by these private rail lines prevented all but the most affluent Cubans from using them.⁴⁹ Even the Quartermaster Department preferred to use inexpensive pack trains to resupply the interior towns connected by rail, unless time or the size of the supplies necessitated the use of the

⁴⁶ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 7, 62. Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 524.

⁴⁷ John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 26.

⁴⁸ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 10.

⁴⁹ Wood to Roosevelt, October 28, 1901, and Wood to Root, November 4, 1901, Container 29, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

expensive railroads. Not surprisingly, the U.S. Army garrisoned the few interior towns linked by railroads to the coast before communities that had to be supplied by pack train.

The U.S. Army had partnered with railroad companies throughout the trans-Mississippi West to lay new railroad lines. The relationship between the two was mutually beneficial. The Army saved enormous sums of money transporting soldiers and supplies by train, often at significantly reduced rates. Trains also allowed for the Army to consolidate its soldiers on larger posts, close smaller posts, and move units quickly to points of crisis. In return, railroad companies received protection from hostile Native Americans and robbers, and a potent means for breaking up strikes. Also at no cost, railroad companies gathered timber and stone from military lands, and the Army was more than happy to have the railroad companies build railroad stations on their installations. The fact that many of the nation's top railroad executives served in the U.S. Army during the Civil War helped facilitate the close relationship between the two.⁵⁰

Half of the U.S. Army helped to guard railroads during the Pullman Strike of 1894 and many other soldiers protected the trains and work crews against Indian raids during their time on the frontier. Twelve Cheyenne attacked Ezra Ewers—who later commanded the brigade of African American soldiers in Santiago—and two of his soldiers when they went to investigate a break in the railroad track near Fort Wallace, Kansas, in 1872. Only the timely arrival of the rest of their company saved their lives. In 1879, Colonel Nelson A. Miles's 5th Infantry Regiment escorted supply trains and work crews of the Northern Pacific Railroad, protecting them from

⁵⁰ Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 196, 255-56. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 76-79. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 124, 160, 179-80, 184. Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 115. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 93.

Sioux raiders in the Dakota Territory. The experience served Captain Ewers and his fellow officers well when the War Department sent the regiment to occupy Santiago.⁵¹

Similar to the War Department's experience working with railroad companies in the West, Wood tried to work with financiers to repair and build new track across eastern Cuba and offered them his support in return. Because of the high cost of material and equipment for railroad construction, Wood did not have enough tariff funds to build new rail lines. He tried to grant concessions to private companies and bankers, so they could shoulder most of the cost. On November 15, Wood sent Corbin an application from the Messars, Brauet & Co., the former bankers of the Spanish Army in Santiago, to build a railroad covering a large portion of the Department of Santiago. Wood had Lieutenant Blount of the 3rd U.S.V.I., a lawyer versed in Spanish law, review the application to ensure it met the existing Spanish laws for granting a charter. The only exception the impatient general wanted to make to the law was one to speed up the slow process.⁵² Unfortunately for Wood, the War Department resisted granting the concession until the shrewd businessman, and now Secretary of War, Russell A. Alger could implement a system that enabled him to grant concessions in a manner that benefitted both his acquaintances and the friends of the administration. After the American press ran an article on the review board Alger established to review concessions in Cuba, public outrage enabled Senator Joseph B. Foraker to introduce an amendment that specified, "no property franchises, or concessions of any kind whatever, shall be granted by the United States, or by any other military or other authority whatever in the Island of Cuba during the Occupation thereof by the United

⁵¹ William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 57, 78.

⁵² Wood to The Adjutant General, October 26, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 254. Wood to The Adjutant General, November 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 3065.

States.”⁵³ Senators John C. Spooner and Orville H. Platt, both annexationists, opposed the amendment. However, when the ardent imperialist Senator Henry Cabot Lodge lent his support to the measure, the Foraker Amendment carried through the Senate by a 36-vote margin.⁵⁴ The amendment prevented further exploitation of Cuba by Alger, but also hampered most railroad construction during the occupation of Cuba.

While Wood worked to improve the road and rail network, he and the previous commanders relied heavily on sea transport to move supplies, soldiers, and messages to the dispersed garrisons in the department. The port in the city of Santiago de Cuba was the most important point in the department’s logistical infrastructure. Most of the military stores, humanitarian relief, and private merchandise landed there first before being distributed by small coastal vessels to the other ports in the province. From the very first day of the occupation, improving the port’s logistical and navigational infrastructure became a top priority for the U.S. Army’s senior commanders and logisticians.

After the Spanish surrendered and the U.S. Navy removed the mines at the mouth of the Bay of Santiago de Cuba, U.S. supply transports and merchant ships immediately began unloading their supplies directly on the docks in the harbor. This was particularly important because during the fighting a huge backlog of transports developed, mostly because of a severe shortage of shallow-draft lighters to unload the transport ships at Siboney. The docks at Santiago de Cuba had only enough space to accommodate a few of the dozens of ships waiting to unload

⁵³ *Congressional Record*, 55th Congress, 3rd Session, XXXII, 2572. Also, quoted in Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:469.

⁵⁴ *Congressional Record*, 55th Congress, 3rd Session, XXXII, 2572. Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:469-71. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 83-84.

their military stores, humanitarian supplies, or merchandise at any one time. Through August, the military and humanitarian ships monopolized the docks, causing the chamber of commerce to protest to the military government. Local Cuban merchants requested that they be allowed to use one of the four piers to unload merchandise and send out their goods, so they could revive their failing businesses.⁵⁵ Even after the backlog of ships dissipated weeks later, Lawton and Wood recognized that they needed to improve the city's docks to make the harbor facilities sufficient enough to support the U.S. Army's garrisons in the department while still accommodating local trade.

The lack of adequate space to store the coal necessary to refuel transports before they returned to the United States forced the Quartermaster officers to either buy coal from the Navy or send ships to other Caribbean ports before they returned to the United States. The shipping delays proved costly and inefficient. Shafter wrote to Corbin on August 9 pleading, "We must have coal here."⁵⁶ Shafter continued, "a loaded collier, with all the necessary appliances for unloading, should be sent here as soon as possible."⁵⁷ After the War Department remedied the coal problem, focus turned to increasing the size and capacity of Dock #1, used by the Quartermaster Department to unload government contracted transports. Wood approved the expenditure of funds collected from Cuban tariffs to extend Dock #1 by 150 feet, add a roof to

⁵⁵ "Noticias," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Santiago de Cuba, August 11, 1898.

⁵⁶ Shafter to Adjutant-General, August 9, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 216.

⁵⁷ Shafter to Adjutant-General, August 9, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 216.

the extension, and repair the existing portion of the dock.⁵⁸ In late November, Wood learned that lawyers representing Callego, Messo & Co., the once-absentee owners of many of the wharves and warehouses in Santiago de Cuba, filed claims in Washington, D.C. asking for \$300 per day back payment for the U.S. Army's use of their facilities. Wood believed this price was "preposterous" and "nothing less than an attempt of extortion."⁵⁹ He suggested that the War Department pay no more than \$50 per day for the use of the facilities.⁶⁰ In addition, Wood asked permission to use a small portion of the revenue collected from customs duties to build storage sheds to protect perishable supplies, noting that the cost for building the sheds would quickly pay for itself with the money saved by not using privately owned warehouses and from the daily loss of food from the weather and thieves.⁶¹ Besides the sheds, Wood eventually funded the construction of a new warehouse, the dredging of the harbor, and the building of a seawall to protect the harbor.⁶²

While it may seem odd that the U.S. Army performed harbor improvement, seawall construction, and dredging duties in Santiago de Cuba's harbor during the occupation, the Army was actually quite accustomed to such missions. These tasks traditionally belonged the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Harbor improvements were considered to be a clear federal responsibility. All along the Pacific coast the Army built levees and seawalls and dredged

⁵⁸ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 63-64.

⁵⁹ Wood to the Adjutant General, November 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 101.

⁶⁰ Wood to the Adjutant General, November 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 101-03.

⁶¹ Wood to the Adjutant General, November 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 101-03.

⁶² National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 8. Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 524.

harbors. The Army Corps of Engineers also made harbor improvements in San Francisco and Los Angeles and was also responsible for constructing, but not running, the lighthouses on the Pacific Coast until 1910.⁶³

With their experience, U.S. Army's engineers in the Department of Santiago were more than comfortable overseeing harbor improvements and lighthouse construction. During the siege of Santiago de Cuba, a shell fired from a U.S. Navy ship hit the lighthouse located in El Morro Castle, an obsolete Spanish fortress guarding the mouth of the bay, making the lighthouse "practically useless and liable to tumble down at any moment."⁶⁴ During an inspection tour of a Spanish government shed Wood uncovered the parts needed to repair the lighthouse in Santiago.⁶⁵ Before the outbreak of hostilities, the Spanish had intended to use the parts to build a new lighthouse in Guantánamo. Wood assigned the engineer Lieutenant E. C. Brooks to use the parts to first repair the lighthouse at Morro Castle and then construct a new lighthouse at Guantánamo Bay.⁶⁶ With the parts already on hand, Wood estimated that repairs to the lighthouse at El Morro Castle would cost his military government only \$500, the cost of employing Cuban laborers.⁶⁷ Later, after a merchant ship sank on the north coast of Santiago Province, Wood asked Corbin to send a tender with repair parts from the United States to fix the neglected lighthouses on that side of the province, with the understanding that the associated

⁶³ Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 74-75.

⁶⁴ Quote from Wood to Adjutant General, September 24, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1669. Also see National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 9.

⁶⁵ Wood to the Adjutant General, November 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 237-239.

⁶⁶ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 63-64.

⁶⁷ Wood to Adjutant General, September 24, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1669.

costs would be charged to the Department of Santiago.⁶⁸ While Wood and his engineers strove to repair lighthouses, the U.S. Navy placed navigational buoys in all the major harbors in the Department of Santiago.⁶⁹ Also in Santiago de Cuba, Wood and Donaldson created a board of pilotage to standardize the fees charged by navigational pilots in the ports across the department.⁷⁰ These improvements to the port facilities enabled merchant ships and U.S. government transports to efficiently unload and safely move their cargos to the garrisons controlling the Department of Santiago.

Although ships were preferable to using riders or pack trains to send military correspondence to all but the nearest outposts, telegraph lines remained the quickest and easiest way for the department commander to communicate with his subordinate officers and to his superiors in the War Department. Lawton and Wood considered telegraph communications essential to their ability to command and control their dispersed outposts effectively, and they went to great lengths to establish, maintain, and secure these communication lines. Immediately after the establishment of the Department of Santiago, all the staff bureaus in the War Department began planning the equipment and personnel required to sustain the U.S. Army's forces in the occupied province. Brigadier General Adolphus W. Greely, Chief of the Signal Corps of the Army since 1887, wrote Lawton asking him what transportation assets and "how many miles of line material" he should send with the signal company preparing to leave for

⁶⁸ Wood to the Adjutant General, November 22, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 39.

⁶⁹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 9. Beacom to the Commanding Officer, Guantánamo, February 8, 1899, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 4 of 8, January 7, 1899 to March 1, 1899, 303.

⁷⁰ Donaldson to Wood, November 29, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 3647.

Santiago.⁷¹ Greely, a veteran of the Civil War, Indian Wars, and a three-year polar expedition, promised to fully support Lawton in establishing effective communications in Santiago. Greely had good reason to care. He was one of the few members of his command to survive a three-year tour at an arctic meteorological station because they lacked communications to coordinate a rescue after frozen seas prevented their supply or rescue.

Like many other Army officers and soldiers, Greely had extensive experience running, securing, and maintaining telegraph lines linking forts to each other and to higher headquarters during his time in the American West. He personally supervised the construction of 1,218 miles of wire across Texas in 1875 to link the series of forts stretching from the Red River through Fort Concho to the Rio Grande. Similarly, Nelson A. Miles built extensive roads and telegraphs in the Department of the Columbia during his tenure as its commander. As commander of the 1st Infantry Regiment in the Dakota Territory, Shafter had one of his companies run a telegraph line to link Fort Randall to Fort Bennett guarding the Sioux reservation near the confluence of the Cheyenne and Missouri Rivers.⁷² Furthermore, Ewers and his company did repair work on several telegraph lines near Fort Keogh, Montana, during the summer of 1881.⁷³ Many regulars serving in Cuba had run miles of telegraph wire as members of fatigue parties on the American frontier. Signal Corps soldiers operated most of the military telegraph systems and received

⁷¹ Greely to Lawton, August 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 15.

⁷² Paul H. Carlson, "*Pecos Bill:*" *A Military Biography of William R. Shafter* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1989), 115-16.

⁷³ William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 90.

special training at Fort Meyer on how to operate telegraphs and heliography. They were the highest rated enlisted men in the Army because of their special skill set.⁷⁴

Despite Greely's desire to send any materials needed and the U.S. Army's extensive experience establishing telegraph networks, Lawton simply did not know the condition of the lines in the province at the start of the initial occupation. After consulting the signal officer in Santiago, Lawton knew only that the lines running from Santiago de Cuba to Cristo, Songo, San Luis, and Palma Soriano required "fifteen miles No. 9 wire, 1500 each brackets, and insulators with spikes."⁷⁵ Lawton and his signal officer understood what repairs were needed to fix the lines only in the vicinity of Santiago de Cuba, and could only speculate as to the condition of the once extensive telegraph network that existed across the province before the outbreak of the Cuban War of Independence.⁷⁶ Fortunately, they rightly assumed that the other lines in the province were also destroyed in the fighting and that none of the tools or telegraph materials needed existed in the province. Therefore, Lawton requested that the signal company bring fifty additional miles worth of line material to start with, all the necessary construction tools, and its own "wagons, harness, and animals [that] will render it independent and free to move without delays."⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 255. Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 68-70. Don Rickey, *Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay: The Enlisted Soldier Fighting the Indian Wars* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 44, 93. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 31. Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866-1891* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), 167, 198.

⁷⁵ Lawton to Greely, August 18, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 13.

⁷⁶ Lawton to Greely, August 18, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 13.

⁷⁷ Lawton to Greely, August 18, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 13.

Just as President McKinley and the War Department immediately considered using tariff revenues to pay for the occupation and military government, Greely also needed a way to pay for the cost of maintaining the telegraph lines in Santiago. On September 1, Greely ordered the chief signal officer in Santiago to use the funds collected for the transmission of messages to pay for the maintenance of the lines and to send any surplus revenue to the treasury.⁷⁸ Unlike the railroads, the telegraph lines in Cuba were state owned and not private property, allowing the military government to charge for their use, make repairs, or add extensions to existing lines whenever required. Unfortunately for Greely and the department commander, however, the revenues collected for transmitting messages did not cover the cost of maintaining the lines, and tariff revenues had to be used to supplement the maintenance costs. The difficult terrain and the inexperience of the Cuban linemen and station operators made the telegraph service in the department unreliable or unavailable during the initial occupation. To get a message from Santiago de Cuba to Havana took an appallingly slow twenty-four hours. The inexperienced Cuban work crews and difficult terrain also slowed maintenance and building efforts, thereby increasing the number of days for which laborers needed to be hired. Additionally, using the “prompt and reliable” French-and British-owned cables to communicate with the United States incurred major costs to the War Department and military government in Santiago.⁷⁹

The volunteers who supplemented the small but professional U.S. Army’s Signal Corps during the War with Spain were predominately professional signalmen. On arriving in Santiago, the signalmen found that Cuban soldiers had almost completely destroyed the old Spanish lines

⁷⁸ Greely, September 1, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 305.

⁷⁹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Report by Brigadier General Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, on Civic Conditions in the Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, In Response to Circular No. 10, Division of Customs and Insular Affairs, War Department, March 25, 1899* (Cristo Cuba: Adjutant Generals Office, September 1899), 17.

during the war and that the work required building new ones would be arduous and dangerous. The experienced signalmen and their Cuban workmen traversed narrow footpaths, placed new poles, and strung telegraph wire through some of the most difficult terrain in Cuba. Even after completing the lines, these work crews constantly had to venture back onto these perilous tracks to repair broken wires, mainly caused by falling trees. Workmen and many mules were injured or killed in accidents while working in this dangerous terrain, and many more signalmen became infected with tropical diseases. For example, Lieutenant Frank W. Dunn died when a tree fell on him while he supervised the construction of the Baracoa line, and two other signal officers died of yellow fever.⁸⁰

In addition to disease, hazardous trails, and falling trees, the signal crews repaired damage done by Cuban saboteurs and those who simply stole essential materials from the telegraph lines. In November, the English Cable Company reported that the houses sheltering their junction boxes at El Morro Castle and Punta Blanca were broken into and the “cables interfered with.”⁸¹ Not only did this damage cost the owners lost revenue, but it also cut one of Wood’s essential lines of communication with the War Department. Wood ordered permanent guards posted at the two junction boxes. Similarly, after someone repeatedly tampered with the telegraph line between the towns of Songo and Macuriges, Wood ordered the commander of the 9th Immune garrison in Sango to send patrols to “prevent in whatever way is necessary all interference with the line” and to find someone within his ranks to make the necessary repairs.⁸²

⁸⁰ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 76-78.

⁸¹ Beacom to unreadable recipient, November 30, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 117.

⁸² Beacom to Commanding Officer, December 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 332.

Throughout the occupation, running, maintaining, and protecting the telegraph lines to the garrisons made great demands on the soldiers and signalmen in Santiago.

Despite the difficult terrain, dangers, and high costs, the U.S. Army's signalmen and their Cuban work crews eventually ran a communication network that connected all the major garrisons and towns to the rest of Cuba. The volunteer signal company arrived in Santiago in the first week of September and immediately went to work running lines to the few U.S. Army garrisons already established in the vicinity of Santiago de Cuba. After signal crews repaired the existing line running to Ewers's garrison at San Luis, First Lieutenant William Jarvie and Second Lieutenant Francis Creighton and a small work crew began to construct the first new line to the isolated garrison at Palma Soriano.⁸³

Once telegraph wires connected the garrisons located near Santiago de Cuba, the Signal Company began constructing a series of lines that linked all the towns in the southern portion of the province, from Baracoa to Manzanillo. As work crews built lines east toward Guantánamo and Baracoa, Lieutenant C. H. Martin's crew laid line to the west from Palma Soriano toward Manzanillo. The Chief Signal Officer in Santiago, Captain Frederick T. Leigh, provided Martin with the signal supplies, tools, and hired a crew of Cuban workers, and he asked the Adjutant General in Santiago to issue orders to the Quartermaster Department to provide the pack train, fodder, and teamsters. Additionally, the Chief Commissary Officer gave a written order to Martin that allowed him to draw rations from any commissary officer in the department. The five signal soldiers, seventeen Cuban workers, and all of their equipment and animals also received railroad passes to San Luis where they would start their expedition. Finally, the Chief Signal

⁸³ Corporal W. T. Goode, *The "Eighth Illinois"* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 191. Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 19, September 25, 1898.

Officer made a special request that the quartermaster civilian teamster, J. C. Shaffer, be put in charge of the pack train. Shaffer and the Chief Signal Officer served together when Shaffer was still in the Army, and reliable teamsters were hard to come by.⁸⁴ By mid-December, Martin had used most of his wire and insulators. Instead of returning all the way to San Luis to pick up the supplies, the new Chief Signal Officer, Captain Frederick T. Leigh, requested that a second quartermaster pack train drop the supplies to him at Jiguani or Bayamo, saving him at least seven days' travel, during which time Martin's crew could be working.⁸⁵

Soon after Martin's expedition reached Bayamo, the last major town before the telegraph terminus at Manzanillo, the expedition ran out of poles and money to pay the unskilled Cuban laborers. Once again, telegraph construction had gone over budget. Given the importance of communicating with his outposts, Wood ordered Pettit, in charge of the garrison in Manzanillo, to use his own funds to purchase additional poles and hire laborers, so that Martin could finish the final leg of the telegraph wire. Wood promised that the funds Pettit used would be reimbursed and would not count against his normal appropriations.⁸⁶

After connecting all the garrisons on the south coast with telegraph wires, the signal crews began connecting the north coast towns of Mayarí and Gibara to the "Main Line," which linked Santiago Province to the Province of Puerto Principe. These lines proved to be the most difficult for the signal company to construct. Second Lieutenant William T. Davenport spent most of December looking for a route to cross the interior of the western portion of Santiago

⁸⁴ Chief Signal Officer to Adjutant General, Dept. Santiago, November 8, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 2801.

⁸⁵ Leigh to Adjutant General, Dept. Santiago, December 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 4, 3982

⁸⁶ Beacom to Pettit, December 30, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 414.

Province. Reports first indicated that the best route across the interior ran from Jiguani to Holguín, but after searching in vain for an acceptable path, Davenport learned from a Cuban that no Spanish telegraph wire had ever traversed this difficult route. From Holguín, Davenport saw that the old Spanish telegraph wire used to run to Bayamo and that 390 poles remained standing on this old route. He speculated that very few of these old poles were still serviceable, but they did help to mark the path the new line should take. Davenport rated the Bayamo route to Holguín as the easiest route of the three proposed to cross the interior. He also found the old Spanish line used to connect Holguín to Las Tunas and the rest of Cuba. Davenport's effective scouting in the last month of the initial occupation identified the last paths needed to complete the telegraph network in the Department of Santiago and link it to the telegraphs in the rest of Cuba.⁸⁷

Unlike the telegraph lines that belonged to the Spanish Government, the few telephone systems in the province of Santiago belonged to private companies, which had been granted concessions and monopolies by the Spanish government. Wood had no power to repeal these concessions. Instead, he had his lawyers look at the terms of the original concessions in the hopes that the companies violated the original terms. Wood investigated the possibility of buying out the concessions so that municipalities could run their own telephone service. None of Wood's ideas to establish private telephone exchanges in any of the towns, however, came to fruition during the initial occupation.⁸⁸ The Signal Corps did install a telephone exchange in the city of Santiago de Cuba specifically for military and government use, which did not violate the

⁸⁷ Davenport to Leigh, December 22, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 4412.

⁸⁸ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Report by Brigadier General Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, on Civic Conditions in the Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, In Response to Circular No. 10, Division of Customs and Insular Affairs, War Department, March 25, 1899* (Cristo Cuba: Adjutant Generals Office, September 1899), 17.

Spanish government's concession. The telephone system gave Wood and his staff officers in Santiago de Cuba "a rapid means of [communicating] between the many offices and depots of the various military and civil departments."⁸⁹ This system consisted of thirty phones and twenty-five miles of telephone wire.⁹⁰

By the start of the rainy season in May 1899, the U.S. Army's signal soldiers and their Cuban assistants had military telephone exchanges in three other occupied towns and ran a total of 663 miles of new telegraph wires in the Department of Santiago.⁹¹ By the time the formal occupation began in 1899, the signalmen and Cuban work crews succeeded in establishing reliable communications to all the garrisons controlling the province and the newly established division headquarters in Havana.

Sanitation: Controlling Disease in the American Encampments and Barracks

Just as moving supplies and communicating with the garrisons was necessary for the U.S. Army in Santiago to establish control over the Cuban Army and civilian population, so was keeping the American soldiers healthy and in fighting condition. Both Lawton and Wood fought with the Fifth Corps and witnessed how tropical fevers and dysentery turned the U.S. Army's soldiers from an effective fighting force to an army of invalids. Acting in accordance with the best science of the time, the officers and doctors believed that unsanitary conditions caused all of the diseases infecting the U.S. Army soldiers, and they took extreme measures to disinfect the

⁸⁹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 78.

⁹⁰ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 78.

⁹¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 77.

environment. Although two Cuban physicians, Carlos Finlay and his associate Claudio Delgado, already suspected that the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito was the vector for yellow fever, it was not until 1900 that an Army medical team under Walter Reed proved Finlay's hypothesis.⁹² The U.S. Army's sterilization methods did help to diminish the number of cases of dysentery and other communicable ailments, even if they did not directly reduce the incidence of yellow fever. Additionally, many of the sanitation measures, such as clearing standing water and vegetation around camps, indirectly reduced disease caused by mosquitos. The U.S. Army officers and soldiers wanted to improve the health of the Cubans for humanitarian reasons, but also because an unhealthy environment and infirm Cuban civilians directly imperiled the health of the American soldiers occupying the country. Concern for Cuban civilians was of secondary importance to the garrison commanders, but it mattered nonetheless.

The humanitarian crises in Santiago de Cuba compelled Shafter to place the young Wood in command of the city following the Spanish surrender. Wood proved an able commander during the fighting around the city, but more importantly he was still officially an Army surgeon. Besides providing medical care to infirm soldiers, Army physicians during this time were responsible for inspecting and enforcing sanitary measures in camps. This made Wood a logical choice to run a city plagued by disease after three years of conflict, bombardment, and siege.⁹³ On arrival in the city to receive the Spanish surrender, the officers of the Fifth Corps found the streets covered in garbage, excrement, and dead and dying animals. So many Cubans died each

⁹² John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 76, 100.

⁹³ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 55.

day from hunger and diseases that they had to be burned in large funeral pyres of almost a hundred bodies at a time.⁹⁴

Wood, with total authority within Santiago de Cuba, went to work with his usual energy, efficiency, and ruthlessness, using draconian measures to sterilize and disinfect the city. He used squads of U.S. soldiers to round up unemployed men and put them to work sweeping and then carting off the filth. When one Spanish gentleman with a high hat urinated on a wall in front of a work crew, a soldier seized him and “put a broom in his hand and another emphatically ordered him to sweep mid [*sic*] many protestations to clean the little spot he had soiled.”⁹⁵ Later, Wood created a sanitary department whose medical officers inspected houses and buildings and forced the population to assist in cleaning the city.⁹⁶ Wood consulted with Major Barber, who had experience with street cleaning in New York City and Chicago, about writing sanitary regulations for Santiago de Cuba.⁹⁷ Barber established a regular sanitary department, which hired hundreds of white-clad workers. The sanitation workers rode wagons or pushed carts in each of the city’s wards removing refuse to the city’s dumps. Many of the former Cuban soldiers were now armed with brooms. The sanitation officers inspected almost every house, street, and

⁹⁴ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 56-57. In Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, Entry from August 3, 1898, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, he estimates the death rate at 50 inhabitants of Santiago de Cuba per day. In Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 517, Wood estimates 80 to 90 Cubans died each day at the height of the humanitarian crises.

⁹⁵ “Commit No Nuisance,” *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Santiago de Cuba, August 1, 1898.

⁹⁶ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 517-20. Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 67-58.

⁹⁷ Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aid-de-camp of General Young, Entry from August 1, 1898, The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

alleyway for unsanitary conditions and demanded that violations be corrected immediately.⁹⁸

Anyone caught repeatedly violating the strict sanitary regulations faced the possibility of arrest and could be brought before a military tribunal where the general summarily punished the accused either with lashes or by forcing him to join sanitation work parties.⁹⁹

By the end of August, Wood's ruthless battle against disease paid off. Despite only a slight drop in the number of fever cases, the population and the soldiers garrisoning the clean city had much better health overall. Wood estimated the death rate in Santiago de Cuba fell 50% below its pre-war levels.¹⁰⁰ Although Wood and other doctors mistakenly believed that cleanliness alone could stop malaria and yellow fever, some of their sanitary methods indirectly reduced the rate of mosquito-borne illness. Wood supervised the dredging of the sewer flats and swamps outside the city of Santiago de Cuba. By the end of the initial occupation, engineers diverted the city's sewage away from the swamps and into the deep ocean water by El Morro Castle. Also, the U.S. Army's engineers completed construction plans to build a modern "intercepting sewer" with "disinfecting and settling basins."¹⁰¹

The cost of disinfecting the city soon added up. When Lawton asked the Army's Quartermaster General, Brigadier General Marshall I. Ludington, to send large quantities of chloride lime, disinfectant, street brooms, and kerosene to burn infected materials, Ludington promised to send as much as Lawton requested. Ludington, however, insisted that Lawton use

⁹⁸ Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 520-22.

⁹⁹ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 58.

¹⁰⁰ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 7.

¹⁰¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 8-9. Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 524.

customs revenue to reimburse the Quartermaster Department for the sanitation supplies shipped to Santiago.¹⁰² Initially, the War Department covered the cost of some of the sanitation materials sent by the staff bureaus, but by October the large increase in the tariff revenues collected in Santiago led the Secretary of War to order that the Department of Santiago be charged for all additional sanitation materials sent to it.¹⁰³

In all the towns in the province, U.S. Army garrison commanders implemented the same sanitation methods that Wood first employed in Santiago to sterilize the streets and buildings. These garrison commanders used the funds they had collected from small municipal taxes and money the department commander dedicated for these measures.¹⁰⁴ The exception to this rule was Holguín, where “over eight thousand cubic yards of unsanitary material [had] been removed, and every effort [was] being made to thoroughly disinfect all buildings which [had] been occupied by small pox patients.”¹⁰⁵ The high cost of purchasing vaccinations and sterilizing the entire town to eradicate a smallpox epidemic went beyond what municipal officials could raise on their own, forcing Wood to supplement the revenues he had sent to the commander garrisoning Holguín.¹⁰⁶

Wood also used tariff revenues to make other improvements, which were vitally important to sustaining both the U.S. Army’s soldiers and the civilian population of the city.

¹⁰² Ludington to Lawton, September 10, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 600.

¹⁰³ Assistant Adjutant General to Commanding General, Santiago, September 10, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2626

¹⁰⁴ Woodson to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, November 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2782.

¹⁰⁵ Wood to Adjutant General, December 12, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 239.

¹⁰⁶ Wood to Adjutant General, December 12, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 237-39.

During the siege of Santiago de Cuba, the U.S. Army had cut off the water supply to city. After the surrender, U.S. Army engineers restored the flow of water to the city, but soon realized that the flow into the city was insufficient to meet demand and that thousands of leaks existed in the system. Lieutenant E. C. Brooks repaired leaks in the aqueduct and began work to heighten the dam at the reservoir in order to increase the city's water supply. He also replaced the old pipes with a larger, four-inch pipeline, doubling the flow of water into the city. Unfortunately, Wood estimated that the increased water supply still provided only a "fifth of what is needed" in the city. Fortunately, the cisterns built throughout the city to catch rainwater kept the water crises from becoming dire.¹⁰⁷ Wood and his engineers had a progressive plan to provide the city with an adequate water supply, but Wood did not have sufficient funds to begin the necessary construction by the end of the initial occupation.¹⁰⁸

The U.S. Army's physicians in Cuba also desperately wanted ice to relieve the suffering of the many infirm soldiers in Santiago. Fortunately, Nathan Straus, the co-owner of both the R. H. Macy Company and Abraham & Straus department stores in New York City, donated an expensive ice plant to the U.S. Army specifically for the benefit of the "sick and wounded soldiers" in Santiago.¹⁰⁹ Alger ordered that the Quartermaster Department ship the donated ice plant as quickly as possible and at no charge to the already generous donor.¹¹⁰ Despite the Quartermaster Department's best effort, it took over a month to transport the plant to Santiago de

¹⁰⁷ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 8. Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 520.

¹⁰⁸ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 7-8, 62.

¹⁰⁹ Depot Quartermaster, NY, to Shafter, August 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 184.

¹¹⁰ Depot Quartermaster, NY, to Shafter, August 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 184.

Cuba.¹¹¹ By the time construction was done, the Fifth Corps had already departed for New York, but the ice plant still helped the garrison in Santiago de Cuba and the sick Cubans and Americans in the hospitals.

The strict standards of cleanliness that the garrison commanders and Army doctors imposed on the Cuban towns originated from the Army's own regulations on camp life. Since before the Civil War the U.S. Army understood that clean and sanitized camps reduced disease rates among its soldiers. Despite the best efforts of the Army's officers and doctors in Santiago to enforce every health regulation and observe best practices, the soldiers still suffered from high rates of fever until the end of the rainy season. This did not stop these doctors and officers from trying new methods to battle the fevers. When the garrison regiments first arrived, the officers and commanders sought campsites on high ground close to water supplies. After pitching the units' tents, the officers ensured that the soldiers immediately dug drainage ditches, that the camps were well policed, and that food, animal, and human waste were disposed of in regularly sanitized sinks far from the sleeping tents. The Inspector General Department and senior medical officers regularly inspected the regimental camps and garrisons to ensure that Officers strictly enforced all sanitary and health regulations.

Wood sent Doctor R. S. Woodson, a Captain and an assistant surgeon in the Army's Medical Department, on several inspection tours of the garrisons and camps in the Department of Santiago. In November, Woodson examined the camp of the six companies from the 3rd U.S.V.I. garrisoning Guantánamo. There the doctor found the "camp well selected, on a sloping hill-side,

¹¹¹ Corbin to Lawton, September 3, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 400.

well ditched and drained.”¹¹² Additionally, Woodson reported that the “privy and kitchen sinks were carefully dug and well policed,” and that the water the soldiers drank from the Guantánamo River was pumped into an iron reservoir tank and then “piped into a large cauldron and boiled” before the soldiers drank it.¹¹³ Despite the sanitary conditions of the camp, the “immune” companies still had almost a quarter of their soldiers sick with malarial fevers.¹¹⁴ To the frustration of the doctors, officers, and soldiers of the U.S. Army living in the camps, even the best sanitation measures did little to slow the high rate of tropical fevers.

Another problem with the camps was the cost of renting privately-owned land and paying for the damages done to it by the soldiers living there. In October, Luis Dagnese, the owner of the La Chivera estate where the 5th Infantry was camped outside Santiago de Cuba, complained to Lawton about the damage done to his property by the soldiers. Not only had the soldiers cut down thirty coconut trees and removed the posts from his wire fences for fuel, but the military traffic coming to and from his camp created a road in his pasturelands. When Dagnese complained to the commanding officer of the camp, Dagnese reported that he “was insulted by the interpreter.”¹¹⁵ Upon receiving the note, Lawton asked the commander of the 5th Infantry for an investigation and a report on the incident.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Woodson to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, November 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2782.

¹¹³ Woodson to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, November 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2782.

¹¹⁴ Woodson to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, November 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2782.

¹¹⁵ Dagnese to Lawton, October 1, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 3.

¹¹⁶ Beacom to Commander 5th U.S. Infantry, October 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 3.

Towards the end of the initial occupation, the War Department and Wood came to realize that living in tented camps, no matter how clean and orderly, exposed the soldiers somehow to malaria and yellow fever. Complaints from the property owners such as Mr. Dagnese probably also influenced the War Department, in consultation with Wood, to place all the soldiers in government-owned barracks before the arrival of the next rainy season. Wood ordered the Quartermaster Department in Santiago to supervise the sanitizing of existing barracks and the construction of any new barracks required for the garrisons.¹¹⁷ Given that Wood and the Army's surgeons blamed the high disease rates among Spanish soldiers in Cuba during the war on the unsanitary conditions of their barracks, the Quartermaster Department and local commanders focused on completely sterilizing and overhauling the Spanish barracks before they allowed their soldiers to live in them.¹¹⁸ Where barracks did not exist, the Quartermaster department built new ones, repurposed other government buildings, or rented private buildings. All of these options incurred significant cost to the Quartermaster Department, and drained Wood's limited tariff revenues.

Even rented private buildings required sanitation. In Palma Soriano, the two companies from the 8th Illinois Infantry garrisoning the town first lived in old palm sheds previously used as shelter for pack animals. Corporal W. T. Goode complained that the fleas in these sheds feasted on the soldiers—each morning the soldiers shook their hammocks and blankets and dispatched the fat fleas that fell to the ground, too full of the soldiers' blood to hop away.¹¹⁹ When one 8th

¹¹⁷ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 32.

¹¹⁸ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 8.

¹¹⁹ Corporal W. T. Goode, *The "Eighth Illinois"* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 179-80.

Illinois soldier bitterly complained about the flea problem, his comrade sarcastically reminded him that he had volunteered in Springfield to “come and fight these fleas. Now let them eat.”¹²⁰ Eventually, the basic sanitation measures taken by the soldiers of the 8th Illinois took care of their flea problem.

In Santiago de Cuba, the 5th Infantry’s two battalions moved from the La Chivera estate into the Mercedes Barracks, previously used by the Spanish Army and transformed during the fighting into a makeshift hospital. Chief Surgeon Valery Havard, concerned that the barracks were disease-ridden, insured that the Quartermaster Department thoroughly repaired and disinfected the barracks before allowing the battalions to occupy the building in November.¹²¹ The Mercedes Barracks did not have room for the regimental hospital or officers’ quarters. The hospital remained outside under canvas,¹²² and Lawton received permission from the Secretary of War to rent quarters for the officers of the 5th Infantry.¹²³ In Baracoa, before Lieutenant Colonel Thomas S. Wylly moved his garrison from a well-sanitized camp to the old Spanish hospital and fort located on a hill west of the town, he oversaw the extensive remodeling and sanitation measures in the hospital. Scientific theory of the day assumed that microbes in the soil caused diseases. Therefore, Wylly ordered the floors and the top two feet of soil removed in the barracks. The workers replaced the soil with “fresh gravel and covered over with a one half inch

¹²⁰ Corporal W. T. Goode, *The “Eighth Illinois”* (Blakely Printing Company: Chicago, 1899), 180.

¹²¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 49.

¹²² National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 49.

¹²³ Ludington to Lawton, October 6, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 54.

layer of concrete.”¹²⁴ Wylly even had water pumped up the hill from the Baracoa water works to a reservoir, and distributed by pipe throughout the newly named Fort Wood.¹²⁵ While these clean and remodeled barracks did not reduce the number of fever cases, they did improve the comfort and general health of the garrisons across the Department of Santiago.

By the end of the initial occupation the War Department in conjunction with the officers in the Department of Santiago developed a system to sustain the garrisons in the province. Always cognizant of costs, McKinley and his advisors implemented the same system of tariff schedules to pay for the military occupation that the Spanish had relied on to finance their Cuban colony. As security improved in the department, commerce also increased until tariff and tax revenues sufficiently paid for the military government. Shafter, Lawton, and Wood all reduced the overhead costs of their administrations by releasing superfluous government employees, reducing the number of rented buildings used by the Army, and controlling the spending of their subordinate commanders. Besides paying for the administration of the province, each of the subsequent department commanders used the tariff revenue to make infrastructure improvements necessary to supply and maintain the isolated garrisons. The officers and soldiers of the U.S. Army and the Cubans worked to repair the harbor facilities as well as the road and telegraph networks in the province, so that before the rainy season arrived in May 1899, they had established effective lines of communication throughout the Department of Santiago. Maintaining the health of the garrisons was just as important as supplying them. The garrison

¹²⁴ Woodson to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, November 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2782.

¹²⁵ Woodson to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, November 4, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 2782. The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Restoring order to Cuba: What Lieutenant Colonel Wylly is Doing in Baracoa,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

commanders and the U.S. Army physicians enforced sanitation measures in the towns and military camps in their spirited, but sometimes misdirected, attempts to curbe the epidemics of diseases and tropical fevers. By the end of the initial occupation, the medical measures implemented by the U.S. Army and the placement of soldiers in cleanly barracks greatly reduced the sick rates among the Army's soldiers until the arrival of the next rainy season.

In January 1899, Brooke used the same methods developed by Lawton and Wood to assert his authority over the Department of Cuba. Similar to Wood, Brooke consolidated all of the revenues collected across the island in Havana and managed the expenditures of all of his subordinate department commanders. Although first Lawton, then Wood, and finally Brooke spent most of the revenues to pay the salaries of government officials, they also repaired and built new buildings and roads. Later in the occupation, Wood devoted some construction dollars to projects intended solely to help ordinary Cubans, but this did not occur during the initial occupation.

Preparing Cuba for the U.S. Army's Arrival

The lessons Shafter, Lawton, and Wood learned about sustaining and caring for U.S. Army regiments in the Department of Santiago were not lost on the War Department. The different staff bureaus and their chiefs worked to take what they had learned during the last six months of 1898 to ensure that the tens of thousands of American soldiers arriving in Cuba between December 1898 and February of 1899 did not suffer from the lack of supplies, inadequate living arrangements, or tropical fevers which decimated Shafter's Fifth Corps. To determine how the U.S. Army would occupy the rest of Cuba, evacuate the Spanish army, and establish the logistical infrastructure to avoid another fiasco once more American soldiers arrived

on the island, the War Department sent a commission of senior military officers to Havana to plan the transition. Advance parties surveyed the countryside for suitable camps and engineers began construction on the infrastructure and encampments required to sustain the nearly fifty thousand soldier-strong occupation force the War Department planned to send to occupy Cuba as a show of force to prevent any trouble with the Spanish army, loyalists, or the Cuban Liberation Army. Most of the work took place in and around Havana, Cuba's largest and most important city, and also the location where the War Department planned to garrison nearly half of the occupation force. Although not without issues, the planning and preparations made to build the logistical infrastructure around Havana allowed for a well-organized occupation of the city.¹²⁶

In accordance with the armistice, McKinley appointed Major Generals James F. Wade and Matthew C. Butler, and Rear Admiral William T. Sampson to the American Military Evacuation Commission for Cuba on August 16, 1898. They arrived in Cuba in mid-September and primarily concerned themselves with negotiating the earliest possible withdrawal of Spanish troops from the island and the custody of immovable military property on the island with their polite but obstinate Spanish counterparts. Even before these larger issues were resolved, Wade and the War Department also began planning the logistical requirements necessary to introduce American forces into Havana and Cuba's five unoccupied provinces. The commissioners thought it best to move U.S. Army regiments to Cuba a few at a time to coincide with the phased withdrawal of Spanish forces, both to reduce the number of troops exposed to yellow fever and malaria at any one time and to ensure there were adequate logistical arrangements prepared for

¹²⁶ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army For Empire: The United States Army In The Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 308-9. Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 86.

their arrival. Finally, McKinley and the War Department decided to send the Seventh Corps, commanded by Major General Fitzhugh Lee, to occupy Havana.¹²⁷

To select campsites and barracks locations, and make logistical and sanitary preparations for the Seventh Corps' arrival in Havana and for the other occupation troops arriving in Cuba, Secretary Alger created a planning board of six officers with representatives from the Quartermaster, Ordnance, Medical, and Subsistence Departments under the leadership of Colonel James G. C. Lee. Other officers from the War Department's staff bureaus arrived in Havana and other major ports to make preparations for the storage of arriving supplies. Moreover, Lee and the other Corps commanders sent their own quartering parties to Cuba to begin more detailed planning for the reception and garrisoning of their soldiers. In sharp contrast to Shafter's invasion of Santiago de Cuba, the occupation of Cuba was well planned. However, in both operations Alger and the War Department failed to effectively coordinate the various efforts and directives of the staff bureaus, field commanders, planning boards, and commissions.¹²⁸

Advance parties worked hard to ensure that Havana and the surrounding areas had adequate port and rail facilities for the disembarking soldiers. Colonel Frank J. Hecker, one of the members of the Lee Board, was a railroad executive before volunteering for the war. He made arrangements with the Cuban railroad companies to move troops and supplies from Havana to various parts of the island. Other staff officers rented and prepared several wharves and warehouses inside Havana for the arrival of tens of thousands of soldiers and millions of tons

¹²⁷ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army For Empire: The United States Army In The Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 308-9. Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 85-6.

¹²⁸ Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 87.

of supplies. The War Department decided to build a pier outside the city for arriving troops because they incorrectly reasoned that the unsanitary conditions inside Havana would expose the arriving American soldiers to yellow fever and malaria. The existing pier Hecker decided to use to avoid Havana was at La Playa. The dock used by the Havana Yacht Club was in shallow water, so ships had to be unloaded by lighter, but it was connected to Havana by good roads and a railroad. Unloading at Havana was far easier and more cost effective, so the dock at La Playa was rarely used.¹²⁹

Still trying to find a place to unload troops and supplies outside Havana, Hecker decided to construct a deep-water pier in the Havana suburb of Tricornia. He planned to connect the proposed wharf to Cuba's existing railroad by building a six-mile trunk line. Unfortunately for Hecker and the War Department, the three companies that bid on the contract colluded to make huge profits. Even worse, the contractor used unskilled engineers and the project was further delayed by bureaucratic procedures, so that the dock and wharves were not completed until long after most of the American troops arrived using the existing docks and warehouses in Havana. The contractor of the Trescornia project also used shoddy materials on the railroad so that much of it had to be rebuilt later.¹³⁰

Despite the Trecornia fiasco, the Quartermaster Department officers in Cuba still efficiently managed the offloading of supplies and soldiers in Havana. Even more impressive was the Quartermaster's Department careful coordination of troop movements from their camps in the United States to the port of Savannah. Quartermaster General Ludington carefully planned

¹²⁹ William M. Venable, *The Second Regiment of United States Volunteer Engineers: A History* (Cincinnati, OH: McDonald & Co., 1899), 62-4, 70.

¹³⁰ "Las fuersas americanas," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Havana, December 28, 1898. Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 87-8.

the movement of each regiment by train so they would arrive less than a day before their preloaded transports left for Cuba to avoid the fiasco of loading seen at Tampa during the war. Ludington assigned Major John B. Bellinger—who was the officer who had eventually sorted out the logistical mess in Tampa—to run the Quartermaster Department’s operations in Savannah. Bellinger handpicked an excellent staff, forced the other staff bureaus to cooperate with his instructions, secured plenty of storage and dock space, and carefully packed each ship for ease of offloading. Units also found their ships preloaded with all the additional equipment they would need in Cuba, and soldiers received new khaki uniforms. Furthermore, the War Department established the Army Transport Service within the Quartermaster Department in November 1898 to operate and maintain the Army’s transports. The new agency helped to coordinate the movement of troops and supplies from Savannah to Havana. The War Department’s operations sending troops and soldiers to Cuba were very efficient, despite what happened with the Treccornia project and delays caused by winter storms.¹³¹

As during the initial occupation of Santiago, the biggest concern of the Lee Board, commissioners, and bureau chiefs was preventing another yellow fever and malaria epidemic. They generally agreed that the best way to do this was to encamp the arriving American soldiers in sanitary camps, clean the filth in the surrounding areas, and avoid contaminated barracks until they could be cleaned and sterilized. In an attempt to limit disease, the tents in the camps would be framed and raised two feet off the ground and have board floors. Furthermore, the camps would have running water and sewage systems. To build camps for fifty thousand soldiers, the War Department planned carefully and spent prodigiously. The Quartermaster Department

¹³¹ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army For Empire: The United States Army In The Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 307-8. Graham A. Cosmas, “Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99,” *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 88-9.

purchased eight million feet of pre-cut wood and huge quantities of pipe and other building materials.¹³² Most of the lumber destined for Camp Columbia outside Havana shipped directly from New Orleans, Tampa, and Charleston aboard schooners and anchored at the San José docks in the city's harbor.¹³³

Lee sent Major General Francis V. Greene—one of his division commanders who had also been an engineer in the Regular Army—to Havana with a battalion from the 2nd United States Volunteer Engineers (U.S.V.E) to begin preparing for the arrival of the Seventh Corps. Greene arrived with Hecker and other staff officers and immediately began consultations with Wade, Spanish authorities, and Cuban officers to determine which of three camp sites proposed by the Lee Board near Havana was best. They decided on Marianao, located seven miles west of Havana and two miles from the ocean on dry terrain. Cubans had long used the area to escape the fevers of Havana during the summer months, as it had a natural spring and a stream that drained the area. Furthermore, the area was connected to Havana by a road and rail.¹³⁴

The 2nd U.S.V.E., under Greene's supervision, immediately set to work surveying the site, building the tent frames, and laying sewer and water lines. They increased the capacity of the rail line for unloading supplies by laying additional track to the newly built warehouses and building sidings. The 2nd U.S.V.E. also repaired the roads and bridges running into the camp.

The engineers initially did not have enough wood to raise all the tents off the ground because of

¹³² Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 87.

¹³³ "Lumber for the Army," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Havana, December 28, 1898.

¹³⁴ "Las fuersas americanas," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Havana, December 28, 1898. Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 88-9. Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army For Empire: The United States Army In The Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 309. William M. Venable, *The Second Regiment of United States Volunteer Engineers: A History* (Cincinnati, OH: McDonald & Co., 1899), 60-5, 78-92.

shipping delays caused by winter storms. But within weeks, the necessary lumber had arrived. They used dynamite to make latrine sinks in the bedrock, and then built bathhouses and functioning sewage and water-works systems, employing paid Cuban soldiers and details from infantry regiments to perform most of the labor. The engineers even installed an ice machine and refrigeration plant to preserve stored food. Eventually, they built permanent warehouses and wooden barracks, and rechristened the area Camp Columbia.¹³⁵

While the U.S. Army prepared camps for the Seventh Corps' arrival, it also started cleaning up Havana. The sanitary problems in Havana posed a direct threat to the health of the arriving soldiers and were similar to those found in Santiago de Cuba immediately after the Spanish surrender. Raw sewage, dead animals, and trash filled the city's deteriorating and unpaved streets; dozens of Cubans died each day of starvation and disease. Municipal services had deteriorated or ceased completely during the war. Greene used War Department funds to renew the contract of the company that cleaned the streets of Havana before the war, and began surveying the city's logistical and medical capabilities. He even began reactivating the municipal police force to avert a period of chaos in Havana during the transition to American authority.¹³⁶

By October 1899, only 11,000 U.S. Army soldiers remained in all of Cuba because of the general peace that had been upheld by the U.S. Army and the decision by the Máximo Gómez

¹³⁵ "Las fuersas americanas," *The Times of Cuba: Diario Independiente y de Informacion*, Havana, December 28, 1898. Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 88-9. Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army For Empire: The United States Army In The Spanish-American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1998), 309. William M. Venable, *The Second Regiment of United States Volunteer Engineers: A History* (Cincinnati, OH: McDonald & Co., 1899), 60-5, 78-92.

¹³⁶ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 63. Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 88. Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:428.

not to contest the U.S. occupation.¹³⁷ The remaining American troops began moving into renovated and sanitized Spanish barracks or newly constructed buildings, like those at Camp Columbia. All the new military encampments were connected by telegraph lines, and American soldiers moved around Cuba on a reconstructed and improved road and rail network. Instances of yellow fever, malaria, and dysentery greatly diminished among the occupation troops because of the newly built or renovated barracks, the sanitation of Cuba's towns and cities, and the increased understanding of these diseases. The War Department had learned from its mistakes during the War with Spain and the initial occupation of Santiago. Army officers not only planned and executed an efficient movement of men and supplies to Havana and the remaining five unoccupied provinces, but also created an adequate network of barracks and camps to sustain their occupation of Cuba.

¹³⁷ Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The US Army Occupies Cuba, 1898-99," *Military Affairs* 38, no. 3 (1974): 90.

CHAPTER 8:
AMERICANIZING CUBA: GOVERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF SANTIAGO

Throughout the Province the work of the Cubans is of a much better character than I expected at first. Of course they are impetuous and hot-headed and liable to do a good many foolish things, but in the main, the current is the right direction. The civil government of this Province, for a time at least, has got to be one almost of Paternalism.

- Brigadier General Leonard Wood to the President of the United States (November 27, 1898)

Introduction

While establishing control over the towns in the Department of Santiago and building the infrastructure required to sustain their garrisons, the War Department also began to set up a military government for the province. U.S. Army officers typically ignored Cuban customs when governing Eastern Cuba. Believing that Latin culture was the root of Cuba's problems, ethnocentric Army officers thought they could solve almost every problem in postwar Cuba by introducing their "superior" American institutions and practices. To ease the transition to a military government, President William McKinley ordered each of his three sequential commanders of the province—William R. Shafter, Henry W. Lawton, and Leonard Wood—to avoid rapid and wholesale changes to longstanding Spanish laws and bureaucratic structures. Within months, however, the War Department and its representatives in Cuba began introducing American methods of governance. Their self-righteousness prevented them from considering that

decades of intermittent warfare might have devastated a once functioning Cuban society. When selecting Cubans for political positions, Lawton and Wood chose those that supported the military government and wanted to see Cuba become more like the United States, or perhaps even a part of it. The Cubans that the U.S. Army favored were typically wealthy landowners or businessmen who were of European descent, spoke English, and had received their education in the United States.

Unlike other aspects of the occupation, the frontier experience of the U.S. Army did little to prepare American officers to govern Cuba. A few senior officers in the War Department experienced Reconstruction in the South; however, the bitterness of that experience left the War Department strongly inclined to remove the Army from civil governance in the Trans-Mississippi West. With little actual experience in governance, Army officers relied upon what they considered to be analogous experiences administering frontier forts and encampments to frame their improvisational approach to governing Cuba. The War Department made Santiago another geographic command in the War Department's military bureaucracy. Within the command, Army officers headed each civil agency and reported to the military governor as members of his staff. They also used customary Army protocol and bureaucratic procedures to run the military government. When it came to dealing with the civilian population, both Lawton and Wood demanded the same obedience to their orders that they received from their soldiers, and they were not afraid to use heavy-handed measures to force compliance. On the other hand, the Army's reliance upon familiar and commonly-practiced bureaucratic procedures allowed it to quickly establish an efficient government that was relatively transparent and generally free of corruption, a significant improvement from the old Spanish regime. The Army also reformed

Cuba's archaic civil service system, and in many cases brought an end to certain special interest groups' dominance on the island.

When Army bureaucratic procedures provided no guide to solve the problems of civilian governance in the Department of Santiago, Lawton and Wood consulted experts and selectively borrowed ideas from popular reform movements within the United States. These professional officers tried to implement many of the social, economic, and administrative reforms championed by progressives in the United States. In spite of their best efforts to use some tact when dealing with dissent and their campaign to implement progressive reform in Cuba, officers ruled the Department of Santiago in a dictatorial fashion.

U.S. Army officers also struggled to accommodate Cuban culture and customs when implementing their reforms. After the Civil War, many former abolitionists and religious groups hoped to protect and reform the Native Americans by "civilizing" the "noble savages." Activists and religiously motivated Indian agents hoped that converting the Indians to western systems of agriculture, strict temperance, and Protestant Christianity would make them virtuous American citizens, not contemplating how these ideas went against long-standing Native American traditions and culture. Similarly, many Americans in Cuba and in the United States hoped that Cuba could quickly rebuild itself by reforming the corrupt and inefficient practices of the Spanish government and Catholic Church, and making Cuba more American. Unfortunately, the prejudices of these American reformers made it impossible for them to realize that while many of their reforms to change the Cuban school, postal, and legal bureaucracies may have in some

instances helped the Cuban people, they ran counter to their culture. As a result, the Cubans did not fully embrace them.¹

A Troubled Legacy of Military Government

While the War Department did have some experience in civil governance before the War with Spain, it despised the duty and sought to quickly turn over the burden to civilian officials. Following their republican tradition, the people of the United States believed it was undemocratic for American soldiers to govern civilians. On many occasions, however, the Army was the only arm of the federal government capable of governing its newly acquired territories until they could elect their own officials. As early as 1803, General James Wilkinson directed the occupation of Louisiana after its purchase, and he governed Missouri from 1805 to 1807. As late as 1870, the U.S. Army governed the territory of Alaska until gladly passing the responsibility over to the Department of the Treasury.²

Reconstruction had reaffirmed the U.S. Army's disdain for providing military governance, especially over a less-than-friendly population. The Army governed the portions of the South it occupied during the Civil War. After the war, the Army governed all former Confederate states except Tennessee, and it continued to provide military governors after the Radical Republican majority in Congress placed the former Confederate states under martial law in 1867. As it did later in Cuba, the Army governed entire states, supervised elections, restored the economy, maintained law and order, and assisted the Freedmen's Bureau's efforts to provide

¹ Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 42-7.

² Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 27-28, 30-35. Edward M. Coffman, *The Regulars: The American Army, 1898-1941* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 20-21.

relief to refugees and protect the interests of African Americans during Reconstruction.

Republicans in Congress criticized the Army for not being harsh enough toward their former enemies and for not adequately protecting African Americans and Union sympathizers from acts of terrorism by the Ku Klux Klan and other vigilante groups. Officers also faced lawsuits from Southern civilians for enforcing martial law and interfering in civil matters. The difficulty of the task, the unpopularity of Reconstruction in both the North and the South, the resentment of Southern whites, and the Army's own discomfort and distaste for martial law left a bad taste in the War Department's mouth for accepting missions involving governance in the West for the remainder of the nineteenth century.³

Despite its institutional disdain for civil governance, the Army was the only federal agency capable of administering local and territorial civil governments on short notice. Some of the senior officers in Santiago had experience as acting Indian agents on reservations when Indians became hostile or civilian appointees were relieved for corruption or incompetence.⁴ Such was the case for Ezra P. Ewers, who looked after Chief Hump's Minniconjou Lakota for seven years and temporarily administered the Cheyenne at the Tongue River Reservation in Montana after the tragedy at Wounded Knee. Other assignments included acting as a caretaker for the Navajos living near Fort Sumner, New Mexico and protecting them from Comanche raiders.⁵ Military officials also ran large military administrative organizations after the Civil War. For instance, Shafter commanded the administrative Department of California.

³ Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 234-46.

⁴ Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 102, 141, 150, 222.

⁵ William L. Ewers, *When the Army Still Wore Blue: The Military Life and Times of General Ezra P. Ewers* (Glendale, AZ: 1996), 53, 111. Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 131-32, 272-280.

Establishing Civil Governance in Santiago

After the unexpected surrender of all of eastern Cuba to Shafter on 17 July, McKinley had no choice but to have the Army administer the occupation government. He gave clear guidance to the War Department on how he expected it to govern Santiago during the military occupation. First and foremost, the powers of the occupation government were “absolute and supreme” over the inhabitants of Santiago.⁶ He implied that the so-called Cuban government had no authority. McKinley wanted the military governor to keep the Spanish municipal laws, judges, and ordinary tribunals in force as much as possible. If the American commander found the laws and officials incompatible “with the new order of things,” the President gave him the authority to “replace or expel native officials...substitute new courts...[and] create such new or supplementary tribunals as may be necessary.”⁷ To varying degrees, the three military governors of Santiago each adhered to the President’s guidance by ignoring the revolutionary Cuban government and keeping Spanish laws and officials in place at first. After a short evaluation period, not one of them hesitated to dismiss officials and change laws, as they deemed necessary.

In general orders to his command and proclamations to the inhabitants of Santiago de Cuba and the surrounding towns, Shafter echoed McKinley’s directives that Spanish laws and officials were to remain in place.⁸ McKinley and the War Department hoped that this would ease

⁶ William McKinley to the Secretary of War, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 161.

⁷ William McKinley to the Secretary of War, July 18, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 161.

⁸ General Order Number 1, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1756, Guantánamo, General and Special Orders, 1:1.

the transition to an occupation government. The decision upset the allied Cubans because it kept in office the very people they had fought against for three years. In late July, a large group of Cubans signed a petition addressed to McKinley that formally condemned the retention of Spanish officials in office.⁹ The decision to keep Spanish officials in place This policy caused more damage to the Cuban-American alliance than any other issue. On the other hand, many loyal Spaniards had no desire to stay in office under a new regime, whether it was Cuban or American, and they resigned. McKinley's policy did allow for a smooth bureaucratic transition to military rule and made the government more efficient and economical, but it did little to assuage the Cubans' anger. Soon after taking command, Shafter decided to get rid of most of the former civil officials in Santiago de Cuba.

Shafter had begun discussing the possibility of dismissing most of the Spanish officials within weeks of establishing the occupation government. His subordinates warned him that such a drastic action would lead to chaos.¹⁰ The Spanish government in Cuba maintained an excessive number of officials in office as a form of political patronage. A large number of bureaucrats inundated Shafter, demanding paychecks and asking the War Department to pay their wages and only use tariff money to cover the salaries of the governor, police, and customs officials. "Their services not being required" any longer, Shafter asked to dismiss the rest of the officials.¹¹

McKinley agreed to allow Shafter to discharge excess civil officials as he saw fit, provided that

⁹ Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:373.

¹⁰ Entry from July 26, 1898 Samuel B. M. Young Papers, Box Number 9, Diary of J. H. Reeves, aide-de-camp of General Young, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹¹ Shafter to the Adjutant General, August 9, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 215.

he retain enough officials to govern effectively.¹² Armed with the President's consent, Shafter acted quickly. He reduced the number of employees working for the city of Santiago de Cuba at the mayor's office, police department, slaughterhouse, cemetery, city prison, and fire department to a total of 38.¹³ He relieved the governor and the governor's entire office, and cut in half the number and pay of the officials working at the customs house. Furthermore, Shafter ordered the removal of the Spanish coat of arms from all government buildings and stationary.¹⁴ He did not concern himself with the political allegiance of the officials he terminated, or even check to see if they were Cuban or Spanish born, to the great dismay of his erstwhile Cuban allies.¹⁵

While such reforms did lead to a more economical administration, Shafter almost caused irreparable harm by inadvertently cutting some critical positions. The large city needed far more than ten police officers, and Shafter quickly hired fifty back to the force, still 140 less than before the occupation.¹⁶ The Inspector of Measures and Weights at the docks in Santiago de Cuba knew the city still needed him to check the scales, but did not know if he was still in office or relieved.¹⁷ After inquiring with the U.S. Army he discovered that Shafter had relieved him. Shafter also dismissed the Engineer of Public Works and the Mines and Forest Engineer. Fortunately, the two engineers neatly stacked their archives of hundreds of record books in the

¹² H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, August 11, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 1.

¹³ William R. Shafter, August 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 3.

¹⁴ Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 13-14.

¹⁵ Shafter to the H. C. Corbin, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 232-33.

¹⁶ Shafter to the H. C. Corbin, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 232.

¹⁷ Ygnacie Leyte Vidal to Gen. Commanding the Dept. of Santiago, September 5, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 428.

hallway of the mayor's office before departing. Captain Ramon G. Mendoza and another volunteer officer discovered the stacked archives of all the titles and surveys for private and public lands in the province.¹⁸ The military government also located and translated a copy the "Practical Guide for Town Councils and Deputations," which had all the laws for provincial governorships on the island.¹⁹ Without recovering these records and the code of laws, the military government could hardly have functioned and certainly would have faced innumerable lawsuits.

When Lawton assumed command of the Department of Santiago, he knew that he needed to enlarge the civil bureaucracy to make it more responsive and functional. Lawton complained to the War Department that "Shafter practically abolished civil functions in this province," and that he had been forced "to administer on his lines."²⁰ Eager to rebuild relations with the Cubans, who petitioned him to reopen the province's civil services, Lawton asked permission to restore the courts, schools, and other government functions. Knowing that few of his regular officers had experience serving as civil officials, Lawton wanted to appoint volunteer Army officers under his command with pre-war experience in law and government to head the civil government and to relieve the hated Spanish executives.

Using the only government structure with which he had experience in his adult life, Lawton planned to run the civil government as an extension of his military staff. He asked to

¹⁸ Captain R. G. Mendoza and Z. Ferrez to Commanding General, Department of Santiago, September 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 168. R. G. Mendoza to The Commanding General, September 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 356.

¹⁹ Extract from the Practical Guide for Town Counsels and Deputations Relating to organizing of civil governorships, October 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 3, 1974.

²⁰ Lawton to General Corbin, September 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 308.

appoint Lieutenant Colonel Ariosto A. Wiley of the Fifth U.S. Volunteer Infantry (Immunes), a capable lawyer in civilian life, to the position of civil governor. Furthermore he wanted to replace the Spanish mayor of Santiago, Rafael P. Salcedo, with Major James H. McLeary, his inspector general. Lieutenant James H. Blount of the 3rd U.S.V.I. studied and translated local Spanish laws and became the judge advocate on Lawton's staff, responsible for ensuring that the U.S. Army's actions were in accordance with the former colonial laws.²¹ Subordinate to these American officers, Lawton planned to place former Cuban officers and others who had supported the revolution in order to begin rebuilding the fractured relationship with the Cuban Liberation Army.²² The President approved Lawton's request to recreate a robust civil government and accepted most of his appointees. McKinley insisted that Leonard Wood act as civil governor of the province in addition to his duties as commander of the city, so Wiley became the assistant governor.²³

By restoring civil services, Lawton also hoped to undercut the strength of the Cuban Revolutionary Party (PRC), which continued to act as a parallel government and threaten the legitimacy of the American military government. The commanders of the U.S. Army had orders from McKinley not to recognize the Cuban government upon their arrival in Cuba. While the Americans established governance in Santiago de Cuba, Cuban revolutionary leaders, including Demetrio Castillo Duany, Jesús Rabí, Pedro Pérez, Domingo Mendez Capote, and others, met in

²¹ Leonard Wood to Lieutenant Colonel A. A. Wiley, October 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 234-5.

²² Lawton to General Corbin, September 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 308. H. W. Lawton to Antonio Salcedo, September 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 310. Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 34.5, September 23, 1898.

²³ Corbin to Lawton, September 16 and 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 818-19.

Santa Ana to discuss the election of a new Cuban government.²⁴ Shafter had alerted the War Department that “the attitude of the pronounced Cubans is hostile,” and that “a dual government can’t exist here.”²⁵ On September 1, the PRC released a manifesto thanking the United States for their “decisive” intervention, but reminding the people of the island that they must remain in session because they were “elected by the people under arms” and because the “Cuban Republic, which was the ideal for which we fought, has not yet been constituted.”²⁶

Lawton understood that using force to break up the assembly might initiate fighting between the Cubans and the U.S. Army. He wisely capitalized on the tensions between the Cuban Liberation Army and the PRC by giving certain conservative-minded Cuban officers jobs in the newly constituted civil government. By granting pro-American officers and a few supportive PRC officials a stake in the American occupation government, he weakened and delegitimized the penniless PRC. Lawton, and later Wood, tended to appoint those they considered “prominent and reliable” Cubans to positions in the civil government. Both Lawton and Wood deemed Cubans who had been educated in the U.S. or Europe, were of European descent, or were pro-business to be “prominent and reliable.”²⁷ They also thought highly of those Cubans who favored strong long-term relations with the United States, and even more highly of those who favored outright annexation.

²⁴ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Flag Raising on North Coast,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

²⁵ Shafter to H. C. Corbin, August 16, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 233.

²⁶ Dr. Domingo Mendez Capote, “Extract of a circular order to the military commanders of the Cuban Army,” September 1, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 726.

²⁷ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 3. “Extranjeros de Ayer,” *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, July 26, 1898.

For example, Demetrio Castillo Duany rose to power in the occupation government because he fully supported the U.S. Army and helped Lawton and Wood identify other likeminded and conservative Cuban leaders. Born to a prominent Cuban family, Castillo went to France for school and later became a naturalized U.S. citizen. Living in New York, he opened a business school and also was a partial owner of the Juraguá Mines near Santiago de Cuba. He had returned to Cuba to fight with José Maceo during the revolution and rose to the rank of Brigadier General. Furthermore, Castillo had assisted the U.S. Army secure Siboney during the landings.²⁸

By the time Wood took over from Lawton as commander of the Department of Santiago, Castillo had become the most trusted Cuban advisor to the occupation government. Castillo traveled on the lighter *Los Angeles* and appointed the mayors and justices of the peace in the coastal towns of the province after the U.S. Army took control of them and had evacuated Spanish forces. Wood told his subordinate commanders in Caney, Cobre, Songo, and Palma Soriano that he gave Castillo the authority to inspect and reorganize the civil governments of these towns as he saw fit, and that he had “the fullest confidence of the Commanding General and his opinions will be given all the consideration.”²⁹ The Cuban officials selected by Castillo were still subordinate to their local American commanders but generally ran their municipal governments. Castillo picked Cubans who were respected by “prominent citizens” but who were also active or supported the revolution.³⁰ In Baracoa, Castillo and Major Thomas S. Wylly

²⁸ Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 292.

²⁹ Leonard Wood, January 3, 1899, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 441.

³⁰ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Our Flag at Manzanillo,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

appointed Colonel Hipolito Gallano mayor. The Americans reported that the former surgeon in the Cuban Liberation Army was a man of “high attainments and culture.”³¹ Castillo went on to recommend the Lehigh University-trained engineer, José Ramón Villalón, be appointed as secretary of public works in Santiago de Cuba. In February 1899, Wood recommended to the War Department that Castillo be appointed the acting civil governor of the Province of Santiago with the substantial salary of \$4,800, noting that he had acted in this role since October.³² As for the “so called Cuban government,” Wood reported that it still remained in session, but after he and Lawton stripped the PRC of some of its most influential leadership in eastern Cuba by giving them paid positions in the occupation government, the PRC had little legitimacy there.³³

Driven by his ethnocentric belief that American forms of government were inherently superior to Spanish ones and his paternalistic feelings toward Cubans, Wood soon began making drastic changes to existing legal and bureaucratic structures in Santiago. Naturally, he fashioned the Department’s civil code along the lines of the laws of the United States, the only political system he really knew. Wood found the former Spanish laws of the province incompatible “with the new order of things” and introduced a temporary constitution for the Province of Santiago based on the Bill of Rights.³⁴ Although not perfectly aligned with its American counterpart, General Order No. 1 for the civil government of Santiago de Cuba did assure Cubans freedom of

³¹ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Restoring order in Cuba,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

³² Wood to Adjutant General, Division Cuba, February 13, 1899, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 4 of 8, January 6, 1899 to March 1, 1899, 345. Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 292.

³³ Wood to Adjutant General, October 22, 1898, Lawton to General Corbin, September 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 183.

³⁴ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Office of Acting Civil Governor, 1898*, G. O. 1, October 20, 1898.

speech, assembly, and religion; the right to protection under the court without cost; the right to face accusers and to have legal counsel; and protection from self-incrimination, double jeopardy, and unreasonable searches and seizures.³⁵ Additionally, Wood held firm ethnocentric biases against the work ethic and culture of the Cubans. Despite admitting the “work of the Cubans is of a much better character than I expected at first,” he still found them to be “impetuous and hot-headed and liable to do a good many foolish things.”³⁶ In his report to the president, he argued that “the civil government of this Province for a time at least, has got to be one almost of paternalism,” with the Cubans being carefully supervised.³⁷

Wood was not the only one to look down on Cubans in a paternalistic way. Most American soldiers, though certainly not all, felt that they were racially and culturally superior to the Cubans they encountered. Almost all Americans were appalled that Cubans allowed their children to run in the streets partially or fully naked until they were at least ten years old. They also looked down on the paltry dress of the rural Cubans and their practice of bathing in mass along rivers with no concern for privacy or gender.³⁸

The different regional origins of the American officers had much to do with their varying views toward Cuban civilians. Unsurprisingly, the officers and soldiers from the American South thought much better of the Cubans of Spanish decent than those of African descent. Wyllly, a South Carolinian from the 3rd U.S.V.I., explained how the former lived in “fine style, are cleanly

³⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Office of Acting Civil Governor, 1898*, G. O. 1, October 20, 1898.

³⁶ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 3.

³⁷ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 3-4.

³⁸ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wyllly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “MAJ Wyllly in Command and Truth of Condition of Ray’s Regiment,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

in their habits, refined in their tastes and hospitable,” while the Afro-Cubans were “filthy and degraded and have no modesty.”³⁹ Private Mack H. Brinkley, also of the 3rd Immunes, “was very very disappointed in the Cuban People. They were a low class of people. Their morals were very, very low.”⁴⁰ He found the “Spanish people were very superior to them.”⁴¹ Despite feeling that he “had made a mistake by “volunteering to defend these people,” he believed that all the Cubans, regardless of color, were kind to the Americans and they in turn were compassionate to them.⁴² Captain Matthew Steele, a Regular Army officer from Alabama, had no sympathy for freeing the Cubans from Spanish rule, saying that he “would rather free the hyenas and gorillas of Africa.”⁴³ He wrote to his wife that he had gotten to the point where he had to “close my eyes or turn my head as I pass one of them or it will nauseate me,” and he told her that the women and children “are beyond the possibility of your imagination to picture in hideous blackness, scrawny

³⁹ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Truth of Condition of Ray’s Regiment,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴⁰ 3rd Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Brinkley, Mack H., Company G, Spanish-American War Veterans Questionnaire, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 66, Folder Number 13, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴¹ 3rd Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Brinkley, Mack H., Company G, Spanish-American War Veterans Questionnaire, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 66, Folder Number 13, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴² 3rd Regiment, U.S. Volunteer Infantry - Brinkley, Mack H., Company G, Spanish-American War Veterans Questionnaire, The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Box Number 66, Folder Number 13, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. See Also, Paul, Andrew, Company I, Box Number 66, Folder Number 18.

⁴³ Steele to Wife, July 22-23, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

ugliness, squalor, and everything horrible.”⁴⁴ He concluded his rant about the black Cubans by telling her that he “didn’t suppose there were such people on the face of the earth.”⁴⁵

The African American officers serving in the volunteer regiments felt much more empathy and pride for the black Cubans than their white Southern peers. Chaplain William H. Coston of the 9th U.S.V.I. believed that disparagers of the Afro-Cubans did so because they refused to prostrate themselves to white Americans due to their race or impoverished condition or “submit to the abuses with which the Afro-American is so familiar.”⁴⁶ Captain W. B. Parsons of the 23rd Kansas described the abject poverty of the black Cubans, but noted that they did everything in their power to help and be friendly with the African Americans from Kansas.⁴⁷ Despite some of their racist views, American soldiers generally thought the Cubans to be generally kind toward them.

One way that Wood believed he could supervise the Cubans whom he viewed as childlike was to give himself unlimited power as military governor. In the same general order that guaranteed and protected the rights of all Cubans, he gave himself the right to suspend the writ of *habeas corpus* and modify any law as he saw fit.⁴⁸ Moreover, all civil officials remained under the absolute control of the military officers who oversaw the occupation in the towns and districts across the Department of Santiago. Given Wood’s low opinion of Cuban institutions and

⁴⁴ Steele to Wife, July 22-23, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴⁵ Steele to Wife, July 22-23, 1898, Matthew F. Steele Papers, Box Number 8, Correspondence with Wife, July 3 to October 26, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁴⁶ W. Hillary Coston, *The Spanish-American War Volunteer: Ninth United States Volunteer Infantry* (Harrisburg, PA: Mount Pleasant Printery, 1899), 167.

⁴⁷ William B. Gatewood Jr., “Smoked Yankees” and the Struggle for Empire: *Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898-1902* (University of Illinois Press: Urbana, 1971), 190-1.

⁴⁸ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Office of Acting Civil Governor, 1898*, G. O. 1, October 20, 1898.

prospects for self-government, he argued that the military must have ultimate control of the civil government until “the governments so instituted are stable, practicable and capable of self-support.”⁴⁹ Wood did not hesitate to allow his soldiers or civil officials to use corporeal punishment to ensure the Cubans obeyed his dictums. As civil mayor of Santiago de Cuba, Wood compelled every able-bodied man to work cleaning the streets under guard. Those who refused to work or did not give it their all “soon learned that there were things far more unpleasant than cheerful obedience.”⁵⁰ One observer recalled, “People making sewers of the thoroughfares were publicly horsewhipped in the streets.”⁵¹ Wood did pay the Cubans for their work, making the desperately hungry Cubans much less likely to rebel against his draconian measures.

Progressive Reforms and the Americanization of Santiago

The middle-class American officers that governed Cuba had much in common with the progressives making reforms back in the United States. They borrowed many ideas from their social peers to alleviate what they saw as the political inefficiencies and social ills of Cuban society, however much they disregarded Cuban customs or opinions in the process. The officers’ reforms brought positive results to Santiago when they introduced the progressive ideas of bureaucratic efficiency, scientific reform, and order to the outdated and corrupt vestiges of the

⁴⁹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 25.

⁵⁰ Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 518.

⁵¹ Robert P. Porter, *Report on the Commercial and Industrial Conditions of the Island of Cuba. Special Report on the Province of Santiago de Cuba and the Internal Revenue of the Island of Cuba*. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1898), 4.

Spanish colonial government.⁵² The Americans were less successful when they tried to force their moral norms on Cuban society with laws and regulations. And despite their ethnocentric and paternalistic behavior, the American military government was generally free from corruption and efficiently administered.

One of the characteristics of colonialism is that the mother country installs a unitary government in its colony to centralize its control and exploitation. Correspondingly, Spain ruled Cuba through a military governor in Havana who had complete control over the provincial and municipal governments. City and provincial officials had almost no decision-making power and all laws and decisions originated in Havana, causing a great deal of inefficiency. Local officials received their jobs as a form political patronage with the intent of profiting from their positions, not governing, which led to rampant corruption.

Unsurprisingly, Wood found the Spanish system of municipal government inefficient and corrupt. In his annual report he complained that there were entirely too many officials at the municipal level and maintaining them cost “far in excess of what is required to obtain an efficient performance of public duty.”⁵³ Wood described how even a small town of four hundred people had almost ten officials drawing large salaries even when their responsibilities were largely ceremonial. The larger towns had proportionally excessive numbers of government officials. Like Lawton and Shafter before him, Wood believed that he could make sweeping cuts to the number of paid bureaucrats without losing efficiency. Besides bloated bureaucracies, the

⁵² Edward M. Coffman, *The Regulars: The American Army, 1898-1941* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 192. Brian McAllister Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 42.

⁵³ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 28.

Spanish colonial bureaucracy in Cuba had functioned in a system where all government action required some sort of fee or payoff. Wood struggled to change a political culture that believed “that influence and money [could] accomplish anything.”⁵⁴ He set about ruthlessly dismissing corrupt civil servants who accepted bribes, regardless of their rank or stature, and found that civil officials changed their behavior when they knew the consequences of any irregularities in their record keeping.

In addition to battling corruption, Wood worked to empower municipal governments and make them more efficient. He organized his civil government as a military bureaucracy by dividing the Department of Santiago into four districts closely aligned with the old Spanish judicial districts in the province. The military commanders of the Districts of Guantanamo, Holguín, Manzanillo, and Mayarí received funds along with specific guidance on how to administer the civil and military affairs in their areas. Wood maintained direct control of the city of Santiago de Cuba.⁵⁵ In a letter to Colonel Duncan N. Hood, one of his district commanders, Wood reminded him to not allow the municipality to incur any debt, and he allowed Hood to collect a small municipal tax to pay for Gibara’s municipal government and other small expenses.⁵⁶ The model Wood established to control the civil and military government of Santiago became the standard for the remainder of the U.S. Army’s occupation of Cuba.

While Wood provided some tariff funds to pay for municipal-level officials, he encouraged towns to become self-sufficient. Wood had the towns establish a municipal tax to

⁵⁴ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 29.

⁵⁵ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, 1899*, 3-4.

⁵⁶ Leonard Wood to Colonel Duncan N. Hood, November 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 491.

raise the funds necessary to pay their mayor and doctor, and to conduct small sanitation and repair projects. By the end of the initial occupation, most towns had reduced the number of civil servants they employed to a number they could independently sustain.⁵⁷ Following Wood's instructions to him in Baracoa, Wylly established a municipal government with a mayor and created a municipal tax to make the town self-sustaining. Wylly planned to use the surplus revenue the tax created to build water works for the city, pave the streets, and bring electric lighting.⁵⁸ Citing Wylly's success at bringing humanitarian relief and rebuilding Baracoa during his tenure, the city council and mayor petitioned Wood in February 1899 to have Wylly stay on permanently as the military commander of the town and not to return to South Carolina with his regiment.⁵⁹ Yet towns like Baracoa in the Department of Santiago never reached the level of self-sufficiency Wood hoped for. Wood had to authorize Colonel James. S. Pettit, the district commander of Manzanillo, to give department funds to help his local military commanders with small projects and purchases, since they did not generate enough revenue on their own.⁶⁰ By the end of the initial occupation, Wood still needed to send each district commander several thousand dollars a month to assist them in running their municipal governments and prevent the towns from going into debt.

Despite their low yields, the modification of the Spanish tax system and the transparency of the military government's use of funds was probably the most popular aspect of the U.S.

⁵⁷ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 4.

⁵⁸ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, "Restoring Order to Cuba," The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁵⁹ The, Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Folder Number , the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

⁶⁰ Leonard Wood to Col. J. S. Pettit, December 2, 1899, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 138.

Army's occupation. All the military governors despised the old Spanish tax system. Wood reported that taxes were not spread across society in proportion to one's wealth, "so that a poor man will pay as much as a rich."⁶¹ Furthermore, Wood believed that by taxing trade and consumption of goods and not property, the system "fails to encourage, but actually retards and in many instances prevents, the improvement and development of the country by penalizing energy and enterprise and by rewarding, indirectly, neglect and inertia."⁶² He immediately made small changes to the tax law to make it a little more equitable and less onerous on the poor but recommended the tax code be completely rewritten.

The military government, like the Spanish-colonial government before it, received most of its revenue from tariffs on imports and exports. The difference was that the occupation government used all the tariff revenue for internal improvements and not to enrich Spanish or corrupt local officials' coffers. The effects of this change were felt immediately. The President appointed Walter A. Donaldson as collector of customs for the Department of Santiago because of his familiarity with Spanish customs laws.⁶³ Donaldson rigorously accounted for every cent and investigated any irregularity. He reported the amount of collected funds and expenditures to the War Department in meticulously kept records and made recommendations on how to improve the tariff system to make it more efficient, and not necessarily more profitable.⁶⁴

⁶¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 30.

⁶² National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 30.

⁶³ Leonard Wood, October 24, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 206.

⁶⁴ G. D. Meiklejohn to The Commanding General, Department of Santiago, September 9, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 434.

Also unlike the Spanish, the War Department granted exceptions to the tariff laws to help provide humanitarian relief to the destitute Cubans and to restart their economy. The President had the Assistant Secretary of War George de Rue Meiklejohn lift the tax on all imported food to keep costs for relief agencies down.⁶⁵ Meiklejohn also abolished the export tax on ore and considered allowing some farm machinery to enter free of charge in order to restart the mining and farming industry in the province.⁶⁶ A company involved in coastal trade between Guantanamo and Santiago de Cuba complained to Donaldson that they wanted to trade between more American controlled ports in Eastern Cuba but could not afford to because the tariff law charged them two cents per ton each time they stopped in a port, which they found excessive. The War Department agreed with their argument and also saw the importance of coastal trade in rebuilding Cuba's economy, so it enacted a new regulation that capped the maximum annual rate costal traders would have to pay each year.⁶⁷ Additionally, to increase the efficiency of trade to American occupied Eastern Cuba, the War Department began allowing ships coming into Eastern Cuba to go directly their destination port without first stopping in Santiago de Cuba. Newly appointed tariff officials at these smaller customs houses collected the tariffs and sent the fees to the department headquarters.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Meiklejohn to Commanding General, Santiago, September 7, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 226. Leonard Wood to Adjutant General U.S. Army, November 5, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 315.

⁶⁶ Meiklejohn to Commanding General, Santiago, September 13, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 299. Leonard Wood to The Adjutant General U.S. Army, November 5, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 315.

⁶⁷ Gallego, Messa y Co. to Walter A Donaldson, October 1, 1898 and Tariff Circular No. 17, October 11, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1700.

⁶⁸ Leonard Wood, November 9, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 399.

To supplement the tariff revenues, Lawton had asked Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin for permission to reestablish local taxes and stamp duties. Lawton wanted to open more civil functions once operated by the state—such as the schools, courts, and electric and water works—and to make each town self-sustaining.⁶⁹ The Republican administration and the War Department were vehemently opposed to incurring debt for ideological reasons and refused to open civil functions until they had enough funds to operate them consistently. Even though the stamp tax on all government transactions produced the majority of municipal revenue, Wood convinced the War Department not to reinstate this tax, because no former Spanish law was so “utterly distasteful or repugnant to the Cubans” because of the inefficiency and graft it caused, knowing he would still have to cut the size of local governments and police forces without the profitable stamp revenues.⁷⁰ To make up for the lost revenue, Wood allowed municipalities to tax stores for business licenses. In Santiago de Cuba, Wood employed Bernardo J. Bueno and Juan M. Galdos, two former Cuban officers, to work alongside two Americans to survey the city and to issue business licenses that Wood estimated would increase the cities revenue by \$100,000 a year.⁷¹

By November, Wood’s Department of Santiago had its finances in order. The municipalities were nearly self-sustaining, although they did cut many positions and services, and the increased tariff revenues enabled Wood to reopen most civil functions. The Department collected \$221,636 in customs revenues through the month of October.⁷² With the additional

⁶⁹ H. W. Lawton to Adjutant General, United States Army, September 20, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 354-5.

⁷⁰ Leonard Wood to the Adjutant General of the U.S. Army, November 5, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 331.

⁷¹ Leonard Wood to Adjutant General, October 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1467.

⁷² Wood to Secretary of War, November 8, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 375.

revenue Wood hired more police, reopened the civil courts and schools, and began repairing the roads and lighthouses in the province.⁷³ Most importantly, Wood could boast that his government was generally free of corruption, operating efficiently, and operating within its means—all progressive traits venerated by both Wood and the Republican administration. While Wood's frugality caused the loss of countless government jobs, the dismissed public officials were typically loyal to the old Spanish regime and planned to return to Spain anyway. By replacing them with conservative Cubans friendly to the United States, the military government faced little complaint, save from Cubans desiring immediate independence.

The transparency and efficiency of the occupation government's use of Cuban revenue marked a stark contrast from their Spanish predecessors. The same was true for its approach to private property. The U.S. Army insisted upon using government-owned property, and renting private property when necessary. The U.S. Army's respect for private property was another way that it avoided perceptions of corruption. Assistant Judge Advocate Wiley investigated which of the buildings formerly used by the Spanish government were public property and which were privately owned and rented. He concluded that the building used by the Chamber of Deputies was privately owned and could no longer be used by the military government unless it paid rent to the owners in Spain.⁷⁴ The military government of Santiago de Cuba was even more disheartened when Assistant Adjutant General Mendoza searched the record of titles he discovered in the mayor's office to learn that the magnificently decorated and maintained

⁷³ Leonard Wood to Assistant Secretary of War, December 17, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 294-6. Leonard Wood, September 23, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1027.

⁷⁴ A. A. Wiley to the Commanding General, Santiago de Cuba, September 15, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 760.

Spanish officers' club was also privately owned and could no longer be used by the U.S. Army.⁷⁵ When Wood received a report that Major Frank Gordon of the 3rd U.S.V.I. was using the home of two priests to stable his horse without their consent, he ordered an investigation, which substantiated the claim.⁷⁶ For this and other acts unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman, Gordon was compelled to resign his commission and return to the United States.⁷⁷ The U.S. Army also immediately returned furniture originally stored in an office building to its owner that it had removed after mistakenly believing it belonged to the Spanish army using the building during the siege.⁷⁸

While the U. S. Army respected the private property of Spaniards and Cubans in Santiago during the occupation, it refused to compensate civilians for either damages resulting from the fighting to take the city, or items stolen by American soldiers and the Cuban Liberation Army. To investigate the numerous claims made by civilians against the U.S. Army in Santiago de Cuba, Lawton convened a board of three officers to investigate and make recommendations on each petition.⁷⁹ On the recommendation of the board of claims, Wood authorized a payment to Pedro Secunido Silva of \$912 for the U.S. Army's use of his building on Cristina Street as a customs house. He had rented it to the Spanish government and the occupation government had used it for 111 days until it signed a new lease with the owner.⁸⁰ On the other hand, the board

⁷⁵ R. G. Mendoza to the Inspector General, September 5, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 446.

⁷⁶ Leonard Wood to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, September 14, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 725.

⁷⁷ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 34.4, September 23, 1898.

⁷⁸ J. W. Jacobs, September 8, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 421.

⁷⁹ Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 34.8, September 23, 1898.

⁸⁰ John H. Beacom to Mr. Pedro Secundino Silva, November 18, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 469-70

refused to pay any damages claimed to have done by the U.S. Navy or Army during the bombardment of the city as the board decided that these were either lawful acts of war or were false claims against the government to repair dilapidated buildings.⁸¹ Furthermore, the board refused to compensate Bernardo Lageyre for the horses that two U.S. Army deserters stole from him. Wood considered the affair a matter for the civil courts, but he did promise to make every effort to capture the men and return the stolen property.⁸² When the board recommended that the military government pay Lageyre for the ninety-three cows consumed by General Calixto García's forces while working with the U.S. Army to siege Santiago de Cuba, Wood demurred.⁸³ He thought that if the occupation government paid Lageyre's and two other claims against the Cuban Liberation Army "while they were nominally co-operating with us" it would be "establishing an extremely dangerous precedent."⁸⁴ Wood worried that it would amount to recognition of the Cuban Liberation Army and that citizens would "make claim upon us for all the past damage done by the Cuban Army in other portions of the Island during this period," and "perhaps establish a ground for them to claim salaries etc., from the United States."⁸⁵ Given the McKinley administration's policy of refusing to recognize the existence, let alone the legitimacy, of the Cuban Liberation Army or the PRC, the War Department agreed with Wood's recommendation not to pay these claims.

⁸¹ John H. Beacom to claimants, December 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 406-407.

⁸² John H. Beacom to His Excellency, the Mayor of Santiago, December 20, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 312.

⁸³ John H. Beacom to Mr. B. Lageyre, October 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 260-1.

⁸⁴ Leonard Wood to Adjutant General U.S. Army, November 5, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 316.

⁸⁵ Leonard Wood to Adjutant General U.S. Army, November 5, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 316.

Another shortcoming of the occupation government was in its intolerance of any negative press and its manipulation of material released to the press. Shafter's trouble with the American press began during the fighting because he disliked their reporting on his obvious shortcomings planning and executing the invasion. Corbin reminisced that Shafter could have been celebrated for his accomplishments, but "he was not tactful in the treatment of the representatives of the press."⁸⁶ Shafter's troubles continued into the first day of the occupation when he ordered the reporter Sylvester H. Scovel of the *New York World* off the roof of the governor's palace as he tried to place himself in the photographs of the surrender ceremony. Scovel attacked the general when he had him removed. Shafter considered trying Scovel and possibly having him shot for his assault, but "preferred to fire him from the island. A trial would only have given him the notoriety he" sought.⁸⁷ The War Department retracted Scovel's license and prohibited him from accompanying the U.S. Army overseas under any circumstance.⁸⁸ Shafter also ordered the arrest and deportation of three pro-administration reporters from the *New York Journal* for attempting to incite violence against the Spanish in Santiago de Cuba by posting large posters with a large heading that read "Remember the Maine" over a picture of the battleship.⁸⁹ Shafter again

⁸⁶ Unpublished Autobiography of Major General Henry C. Corbin, Folder 8, Container 11, Henry Clark Corbin papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 96.

⁸⁷ Shafter to Secretary of War, July 24, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 177.

⁸⁸ H. C. Corbin to War Department, Adjutant-General's Office, July 26, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 180.

⁸⁹ Shafter to Hon. R. A. Alger, July 23, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 175.

overreacted when faced with dissension and thought “the action of these men deserved death.”⁹⁰

The War Department was shocked that Shafter could not even get along with friendly reporters and that the paper most supportive to the administration did not have any representatives in Cuba. The administration ensured the editors that Shafter had no issue with the paper sending other journalists to Santiago, and rushed them down on the next government transport out of New York.⁹¹

After the signing of the peace protocol in Washington on August 13, 1898, the War Department could no longer censor the American press and all telegraph lines out of Cuba were opened.⁹² From that point on, the U.S. Army could not control the stories American journalists published, regardless of their veracity. Major Charles G. Starr, the Inspector General of the Department of Santiago, went to San Luis to investigate a newspaper’s claim that soldiers from 8th Illinois Infantry had forced “their way into homes, insult[ed] women and children, and even committed crimes which cannot be specified” because the soldiers of this regiment were “negroes gathered from the riff raff of our northern cities, officered by men of their own color.”⁹³ After interviewing dozens of civilians, soldiers, and town officials, Starr concluded that the newspaper reports did a great injustice to the 8th Illinois “by reason of their color” and the

⁹⁰ Shafter to Hon. R. A. Alger, July 23, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 177.

⁹¹ H. C. Corbin to General Kimball, Quartermaster, July 26, 1898, and R. A. Alger to General Shafter, July 24, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 176, 180.

⁹² H. C. Corbin to General Shafter, August 13, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 224 and 225.

⁹³ “More disorder, Negro Immunes Painting the town of San Luis,” National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 62.

published story consisted of utter “falsehoods manufactured out of whole cloth.”⁹⁴ He recommended that action be taken to prevent the paper from publishing additional libels, but there was little the military government could do.

Wood came down much more harshly on Cuban papers. He feared the rhetoric of Santiago de Cuba’s *La Independencia*, which openly called for the continuance of the revolution against the Americans and feared that the occupation government was dividing the independence movement while it was on the verge of success. The journal reminded the occupiers that the Cubans were “a people who have proved by the way we liberated our country from Spanish tyranny that we can resist aggression and oppression whenever it comes and whatever it form.”⁹⁵ The editors were right as to American intentions but not the nearness of unilateral Cuban success in their fight against Spain. They feared American annexation most, but also worried that the Americans in power would favor their conservative rivals within the revolutionary camp. Knowing that the editors wanted him to “make martyrs of them” and their cause by using “harsh measures,” Wood skillfully used a combination of persuasion and threats to suppress what he considered to be the “ultra-radical element.”⁹⁶ Fortunately for Wood, most Cubans seemed tired of war and happy that their desperate situation was improving, and were not eager to renew their struggle for independence.⁹⁷

⁹⁴ C. G. Starr to Adjutant General, Dept. of Santiago de Cuba, August 21, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 62.

⁹⁵ Reprinted in The State on November 20, 1898, as quoted in Philip S. Foner, *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism, 1895-1902*. 2 vols. (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 2:396.

⁹⁶ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, October 27, 1898, Container 27, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

⁹⁷ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1977), 67-8.

The American press heaped praise on Wood for his handling of the humanitarian crisis in Santiago de Cuba and the establishment of a progressive government of thrift, economy, and order in the city. The pro-administration *New York Times* celebrated Wood's administrative abilities and held it as a model for governing other American dependencies. Even the anti-imperialist *New York Evening Post* conceded that "if the President will keep on giving us men like Gen. Wood...we may hope for the winning of renown in civil administration."⁹⁸

Furthermore, Wood carefully managed his own image in the press by writing self-aggrandizing articles in the popular magazines, *Scribner's Magazine* and the *North American Review*.⁹⁹ The former magazine asked Wood to write an article on his work as military governor, but did not need to remind him of the "great importance in forming public opinion" on the problems he faced in Santiago, and their belief that "the public which we reach is a very important element in the formation of that opinion."¹⁰⁰ Wood even hired A. E. Mestro to lobby for him in Washington to become the military governor of all of Cuba. Wood had him deliver a letter to the president on his behalf, and Mestro convinced William McCloy of the *New York Evening Sun* to publish an editorial arguing that Wood was the most qualified person for the governorship.¹⁰¹

Despite his boasting, Wood had made great progress during the first months of his tenure in establishing control, relieving the humanitarian crises, building infrastructure, and making the

⁹⁸ "The Opportunity in Cuba," *New York Evening Post*, December 13, 1898, 6.

⁹⁹ Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 515-27. Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1977), 69-70.

¹⁰⁰ Charles Scribner's Sons to Wood, December 3, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁰¹ A. E. Mestro to Gen. Leonard Wood, October 16, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Department of Santiago self-sufficient. Wood, however, struggled when he attempted to reform long-held Cuban customs, institutions, and traditions. Changing cultures takes generations, but Wood wanted immediate results from his reforms. Building infrastructure in the Department of Santiago and enforcing laws with force proved to be an easier task for the military government than changing Cuban culture.

Using tariff money, Wood oversaw the renovation and repair of Santiago de Cuba's jail, slaughterhouse, market, hospital, and orphanage. He authorized the newly appointed mayor, Emilio Bacardí, to open a museum and library to display relics of the wars of independence, and even provided some government funds to establish it.¹⁰² Various Catholic sisterhoods labored to keep the hospitals and orphanages open during the war but the hard-pressed Spanish regime could provide almost no money or supplies. To keep these charitable institutions operating, Wood and Lawton initially relied on the Red Cross and private donations of generous individuals and social groups in the United States. Once tariff revenue increased, Wood began to appropriate government funds to support the charities.¹⁰³ Additionally, Lawton worked closely with the Department of Agriculture to set up a meteorological weather station near the city so they could study the causes of hurricanes and analyze how they approached the United States.¹⁰⁴

Wood used municipal police and soldiers when necessary to enforce strict compliance with his dictates, demanding order in the city and in the province. Wood confiscated every cart

¹⁰² Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 116.

¹⁰³ John H. Beacom to Mrs. A. J. Harvey, January 9, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 4 of 8, January 6, 1899 to March 1, 1899, 17. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 30-31.

¹⁰⁴ George Kingsbury to Maj. Genl. Henry W. Lawton, 4 October 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1682.

and wagon, and used police and soldiers to impress the male population of Santiago de Cuba to clean up the refuge in the streets. He paid and fed the desperate population, but used physical force against those who refused to work. To reduce the theft of livestock and to hold owners accountable for their wandering animals, Wood ordered all livestock to be registered. He made all previous proofs of ownership void after January 1, 1899. To conserve water during the winter dry season, Wood ordered the public fountains closed from 7 p.m. to 5 a.m., rotating the time that each neighborhood had water, and prohibited the washing of the streets without approval from the Sanitary Department.¹⁰⁵

Wood was far less successful at using laws to enforce progressive American morality on Cuban society. Embracing concerns shared by middle-class Americans for their own communities in the United States, many of the first laws enacted by the civil government were to curb what Wood saw as morally bankrupt behavior in his “civilizing mission” to “uplift” the Cubans.¹⁰⁶ In an attempt to try to stop the rampant gambling among Cubans and Americans soldiers that most American officers and educated Cubans detested, the civil government enacted a law that threatened arrest and a thousand dollar fine, or a year hard labor, for those caught running gambling houses. The civil government decreed another law two days later that tried to stop bull and cockfighting, which the American officers considered barbaric.¹⁰⁷ Also unsuccessfully, the U.S. Army tried to bring temperance to Cuba by stopping or limiting the sale

¹⁰⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Office of Acting Civil Governor, 1898*, G. O. 4, November 26, 1898, and G. O. 6, December 13, 1898. Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 517-20.

¹⁰⁶ Michael McGerr, “Transforming Americans,” in *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Maureen A. Flanagan, “Money, Morals, and Modernity: The Consumer Society,” in *America Reformed: Progressives and Progressivisms, 1890-1920s* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007).

¹⁰⁷ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Office of Acting Civil Governor, 1898*, G. O. 2, November 23, 1898, and G. O. 3, November 25, 1898.

of alcohol. Colonel Patrick H. Ray, the military governor of Guantanamo, prohibited the sale or gifting of liquor, beer, or wine without a costly license. He hoped to curb the sale and consumption of alcohol and fined violators a thousand dollars or imprisoned them for six months.¹⁰⁸ Despite these strict laws, American officers had about as much luck enforcing their morality upon the Cubans as they did upon their own soldiers.

The majority of ordinary Cubans despised the occupation government imposing American values on them and continued to drink, gamble, and attend cockfights no matter how steep the penalties. Cubans had long relished these activities after the harvest and during major holidays. Surprisingly, the Cuban nationalist and educational elite, like José Miguel Gómez who later became the civil governor of Santa Clara, strongly supported and even advocated for the occupation government to eliminate the wildly popular tradition of cockfighting and gambling. However, most Cubans, especially the lower-class *campesinos*, loved these popular pastimes and rejected the progressive crusades to reform what was perceived as Cuba's moralistic vices.¹⁰⁹

The military government also struggled to change the justice system of Cuba that was based on the tradition of Roman civil law. As it did in other facets of civil government, the U.S. Army first reestablished the Spanish colonial system of courts to ease the transition of the military government on the Cuban people. Even before the formal surrender of Santiago de Cuba on July 17, 1898, McKinley instructed Adjutant General Corbin to order the Army to continue using the existing municipal law in the province during the occupation. Shafter kept the courts closed because most of the Spanish officials resigned and he did not have the money to pay the

¹⁰⁸ General Order 5, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1756, Guantánamo, General and Special Orders, 1:3.

¹⁰⁹ Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 5, 50-53.

remaining ones. After Lawton assumed command, he worked to reestablish civil functions using the ever-increasing tariff revenues. Lawton asked for and received volumes on American and English legal systems, and international law from the War Department's Judge Advocate General to help him deal with the myriad legal issues he faced.¹¹⁰

The Spanish judicial system that Lawton reestablished for the Department of Santiago consisted of a three-tiered hierarchy of courts. At the bottom were the seventeen municipal courts, each presided over by a single judge who dealt with low-level civil cases where \$200 dollars or less was at stake, and with misdemeanors known as *faltas*. The municipal judges and their clerks received no salary but collected fees for their services. The Courts of the First Instance made up the second tier and had final jurisdiction over appeals made in municipal courts. Furthermore, the second-tier courts investigated all *delitos* (felonies). Each of the seven Courts of the First Instance were presided over by a judge originally appointed from Spain who received a fixed salary. If the judge determined the accused crime was only a misdemeanor, he sent it back to the municipal court, but if he determined that there was enough evidence to warrant a trial for the *delito* he sent the case to the *Audiencia* (Supreme Court) in Santiago de Cuba, the only court in the province that tried criminal offenses. The *Audiencia* consisted of a chief justice and five other judges, three state attorneys, and several clerks. All witnesses and accused parties in felony cases had to go to the Supreme Court in Santiago de Cuba and stay

¹¹⁰ Lawton to Judge Advocate General, August 31, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 120. Lieber to Major General Lawton, September 2, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 1, 364. National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 19.

there for the trial, eliminating any hope for speedy deliberation. Many witnesses refused to testify because of the time they would have to spend away from their homes and jobs.¹¹¹

Wood preferred to retain the majority of the Spanish laws, as they were satisfactory and the Cubans were accustomed to them, but he pleaded that he be allowed to modify the judicial system for criminal cases which he found “radically defective.”¹¹² The Americans were most shocked that no jury system existed in Cuba. Assistant Adjutant General Mendoza, a member of the Havana bar before immigrating to the United States, recommended giving salaries to the municipal judges and their notary clerks because the fees that law allowed them to accept were too small to live off, leading almost all of them to use “blackmail, bribery, and extortion [sic]” just to survive.¹¹³ Moreover, Mendoza recommended reducing the excessive salaries of the higher judges and cutting extraneous personnel. To overcome the Spanish judicial system that Wiley considered “slow...clumsy, primitive, and unsatisfactory,” Wood’s judge advocate general proposed establishing a military commission composed of three military officers, a prosecutor, and a clerk to try felony cases.¹¹⁴ Wood forwarded the recommendation to the War Department in early October, but did not receive approval. On November 28, Wood appointed new judges to the Supreme Court and some Courts of the First Instance. They were conservatives who were loyal to the occupation government, and several were former officers in the Cuban

¹¹¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 19-20. R. G. Mendoza to Assistant Adjutant General, October 1, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1365.

¹¹² National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 20.

¹¹³ R. G. Mendoza to Assistant Adjutant General, October 1, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1365.

¹¹⁴ A. A. Wiley to General Wood, September 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1517.

Liberation Army.¹¹⁵ The President and the War Department decided to wait to make more radical changes to the judicial system until after the formal occupation of the island began in January 1899. Later, when Wood became military governor of all of Cuba, he oversaw the modification of the Cuban judicial system along American lines.¹¹⁶

Unlike the Cuban judicial system, the U.S. Army's occupation forces quickly reformed the defunct postal system in Santiago by eliminating corruption and modernizing it along the American model. The War Department needed a functioning postal system to communicate cheaply and efficiently with its occupation forces posted in scattered garrisons throughout the island. McKinley dictated to the War Department on July 21, just four days after the Spanish capitulation, that it open the port of Santiago de Cuba to U.S. postal deliveries, and that all occupied areas use American postage stamps. All revenues from the sale of postage in Cuba were to be used to pay for the operating costs. The McKinley administration deemed postal communications too important to ever rely on the old Spanish system. The post office in the Department of Santiago fell under the Postmaster General of the United States, who sent a civilian appointee to operate the system.¹¹⁷

Outside of the provincial capital, U.S. Army officers ran the postal system until civilian appointees arrived from the United States or the military government appointed sympathetic Cubans. In Guantanamo, as in most of the towns the U.S. Army occupied, Colonel Ray relieved

¹¹⁵ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Office of Acting Civil Governor, 1898*, G. O. 5, November 28, 1898.

¹¹⁶ Leonard Wood, "Santiago Since the Surrender," *Scribner's Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 524-26. R. G. Mendoza to Assistant Adjutant General, October 1, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1365.

¹¹⁷ William McKinley to Post-Office Department, United States of America, July 21, 1898, Nelson A. Miles Papers, Box Number 6, *Official Correspondence relative to Santiago and Porto Rico Campaigns*, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 170.

the Spanish sympathizer who operated the postal system in the city during the war because he could not be trusted to handle military mails and the Cubans despised him.¹¹⁸ In his place Ray appointed Chaplain Daniel Parker until a civilian postmaster arrived from the United States.¹¹⁹ By the end of the initial occupation, the U.S. Army had opened post offices in all the towns in the province.

With the ending of the initial occupation, Havana became the single port of entry and departure for all mails arriving from or departing to the United States. Wood hated the system because it took eleven days for a letter from New York to arrive in Santiago de Cuba. He proposed that the United States Post Office contract Boston Fruit Company steamers, already authorized to carry U.S. mail and going to and from Jamaica three times a week, to add a quick stop to bring mail to Santiago. Furthermore, Wood wanted to modify the Spanish laws on posts to make them more modern and efficient, and he wanted to be allowed to punish corrupt postal officials and those who robbed the mail under military courts instead of prosecuting offenders under the slow-moving Cuban judicial system. Similar to his request to reform the Cuban judicial system and civil code, the McKinley administration decided to wait to reform the postal laws until the long-serving career soldier, Major General John R. Brooke, arrived to head the occupation government of all of Cuba, so they could make nation-wide reforms.¹²⁰

Despite not directly controlling the postal system, Wood still found himself responsible for managing many portions of it. As in its frontier mission in the American West, the U.S.

¹¹⁸ P. H. Ray, August 28, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 1 of 8, August 15, 1898 to October 4, 1898, 109.

¹¹⁹ General Order Number 2, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1756, Guantánamo, General and Special Orders, 1:2.

¹²⁰ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 16.

Army became responsible for ensuring the safe delivery of mail, especially in isolated places.¹²¹ When Wood sent the *Los Angeles* to deliver rations and supplies to the garrisons of the province, he authorized the ship to carry the mail.¹²² Wood could not make wholesale changes to the civil laws concerning the mail, but he did make regulations for the couriers who carried the mails to ensure that they arrived on schedule and safely guarded the mails.¹²³

The commanders who ran the Department of Santiago took a similar approach with the schools in the province by first reopening them along the existing Spanish system before reforming their administrative bureaucracy and Americanizing the curriculum. Although the Indian Bureau ran the schools on the reservations, the War Department did have recent experience managing schools. It built and managed a school for the Chiricahua Apaches at Mount Vernon Barracks, Alabama, in 1889, that served to educate and Americanize their children. The War Department also ran the famous Carlisle Indian Industrial School with a similar mission under the care of Richard H. Pratt from 1879 through the First World War.¹²⁴

The U.S. Army began reopening and administering the schools in Santiago de Cuba, closed because of the fighting. Lawton received a letter from the Director of the Superior School of Santiago Province in September that under normal circumstances students in the province would be enrolling for the next school year that began in October. Students who missed their exams the previous May also needed to take them before the new academic year. He explained

¹²¹ Michael L. Tate, *The Frontier Army in the Settlement of the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 62-69.

¹²² John H. Beacom to Postmaster, Santiago, Cuba, November 25, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 3 of 8, November 17, 1898 to January 6, 1899, 65.

¹²³ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Office of Acting Civil Governor, 1898*, G. O. 9, December 28, 1898.

¹²⁴ Robert M. Utley, *Geronimo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 240-1. Robert M. Utley, *The Last Days of the Sioux Nation* (New Haven: Yale University, 1963), 35-8.

the schools operated, by law, from fees paid by the students and could proceed with those funds for a time. The school director understood that McKinley's proclamation stated that the civil government in the province should continue on as before, but wanted confirmation from the U.S. Army commander before proceeding "with the examinations and opening the new course."¹²⁵ Not wanting the students to miss a school year, Lawton ordered Wood to open the schools in the Santiago de Cuba as usual on October 3. Lawton gave him an annual budget of \$20,480 and asked him to send his appointments for teachers and school board officials to him for final authorization. Wood appointed twelve teachers within the city limits who each received \$60 dollars per month, except for the Upper School teacher who received \$125. The occupation government used municipal funds to pay the instructors.¹²⁶

As a good progressive, Wood quickly seized upon the inefficiencies in the old Spanish school system and looked to make the school board more efficient and the schools more inclusive. Wood complained that the biggest challenge to opening new schools in Santiago was that there was no government land to place them on and that the lack of transportation prevented children that lived "any distance from the centers of population" from attending schools.¹²⁷ Wood was pleased with the energy and zeal of his school board and wanted to provide public primary education to all Cuban children. But he felt handicapped by existing Spanish laws on education that seemed "to have been designed more in the interest of teachers and other office

¹²⁵ Vitaliano de J. Martinez y Rodriguez to Assistant Adjutant General, October 1, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 916.

¹²⁶ Leonard Wood Papers, *General Orders and Circulars, Department of Santiago, 1898*, G. O. 10, September 22, 1898. Leonard Wood to Adjutant General, Department of Santiago, September 30, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1487, Box 2, 1342. Leonard Wood Papers, *Special Orders, Department of Santiago, 1898*, S. O. 43.9, October 4, 1898. "De Hoy, Santiago de Cuba," *La Lucha: Diario Republicano*, Habana, August 25, 1898.

¹²⁷ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 15-6.

holders than in the interest of real and general public instruction.”¹²⁸ He made a comprehensive plan to reform the entire school system in Cuba, but in the meantime he began work on less ambitious plans to open a school to train girls to become teachers and a high school for boys in Santiago de Cuba, so they would no longer need to travel to Havana to further their education. Meanwhile, Wood opened thirty kindergartens in Santiago de Cuba for children under seven years old.¹²⁹ Garrison commanders across the Department of Santiago followed Wood’s lead and opened dozens of schools. In Baracoa, Wylly opened two public schools by the end of 1898. Furthermore, across the island all schools began to teach English as well as Spanish to their pupils, making it easier to Americanize a new generation of Cubans.¹³⁰

While the inefficient and overly bureaucratic postal, education, and judicial system confounded American officers, nothing bewildered them more than the relationship between the Catholic Church and the former colonial government. To these almost exclusively Protestant officers, the special privileges and funding the Catholic Church received from the former colonial government seemed to confirm their worst fears of papal corruption and violated the very foundation of the American constitutional government, which demanded the separation of the church and state.

The Spanish government considered the church and the state to be a single indivisible entity and had taken control of the property and land owned by the Catholic Church in Cuba, as

¹²⁸ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 26.

¹²⁹ Leonard Wood to the President of the United States, November 27, 1898, Container 26, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 7. Leonard Wood, “Santiago Since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25, no. 5 (May 1899): 526.

¹³⁰ The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wylly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Restoring Order to Cuba,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

well as the mortgages they collected from rented land. The Catholic Church fought back against Spain and regained some right to land in Cuba with the Concordat of 1851. In return for the land confiscated by the Spanish government, the church received large payments every year and ensured that Roman Catholicism continued to be the only religion of the country and its colonies. Church property in Cuba, therefore, belonged to the state, and the colonial government made itself responsible for all the expenses of the church, including the clergy's salaries. Furthermore, the Catholic Church in Cuba profited from the rent of large amounts of land and property bequeathed or purchased by the church in corporation. When the U.S. Army occupied Santiago, it terminated the government payments to the church for former church properties. The Archdiocese of Santiago argued that all these lands should be turned over to it because the old colonial government had failed to fulfill its obligations on them. The War Department argued that the property belonged to the state and could therefore be used or sold in any way the occupation government saw fit. Furthermore, the church made large sums of money from Cuba by *capellanías*. These were annual payments made to the Church from the income off lands, established in the wills on original owners. When an annual mortgage, or *censos*, was not met, which had often become the case on agricultural land during the series of revolutions on the island, the debt became a lien on the property. The owners could not rebuild or invest in their lands after the war because of the huge debts they owed the church, often in excess of the total value of the property.¹³¹

¹³¹ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 17-8. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 184-5. Wood to Root, April 26, 1900, Container 28, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

With the approval of the War Department the occupation government separated itself from the Catholic Church and looked for legal means to undermine its strength. Upon learning from a report made by Wood in September that the salaries of priests were made with public revenues, the War Department ordered an immediate ending of the practice.¹³² Wood and the War Department also wanted to continue to hold the lands that once belonged to the Church, not used for worship, which they believed still belonged to the state. Furthermore, they began looking into legal ways to unencumber the Cuban people from the *capellanías*, so they could begin reinvesting in their lands. Unfortunately, they knew these were long-term problems that required changing or manipulating the existing laws of Cuba.¹³³ McKinley and the War Department decided to wait for the occupation of the entire island to begin on January 1, 1899 before making major changes to Cuba's civil code.

American Governance During the Formal Occupation and its Impact on Cubans

When Brooke took command of the Division of Cuba, he followed the guidance McKinley gave to Shafter in Santiago four months earlier to keep the existing colonial laws and Spanish officials in place initially. Brooke made some limited progressive reforms to Cuban laws and government structures, and he was less paternalistic toward the Cubans than Wood during his administration. He generally gave his Cuban ministers the power to run things. However, he organized the occupation government to more closely reflect traditional U.S. Army command structures. Under Brooke, a general commanding a military department directly supervised each

¹³² H. C. Corbin to Commanding General, Department of Santiago, October 10, 1898, National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1479, Vol. 2 of 8, October 4, 1898 to November 21, 1898, 195.

¹³³ National Archives, Record Group 395, Entry 1504, *Annual Report of Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, U.S. Volunteers, Commanding Department of Santiago, Report on Civic Conditions, Department of Santiago and Puerto Principe, 1899*, 17-8.

civil province and Havana; and American officers ran the customs houses, quarantine service, treasury, and telegraph and phone services.¹³⁴

Brooke had served in the U.S. Army since 1862. A thorough professional, he did not consider it proper to make major policy decisions without approval or guidance from McKinley or the War Department. Neither provided him much in the way of specific guidance for his military government. Nor did Brooke receive any long-term policy decisions regarding American intentions in Cuba. Without direction, Brooke made only a few small reforms and focused on bringing order and peace to the island. He focused on making his military and civil governments more efficient and gave his Cuban ministers and his department commanders considerable leeway. Nevertheless, he also Americanized some laws and bureaucracies that were too alien for his conservative nature. His cautious and impartial approach frustrated the McKinley administration, which looked for Brooke to drive policy rather than wait for it. Brooke's subordinate department commanders became frustrated with their superior's passivity, especially Wood and Major General James H. Wilson, as these volunteer generals were more self-assured about both their ability to lead the occupation and the superiority of American methods of governance. McKinley and the War Department sided with Wood over Wilson in the political struggle to circumvent their commander and determine a Cuban policy that set the conditions for American hegemony, if not outright annexation. Once Wood took command of the Division of Cuba on December 23, 1899, he instituted an aggressive policy of Americanizing Cuba's civil

¹³⁴ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 54-9.

government.¹³⁵ Wood reported the necessity of his paternalism to McKinley after taking charge by arguing that he was “dealing with a race that has steadily been going down for a hundred years and into which we have to infuse new life, new principles and new methods of doing things,” and he continued that the Cubans knew “that they are not ready for self government.”¹³⁶

As in Santiago, many of those telling Wood that they wanted an American civil government were loyalist *peninsulares* or upper-class Cubans, both of whom looked to the U.S. Army for protection from the perceived threats of social revolution and disorder. They championed annexation by the United States from the beginning. The U.S. Army understood that for political reasons it must appoint Cubans to positions in the new occupation government. It leaned heavily on the upper-class merchants, professionals, landowners, and especially English-speaking expatriates for support, with only some regard to their affiliation during the war. As in Santiago, the “better classes” of Cubans quickly loaned their support to the United States in return for the patronage of government jobs and for protection against the unprofitable chaos that revolutionary change to the existing political, social, and economic order would bring.

Meanwhile, the PRC and Cuban Liberation Army, once tenuously united in war by their desire for independence from Spain, began to feud with each other for power in the peace, even as both organizations internally split along class and racial lines in their support for the occupation government. The former Cuban officers wanted the jobs that initially went to the expatriates, and with the threat of renewed fighting, began receiving a larger share of American patronage. Aided by the support of General Máximo Gómez, the U.S. Army exploited the

¹³⁵ Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 270-71. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 65-6, 88, 98-115, and 126.

¹³⁶ Wood to the President of the United States of America, April 12, 1900, Container 28, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 3.

collapse of Cuban revolutionary consensus and its control of government employment to co-opt many former separatists to the American program. In the long term, they marginalized the revolutionaries by disenfranchising nearly the entire landless working class's right to vote.¹³⁷

The calculated placement of Cubans in government positions, the progressive reforms, and the Americanization of Cuban laws by the occupation government created discord and cognitive dissonance among the Cuban people. According to the Cuban historian Marial Iglesias Utset, "a battle broke out among three segments of the Cuban polity: the proponents of a strident nationalism, the advocates of a forceful 'Americanization' of Cuban customs and institutions, and the defenders of the Spanish cultural heritage."¹³⁸ She argues that most Cubans went through an identity crisis because they wanted to reform their society and government but also understood that the American reforms carried a steep cost as they also targeted cherished traditions and subjected Cubans to a sort of cultural imperialism by the United States. She concludes that from its inception the American "occupation government was at once hated and admired, rejected and imitated" by the Cuban people.¹³⁹

The Cubans both admired and despised the Americanization of the Cuban education system. Cuba had an illiteracy rate close to 70% and only a small fraction of children went to school. Brooke appointed an American, Alexis Frye, as superintendent of the newly created public school system. He worked tremendous hours without pay and genuinely tried to protect the interests of Cuban teachers. Later, Frye even spoke out against Wood's education policies,

¹³⁷ Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 216, 235-242, 285-300.

¹³⁸ Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 2.

¹³⁹ Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 8.

and the new governor replaced him with the loyal Lieutenant Matthew E. Hanna. The Cubans admired how the U.S. Army transformed former Spanish barracks, and any other unused public buildings, in Cuba into schools as they attempted to create enough space for all Cuban children to receive a primary education. In just over a year, they enrolled over 150,000 of Cuba's 400,000 school-aged children, opened close to 3,100 new public schools, reformed the private ones, and revived and reformed the University of Havana. By 1902, they enrolled another 100,000 students and spent close to 25% of the island's total revenues on public schools.¹⁴⁰

Children marching into buildings that soldiers once occupied symbolized to Cubans how the progressive reforms brought by the U.S. Army could modernize Cuba for the better, but they despised the self-righteousness of the occupation government's attempt to Americanize the curriculum and teaching methods. Most Cubans detested it when Brooke's civil government followed Wood's example in Santiago by making English a mandatory part of the school curriculum in September 1899. They also disliked that Hanna's laws governing schools on the island borrowed wholesale from Ohio state law with no consideration for Cuban traditions. Furthermore, the occupation government purchased thousands of textbooks from American publishing companies in English or translated poorly into Spanish, full of histories of American founding fathers and images alien to the Cuban population. A nationalistic backlash ensued against the teaching of the English language as a form of cultural conquest that might lead to political annexation. In the end the ambitious plan failed because not enough teachers spoke or could be trained to teach English, so only a small fraction of primary students received any

¹⁴⁰ Wood to Honorable George S. Hoar, August 31, 1900, Container 28, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 1:26-8. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 180-82.

instruction in the language during the four-year occupation. Moreover, the new public schools became more of a center to teach a new Cuban nationalism than they ever became a place to Americanize Cuban children.¹⁴¹

Wood realized that the Cubans would never allow their children to be taught by teachers from the United States. Therefore, to help educate Cubans on “superior” American scholastic methods an American nonprofit called the Cuban Educational Association (AEC) partnered with over three hundred American universities to provide scholarships to Cubans and Puerto Rican students so they could become teachers upon graduation. Showing the best of American altruism, many sponsor families allowed the students to live with them at little or no cost and railroads transported them at no charge. Equally ambitious was Frye’s plan to send 1,237 Cuban teachers to socialize and study education and English at Harvard in the summer of 1900. The U.S. Army transported the teachers free of charge, private American benefactors paid all the other costs, and all of Boston treated the teachers warmly. Simultaneously, both programs showed the worst of Americans’ belief in the superiority of their culture and race as the AEC’s explicit mission was to “civilize” the “Latin Races” with the “American way of life,” and many annexationists hoped that the study of the English language and education of Cuban teachers would lead to what they perceived to be the inevitable annexation of Cuba.¹⁴²

Another nationalistic backlash occurred when Brooke followed Wood’s example in Santiago by banning cockfighting and trying to limit gambling, largely at the request of the

¹⁴¹ Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 8, 69-75, 112. Wood to Honorable George S. Hoar, August 31, 1900, Container 28, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 181.

¹⁴² Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 8, 69-83.

Cuban intellectual elite. Brooke's secretary of state, Diego Tamayo, urged his boss to ban the practices because he believed them to be immoral and he thought that the U.S. Army would not leave Cuba until his countrymen could prove that they were civilized and capable of governing themselves. Not needing much persuasion, Brooke issued military order 165, which banned cockfighting across the island. Perhaps no civil law passed by the occupation government was more disliked because of the popularity of the blood sport among ordinary Cubans who saw it as part of a Cuban national culture, or *cubanía*. Despite several petitions, Wood and his Cuban secretaries refused to reestablish the legality of the sport, although they admitted that the sport flourished underground. The civil administration also refused to reinstate other popular pastimes they thought morally corrupt, like bull fighting and a national lottery.¹⁴³

The War Department paid for the occupation of Cuba with tariffs and municipal taxes, following the efficient model it established immediately after the capture of Santiago de Cuba, and refined under Wood's administration of the province. McKinley sent his personal advisor on tariff issues, Robert P. Porter, to Havana in the autumn of 1898 to develop a tariff schedule for Cuba after holding public hearings in the city and in the United States. He began with the schedule used in Santiago during the initial occupation, which was the old Spanish model with some minor modifications, including that it did not discriminate against imports from any nation. Porter disliked the new schedule, but thought the modifications in Santiago moved the tariff law in the right direction. He continued to Americanize the new schedule in line with Republican Party economic theories. He even rewrote the tables in dollars. Porter slashed the old rates by more than half to help the island recover economically but still provide enough revenue to

¹⁴³ *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 1:22-3. Marial Iglesias Utset, *A Cultural History of Cuba during the U.S. Occupation, 1898-1902* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 50-53.

support the occupation government. Porter believed his scheme would work if the rampant smuggling and inefficiencies that characterized the old-customs system were eliminated.¹⁴⁴

To modernize and reform the corrupt customs houses in Cuba, the War Department assigned the cerebral and honest Lieutenant Colonel Tasker H. Bliss to serve as Chief Collector of Customs for the Island of Cuba in December 1898. He dismissed excessive officials, modernized the bureaucratic systems, and ruthlessly fought corruption. He turned over meticulous receipts to the North American Trust Company, which acted as a bank for the occupation government. Bliss's efficient and honest customs service soon began to pour money into government coffers that Brooke, and later Wood, put to use paying for the occupation government, distributing food and medicine to the destitute, rebuilding critical infrastructure, and reopening Cuban hospitals and charities.¹⁴⁵

Fortunately, the military government reached a satisfactory compromise with the Catholic Church to liberate property owners from their *capellanías*, while still compensating the church for the lands seized by the Spanish colonial government, or *censos*. The military government appointed commissioners to find a solution to the complex problem. To Wood's dismay, they found that the Catholic Church should be compensated for the large amount of property appropriated by the former regime. Not to be denied, Wood worked through the Bishop of Havana to find an acceptable compromise. The Church retained the right to receive rents on its former lands held by the government at an agreed-upon low rate, but a future Cuban government gained the right to buy all the contested land at cost, just over two million dollars,

¹⁴⁴ David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 42-44.

¹⁴⁵ Tasker H. Bliss Collection, Box Number 6, Folder 28, the U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 58-64, 93.

sometime during the next five years. In the meantime, the military government paid nearly a million dollars to purchase all the land mortgages owed to the church at fifty cents on the dollar and then sold the lands back to the renters at the same reduced price. By using tariff monies, the occupation government freed many small landowners from crippling liens and settled the relations between the Catholic Church and the American occupier without major offense to either party.¹⁴⁶

Furthermore, the occupation government made major reforms to Cuba's judicial system, but Wood pushed the reforms too far by forcing aspects of English common law that were alien to the Cubans. Wood's progressive reform of the barbaric prison conditions on the island and his release of prisoners who never had a trial or received excessive punishment met with universal praise.¹⁴⁷ The governor gained further support for reducing corruption by ending the practice of paying fees for trial services—so cases were no longer decided by who had the larger purse—and by giving judicial employees fixed salaries. Wood also streamlined the overburdened justice system by creating police or correctional courts to give summary decisions in smaller criminal cases at the city where the offense occurred. Most notably, he ensured that the state provided legal representation to those who could not afford it. The Cubans admired these reforms, but their legal heritage based on Roman law left them disinclined to accept hallmarks of English

¹⁴⁶ Wood to Root, June 8, 1901, Container 29; Root to Wood, May 9, 1901, Container 29; and Wood to Secretary Root, January 16, 1902, Container 31, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁴⁷ *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 1:24. For report on deplorable state of Cuban prisons and corruption of judicial system see Charlton T. Lewis, President of the Prison Association of New York, to Elihu Root, December 20, 1899, Container 31, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

common law such as the jury system and the writ of *habeas corpus*. Cubans simply did not believe it their duty to convict their peers.¹⁴⁸

Cubans also struggled to move away from a unitary system of government. While a Spanish colony, all laws and funds came from the governor general in Havana down to the local municipalities. Wood tried to reduce the amount of funding the municipalities received from the central treasury to pay for their police, officials, and local roads, while simultaneously abolishing the consumption tax that traditionally filled the local coffers, ensuring that towns could not sustain themselves without going into debt. Wood's attempt to establish local self-governing and self-financing townships based on the Anglo-American model, as he attempted in Santiago, seemed completely alien to the Cubans and they reverted back to the old unitary system soon after the U.S. Army's departure in 1902.¹⁴⁹

Perhaps the best characteristic of the occupation government was that the Army officers charged to run it were almost always honest and eliminated corruption in the civil government where it had once been the norm. The darkest blemish on the American civil government occurred in the Havana post office, run by the Postmaster General of the United States and not the U.S. Army. In May 1900 an audit ordered by the Inspector General, Colonel George H. Burton, of the American-run postal system in Cuba found large-scale embezzlement by Charles F. Neely, but suspicion of corruption spread all the way to Director General of Posts in Cuba,

¹⁴⁸ *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 1:24-5. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 182-83. Wood to President of the United States of America, April 12, 1900, Container 28, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

¹⁴⁹ *Civil Report of Major General Leonard Wood, Military Governor of Cuba, for the Period from January 1st to December 31st, 1901* (Havana, Cuba: Department of Cuba, 1902), 1:4-5.

Estes G. Rathbone, a Republican appointee.¹⁵⁰ The postal scandal caused widespread criticism of the administration in Cuba and an outcry in many political sectors and the press to immediately end the American occupation.¹⁵¹ Army officers decried the blemish on their record. Wyllly argued that because Army officers had “no political axes to grind and no political friends to reward...the military administration has been clean and efficient.” He cited men like Neely when arguing that the “evils of carpet-bag appointments have been illustrated” and only officers should administer Cuba.¹⁵²

While the War Department’s handling of the postal scandal was excellent, it caused irreparable damage to the hopes of annexationists. Wood ordered a ruthless investigation and released its findings to the public, understanding that “the only chance to free ourselves from blame is to smash the offenders without regard to who they are.”¹⁵³ Federal agents captured Neely in Florida after he absconded from Cuba. During his trial, Neely’s lawyer argued that the occupation of Cuba by the United States was unconstitutional and therefore Neely could not be extradited to Cuba for trial. To the relief of the McKinley administration, the court ruled that the occupation was legal and found Neely and Rathbone guilty after a long trial. The court also ruled in January 1901 that Cuba “is territory held in trust for the inhabitants of Cuba to whom it

¹⁵⁰ Report of Colonel G. H. Burton, Inspector General, Division of Cuba, August 13, 1900, *Annual Report of Major General Leonard Wood, U. S. V., Commanding Division of Cuba* (Havana, Cuba: Division of Cuba, 1900).

¹⁵¹ Wood to Elihu Root, May 5, 1900, Container 28, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 1-3. David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba, 1898-1902: Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 139-42.

¹⁵² The Spanish-American War Veterans Survey Collection, Small Collections, Thomas S. Wyllly Papers, Box Number 1, Scrapbook, “Must keep troops in Cuba,” The U.S. Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

¹⁵³ Wood to Elihu Root, May 5, 1900, Container 28, General Correspondence, Leonard Wood Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., 2.

rightfully belongs and to whose exclusive control it will be surrendered when a stable government shall have been established by their voluntary action."¹⁵⁴

The highest courts in the land made it clear that the United States could not annex Cuba. Despite the forlorn hopes of a coterie of expansionists in the Republican Party, to include Wood, and a minority of wealthy businessmen and land owners in Cuba, annexing Cuba was never a realistic possibility. The large majority of Cubans made it clear throughout the four-year occupation with protests and their votes that they would not accept annexation. Their resistance, combined with fears of another Philippine-style insurgency, a resurgent Democratic Party, and popular opinion to honor the Teller Amendment ensured that Cubans would remain independent, even if the Platt Amendment took much of their sovereignty.

Wood should have realized this sooner, as many of his reforms to Americanize Cuba were aimed at preparing the island for annexation. Wood's faith in the superiority of American institutions and his paternalistic view toward his subjects naturally led him to attempt to "uplift" the Cuban people by imposing American culture on them. Changing the values, traditions, and customs of a nation takes at least a generation. Wood had less than four years, and he too often used power rather than persuasion to make his case. Wood failed to Americanize Cuba, but he did succeed in rebuilding its infrastructure and reforming its corrupt and inefficient government bureaucracy. Some of his reforms brought lasting benefits to the island, but in most instances the Cubans reverted back to their old ways, for better or worse.

¹⁵⁴ *October Term, 1906*, vol. 27 of *The Supreme Court Reporter: Cases Argued and Determined in the United States Supreme Court*, (St Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1907), 546.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation examines how U.S. Army officers capitalized on their experiences pacifying the American West and South to conduct a successful initial occupation of Santiago, Cuba—beginning after the Spanish surrender of eastern Cuba to General William R. Shafter's Fifth Corps on July 17, 1898. It argues that while contemporary and subsequent generations of Americans, Spanish, and Cubans may view this war as a new version of American Imperialism, the U.S. Army viewed its occupation as a continuation of policies and duties that it had implemented for decades. The U.S. Army's officers relied on their frontier and Reconstruction experiences and ingenuity to help them evacuate their Spanish prisoners, relieve humanitarian crises, discover the causes of tropical fevers, control the Cuban population, establish a logistical infrastructure, and create a military government, which later became the model for how the U.S. Army conducted the remainder of its occupation of Cuba.

Using a blend of coercion and conciliation, the U.S. Army disbanded the Cuban Liberation Army and delegitimized the Cuban revolutionary government. With firm control over the Cuban population and the creation of a loyal constabulary, and with no serious political or military challenger, the U.S. Army gave government officials in Washington the time to determine unilaterally the future relationship between Cuba and the United States. Unfortunately, the U.S. government decided to force the young Cuban republic to accept the Platt Amendment as part of its new constitution as precondition for ending its military occupation of Cuba in 1902. The effectiveness of the U.S. Army's occupation gave the Cubans no choice but to accept the

Platt amendment, which stripped the country of much of its sovereignty and forced it to accept American hegemony for another fifty years.

But no amount of frontier experience could prepare the U.S. Army to send a large field army overseas to fight in Cuba. The War Department had not waged a large-scale conventional conflict since the Civil War and most of the senior American generals had only served at the tactical level during the conflict. Furthermore, the War Department had an unproductive dual command structure and no general staff to coordinate its ten staff bureaus, each operating independently to support the Santiago campaign. The combination of the War Department's anachronistic bureaucracy, faulty pre-war planning assumptions, a large influx of volunteers, and changing operational directives from President William McKinley's administration help to explain the Fifth Corps' poor performance in Cuba. Yet Shafter deserves considerable blame, as Major Generals Nelson A. Miles and Wesley Merritt overcame the War Department's cumbersome bureaucracy to lead better-managed campaigns in Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

Within weeks of the Spanish army's surrender at Santiago, the War Department was already running more efficiently. President McKinley deserves much of the credit for the transformation. He sidelined Secretary of War Russell A. Alger and Commanding General Miles and took a direct leadership role over the War Department, allowing the very competent Adjutant General Henry C. Corbin to synchronize the War Department's bureaucracy. Furthermore, he appointed two energetic and competent leaders, Generals Henry W. Lawton and Leonard Wood, to administer the Department of Santiago. With more efficient management, the War Department worked diligently to evacuate the 24,000 Spanish soldiers in eastern Cuba back to Spain. The success of this phase of the operation was due in part to the cordial relationship between the American and Spanish forces, which viewed each other as noble adversaries and brothers in arms.

The U.S. Army officers that served in the Fifth Corps spent considerable time patrolling the United States's national boundaries and had many interactions with foreign officers that prepared them for dealing with the Spanish in Santiago. Moreover, most of the senior Army officers left behind to occupy Santiago had previous experience caring for large numbers of Indian detainees, contributing to the success of the prisoner evacuation. The cordial relationship between the Spanish and American armies in Santiago continued into 1899, as both sides coordinated the withdrawal of Spanish garrisons with the arrival of American occupying forces. Their coordination ensured that the Cuban Liberation Army had few opportunities to establish control of major towns before they were secured by some of the 40,000 American soldiers sent by McKinley to occupy Cuba after the signing of the Treaty of Paris.

The same cannot be said for the relationship between the American forces and the irregular Cuban fighters, mostly of African decent. From their experiences on the American frontier with Indians and because of their own racial prejudices, many U.S. Army officers assumed that the Cuban soldiers could be used effectively only as laborers and scouts. Fortunately for the U.S. Army, Lawton soon rebuilt a solid relationship with the Cubans, preventing an outbreak of hostilities.

The improved War Department bureaucracy also did a commendable job of evacuating the Fifth Corps quickly to the United States once it realized the severity of the malaria and yellow fever epidemics in Santiago. The U.S. Army had been coping with yellow fever and malaria epidemics in the United States since its inception. Despite over one hundred years of experience with the two diseases, the Army's doctors still did not understand their causes. Their investigations had led Army doctors to suspect a microbe caused yellow fever, and that malaria was caused by a parasite. The Army's medical community also knew at the time that malaria

could be treated with quinine, and that neither yellow fever nor malaria was contagious or transmittable through drinking water. While in Santiago, medical officers continued to rely unsuccessfully on sterilization and quarantine to stop the deadly fevers. Although they failed to achieve the desired outcome, these sanitation efforts greatly reduced the number of dysentery and typhoid cases.

Uncertain of what else to do, Adjutant General Corbin hoped that sending African American and white volunteer regiments of allegedly immune soldiers to occupy Santiago would prevent more soldiers falling victim to fevers. His plan failed, and only the end of the summer rainy season brought an end to the epidemics. The Army Medical Department continued to research the causes of yellow fever and malaria during the occupation, and with the help of Cuban doctors, confirmed that mosquitos were the vectors of the two diseases. The U.S. Army soon implemented measures to control the mosquito populations in Cuba and to protect soldiers from being bitten. By the time the occupation ended in 1902, there were almost no new cases of yellow fever in Cuba. Now able to minimize the cases of malaria and yellow fever, the U.S. Army could sustain its soldiers for long-term occupations in the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Panama.

Veteran soldiers and officers in Santiago had dealt with many humanitarian catastrophes during their post-Civil War service. They provided relief to former slaves and destitute whites in the South during reconstruction, delivered humanitarian aid after several natural disasters, and assisted Indians in dire need of food and shelter after the cessation of hostilities or when neglected on their reservations. Their experiences served them well as they managed the War Department's relief efforts, first in Santiago and then in the rest of Cuba. The situation in Santiago de Cuba after the Spanish capitulation was terrible because of the devastation caused by

three years of fighting and the Spanish policy of civilian *reconcentraci3n*. Dozens died in the city each day from the lack of nourishment, exposure, and disease. Despite some friction, the War Department, Army officers on the ground, and Cuban volunteers worked hand-in-hand with the Red Cross to relieve the suffering in the Department of Santiago. Eventually, the U.S. Army took full responsibility for feeding the destitute in the province and the Red Cross shifted its efforts to delivering relief to the rest of Spanish-occupied Cuba. The measures taken in Santiago to relieve the humanitarian crises were immediately implemented in the rest of Cuba as the U.S. Army replaced Spanish forces from December 1898 to February 1899. The efforts of the War Department and the Red Cross saved the lives of a countless number of Cubans, and by the summer of 1899 the humanitarian crisis was largely over.

The most essential mission the U.S. Army had to accomplish in Santiago was to control the province by garrisoning it, disarming and disbanding any potential adversaries, and threatening to use force against those who did not comply. The Cuban Liberation Army eventually gave up its arms and disbanded, convinced that the American occupation would last only a short time and because the Army offered the destitute Cuban soldiers jobs and rations in exchange for their compliance. The strategy of using forts to control restless populations and to use a mix of conciliation and coercion to pacify hostiles was a tried and true method developed by the U.S. Army on the American frontier and exported to Cuba and the Philippines by Army officers who had used it often during their careers. In Santiago and then in the rest of Cuba, the U.S. Army disarmed the Cuban Liberation Army by threatening, but never using, force against the few who at first did not comply. Most of the Cuban soldiers went home, however, because their leadership had received positions within the American military government, and then they convinced their soldiers to disband in return for small sums of money, rations, and the hopes of a

job. Once the U.S. Army established garrisons across Cuba and monopolized military force, it could implement Washington's slowly developing policy for the island with little interference.

Many disbanded Cuban soldiers found work in the sanitation and construction crews, rebuilding the country after the war, but the most politically reliable Cuban soldiers received coveted positions in the municipal police departments or in the Cuban Rural Guard. The U.S. Army had an institutional aversion to policing civilian populations after Reconstruction. Although the U.S. Army still responded to strikes and riots on the President's authority, the *posse comitatus* act of 1878 made it legally risky for officers to become involved in civil policing. Even before 1878, the U.S. Army preferred to leave policing to civilian authorities and Indian police on the reservations, intervening only in emergencies. Upon arriving in Cuba, the U.S. Army tried to avoid policing from the onset of the occupation of Cuba for several reasons. First, the Rural Guard had a familiarity with the customs, language, and backcountry trails necessary to pursue bandits. Second, most Cubans did not view native police forces as an occupying force, and most of the Cuban police had immunity to the tropical fevers plaguing the Americans. Third, the Cuban police forces could get away with using extrajudicial means to capture alleged criminals, avoiding the legal constraints imposed on American forces. Finally, using the native auxiliaries to police Cuba allowed the U.S. Army to control the island with minimal American forces, which became imperative as the War Department gradually mustered out volunteer soldiers from 1898 and relied more heavily upon the Regulars to fight the insurrection in the Philippines. The U.S. Army also exported to the Philippines and Puerto Rico the practice of using native constabularies.

In order to sustain the garrisons required to control Santiago, the U.S. Army had to build or repair the necessary logistical infrastructure. The roads in the Department of Santiago were in

a deplorable condition and most had been reduced to footpaths, forcing the U.S. Army to rely on mule trains. Furthermore, most telegraph lines in the province had been destroyed during the three years of fighting. Fortunately, American officers in Cuba had spent their careers building and repairing roads and running telegraph lines to their frontier garrisons. They also had ample experience using mule trains to supply campaigns moving through difficult terrain. Relying on these experiences, the U.S. Army went to work rebuilding the lines of communication across Santiago, employing many former Cuban soldiers as laborers. The War Department used customs revenues to pay for the Cuban labor making the repairs and sanitizing the towns. Brooke used the same method of revenue collection developed by Lawton and Wood in Santiago to pay the salaries of government officials and repair the infrastructure necessary to sustain the military occupation when he took command of Division of Cuba in January 1899. The War Department had learned from its failure to provide adequately for the logistical needs of the Fifth Corps. The department planned and executed an efficient movement of men and supplies, not only to Havana and the remaining five unoccupied provinces, but also to the Philippines. It also built a network of barracks and camps to sustain both occupations.

After controlling the Department of Santiago and building the infrastructure necessary to sustain its garrisons, the U.S. Army established a military government. American constitutional and societal norms restricted the Army's role in civilian governance. The Army's unpleasant experience occupying the South after the Civil War reaffirmed the institution's preference to avoid governing civilian populations. With little practical experience in civil governance, senior officers in Cuba had no choice but to rely on their analogous experience of administering the Army in the United States, using military protocol and staff procedures. Furthermore, officers consulted civilian experts and selectively borrowed ideas from progressive reform movements in

the United States. The occupation government successfully reformed much of Cuba's byzantine civil service system, modernized the tariff system, and eliminated much corruption. The ethnocentrism of U.S. Army officers assumed that introducing "superior" American institutions and values could solve all of Cuba's problems. By failing to consider Cuban culture, most of the Army's reforms were short lived. American self-righteousness and the belief in the superiority of their values and political system limited the effectiveness of the occupation governments in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, and all of the United States's subsequent occupations.

The transmission of methods of pacification from the American West to Cuba and the Philippines did not end in 1898. In 1899, soldiers recently returned from Cuba put down unrest among the Chippewa in Minnesota, while nearly 10,000 soldiers remained west of the Mississippi to keep watch over restless Indians, especially in southern Arizona and around Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Commanding General Miles reported in 1901 that the U.S. Army would need to keep forts near the reservations to maintain order for the foreseeable future.¹ Simultaneously, the Army rotated Regulars from their garrisons in the United States back to occupation duty in Cuba and active counterinsurgency operations in the Philippines, where it utilized the same pacification method of garrisoning troops, protecting the populace, and establishing an effective civil government that it used in Cuba.²

Meanwhile, the War Department adjusted to become a more efficient bureaucracy capable of managing the occupations of Cuba, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Guam; its many forts and garrisons in the United States; and the ongoing Philippine War. McKinley deserves most of

¹ Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 197-200.

² Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 20-21, 33. Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 198-99.

the credit for this as he took direct control of the War Department, dismissing the ineffective Alger and sidelining the arrogant Commanding General Miles. To help him run the day-to-day operation of the department and ensure his guidance was acted on, McKinley increasingly relied on the efficient and responsive Adjutant General Corbin. One of McKinley's best decisions was to appoint Root as the next Secretary of War in 1899. Root worked with a Republican majority in Congress to create an Army War College and general staff to develop, coordinate, and implement strategy. Furthermore, he successfully worked to reorganize the War Department's dysfunctional command structure by eliminating the position of commanding general and replacing it with a chief of staff, who worked for and not parallel to the Secretary of War.³

While the War Department fought internal resistance to become a better managerial organization, the methods of pacification used by the U.S. Army overseas remained remarkably consistent. Old rivalries among the different staff bureaus in the War Department stifled meaningful reform through World War I, as each agency fought to maintain its influence within the organization.⁴ Similarly, a series of adjutants general who succeeded Corbin fought a losing battle to keep their hold over the War Department from the newly created position of chief of staff, until finally being defeated by Chief of Staff Leonard Wood and Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson in 1912. Meanwhile, U.S. Army officers with experience conducting occupation duty in Latin America, the Philippines, China, and the Rhineland again relied on a pacification doctrine that blended coercion with reconciliation, efficient military government, and the use of native

³ Robert Wooster, *The Military and United States Indian Policy, 1865-1903* (New Haven: Yale University, 1988), 200-202. Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 269.

⁴ Robert Wooster, *The American Military Frontiers: The United States Army in the West, 1783-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2009), 269.

proxies to help secure the populations of Japan and Germany after World War II and control the maturation of their political systems. There is less evidence, however, that the Army applied—or even remembered—these lessons when it encountered similar challenges in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

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