

AFRICAN AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN THE PHILIPPINE WAR: AN EXAMINATION OF THE  
CONTRIBUTIONS OF BUFFALO SOLDIERS DURING THE SPANISH  
AMERICAN WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH, 1898-1902

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During the Philippine War, 1899 – 1902, America attempted to quell an uprising from the Filipino people. Four regular army regiments of black soldiers, the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, and the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantry served in this conflict. Alongside the regular army regiments, two volunteer regiments of black soldiers, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth, also served. During and after the war these regiments received little attention from the press, public, or even historians. These black regiments served in a variety of duties in the Philippines, primarily these regiments served on the islands of Luzon and Samar. The main role of these regiments focused on garrisoning sections of the Philippines and helping to end the insurrection. To carry out this mission, the regiments undertook a variety of duties including scouting, fighting insurgents and ladrones (bandits), creating local civil governments, and improving infrastructure. The regiments challenged racist notions in America in three ways. They undertook the same duties as white soldiers. They interacted with local “brown” Filipino populations without fraternizing, particularly with women, as whites assumed they would. And, they served effectively at the company and platoon level under black officers. Despite the important contributions of these soldiers, both socially and militarily, little research focuses on their experiences in the Philippines. This dissertation will discover and examine those experiences. To do this, each regiment is discussed individually and their experiences used to examine the role these men played in the Philippine War. Also addressed is the role ideas about race played in these experiences. This dissertation looks to answer whether or not notions on race played a

major role in the activities of these regiments. This dissertation will be an important addition to the study of the Philippine War, the segregated U. S. Army, and African American history in the modern period.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This dissertation will examine and analyze the contributions of African American soldiers during the Philippine War (1898-1902). This subject lacks a thorough review. Previous studies of these soldiers focused on their experiences with racial prejudice in the United States and not on the military aspects of their service. While this dissertation will discuss the racial attitudes of American citizens in general and the Army in particular, it will also examine the African American experience of military service in the Philippine War. The Army and American public alike felt African American soldiers would work better with the Filipino people than white soldiers. One of the main goals of this work is to find out if this belief held true.

The United States acquired the Philippine Islands after the Spanish American War of 1898. The resulting American occupation of the islands created friction with the inhabitants, which eventually exploded into war. The Philippine War provided America with a difficult set of problems. The Filipino people rose up in rebellion against Spanish rule prior to the arrival of American forces in the spring of 1898. The United States quickly moved to annex the islands. For the Filipinos, annexation came as a shock, since they expected the Americans to set them free. Instead, the United States attempted to replace the Spanish as the rulers of the islands. Hostility quickly turned to violence and the Philippine War began.<sup>1</sup>

The war lasted four years and the American public found the conflict highly controversial. Unlike previous wars, the United States Army fought to subdue a foreign people fighting for their freedom. Americans waged war on the American Indian from the start of colonization. However, American citizens considered the Indian Wars a domestic affair and

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<sup>1</sup> Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899 – 1902* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 3.

different from the events happening in the Philippines. The war also saw violence on a scale unfamiliar to the American people. U. S. forces burned villages, targeted civilians, and engaged in torture. Much of the American public saw these actions as black marks on the national character.<sup>2</sup>

Into this bloody conflict came the African American regiments of the U. S. Army. The Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantry, and the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteer Regiments all served in varying capacities during the war. The first of these regiments arrived in mid-July of 1899, and remained in the Philippines for the duration of the war.<sup>3</sup> The use of African American soldiers drew mixed reactions from a wide range of Americans. Racists questioned the loyalty of these men, fearing they would not fight against fellow dark-skinned peoples.<sup>4</sup> Anti-imperialists, both white and black, disliked the idea of using African American soldiers to subdue dark-skinned people, while racial inequality still existed in America.<sup>5</sup>

The Army saw these soldiers as valuable assets. These regiments acquired a great deal of combat and field experience from serving in the American West. Different elements of the Ninth, Tenth, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Fifth also served with great distinction during the Spanish American War. Small and chronically underfunded, the Army refused to do without its African American soldiers.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> David J. Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire; The Philippine-American War, 1899 – 1902* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), xvi.

<sup>3</sup> Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., *“Smoked Yankees” and the Struggle for Empire; Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898 – 1902* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1987), 241.

<sup>4</sup> Stuart Creighton Miller, *“Benevolent Assimilation;” The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899 – 1903* (London: Yale University Press, 1982), 80.

<sup>5</sup> Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., *Black Americans and the White Man’s Burden, 1898 – 1903* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 258.

<sup>6</sup> Marvin Fletcher, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army, 1891 – 1917* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1898), 49.



Starting with the Civil War the African American community felt service in the Army would improve their position in American society. This belief continued throughout the Indian Wars and carried over into the Spanish American and Philippine Wars.<sup>7</sup> Black leaders also debated the hypocrisy of loyally serving the same society that supported or ignored Jim Crow laws and lynchings.<sup>8</sup> The soldiers themselves expressed a belief in the value of their service.

For the duration of the Philippine War, African American soldiers served in a wide range of missions. Their primary duties involved working directly with the Filipinos. The Army believed black soldiers possessed a natural affinity for the Filipinos, due to notions non-whites supported one another.<sup>9</sup> These soldiers guarded villages and military bases and kept the peace in towns and the countryside. These soldiers fought an unconventional war, which did not include large-scale battles. Rather, African American soldiers spent their time in the field scouting and hunting down small insurrectionary or criminal bands.<sup>10</sup>

The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Regiments went through their own unique experiences. The Army and United States government used these regiments to respond to African American protests of exclusion from volunteer service in the Spanish American War and in the Philippines. These regiments also responded to calls from the African American community for the appointment of black officers. Company-level officers (lieutenant to captain) came from regular army regiments. These two regiments served in the Philippines from July 1900 until the end of 1901.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood; How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish American and Philippine-American Wars* (London: Yale University Press, 1998), 130

<sup>8</sup> Amy Kaplan & Donald Pease eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 436-437.

<sup>9</sup> Gerald Astor, *The Right to Fight; A History of African Americans in the Military* (Novato: Presidio Press, 1998), 78.

<sup>10</sup> Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 270.

<sup>11</sup> Gatewood, "Smoked Yankees," 241.

All of these regiments experienced racially motivated hostility from white soldiers. Whites refused to treat the African American soldiers with respect, and constant issues arose from racism. Segregation in American cities and towns angered African American soldiers. Likewise, white soldiers refused to salute black officers, a major breach of military discipline. Also black soldiers were expected to do manual labor not expected of white troops. In spite of such blatant racism, the record shows African American soldiers worked hard to maintain a high level of professionalism.

This dissertation will answer three main questions:

1. How did the service and combat record of African American soldiers differ from that of their white counterparts?
2. What role did ideas about race play in the interaction between African American soldiers and the Filipino population?
3. What was the overall contribution of African American service during the Philippine War?

This dissertation will answer these questions by examining military documents, personal records of those involved, and testimony from the vibrant African American newspaper scene. This dissertation will examine the unrealistic expectations leveled against these soldiers based on the racial notions of most Americans. Ultimately, this work will prove African American soldiers and their officers managed to perform on average with other soldiers despite both blatant and obscure racism. Although, this dissertation will also demonstrate the performance of these soldiers did not change American attitudes and stereotypes when it came to black soldiers.

There is at present a limited historiography on the topic. Following the Spanish American and Philippine Wars, a flood of writing on African American soldiers appeared. These writings

attempted to show the loyalty and bravery of African American soldiers. Works such as *The Colored Regulars in the United States Army* by T. G. Steward and *History of Negro Soldiers in the Spanish American War* by Edward A. Johnson directly challenged white views of African American inferiority. Steward and Johnson were themselves African American and used their works to combat racism.

White writers of the time used their works to explain why African Americans did not deserve equal treatment. Captain R. L. Bullard in “*The Negro Volunteer: Some Characteristics*” expressed the views of those in America at the time:

Does the color of his skin make any difference? No, it does not make any difference, but it indicates a difference between the volunteer in black and him in white; differences so great that they almost require the naturalist and do require the military commander to treat the Negro as a different species.<sup>12</sup>

The growing popularity of Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution branched into other fields. The theory of Social Darwinism declared only strong societies and races rose to superiority. This theory attempted to explain why Western and white culture dominated the world. They dominated because of their superiority over other cultures and races. Although concepts concerning the idea of race have drastically changed since the late 1800’s, the people in question believed solidly in the concept of race both biologically and culturally. Social Darwinism influenced Bullard and others into feeling justified in calling African Americans a separate species. Social Darwinism also justified denying African Americans their rights due to their natural inferiority. In the Philippines, Social Darwinism justified America’s war to conquer the Filipino insurrectionists.<sup>13</sup> Americans also feared allowing African Americans to join the military

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<sup>12</sup> Robert L. Bullard, “The Negro Volunteer: Some Characteristics,” *Journal of Military Service Instruction of the United States* 29, (July 1901): 29.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944), 171.

would give a false sense of power and desire for respect.<sup>14</sup> These authors ignored the military contributions of black soldiers. Instead, they focused on preconceived notions of racial inferiority.

These early writers saw the transfer of America's black population to the Philippines as a viable solution to numerous problems. These efforts mirrored early attempts to establish the colony of Liberia in 1847. The experiment attempted to transport former slaves back to Africa and met with mixed results.<sup>15</sup> Dr. A. R. Abbott argued in, "The Employment of Negroes in the Philippines" that moving African Americans to the Philippines would bring American values to the Philippines and rid America of its racial problems.<sup>16</sup> American writers focused on these racial issues during and after the Philippine War. Newspaper editorials, academic articles, and even proposed federal legislation called for the immigration of America's blacks to the Philippines. These racial attitudes set the tone for discussions surrounding African American soldiers during the Philippine War.

From World War I until the 1970's, few secondary works appeared addressing these soldiers in the Philippines. Brief articles emerged from time to time in African American newspapers. These articles did not deviate from the style of earlier writings. Following the First World War, white writers completely ignored black involvement in the Philippines. A less politicized study of these soldiers waited for Willard Gatewood, Jr., and Marvin Fletcher. Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, these writers opened the door for the study of African American soldiers during the latter half of the 1800's and the Philippine War. Both focused on

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<sup>14</sup> Leon F. Litwack, *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow* (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), 466.

<sup>15</sup> Brian G. Shellum, *Black Officer in a Buffalo Soldier Regiment: The Military Career of Charles Young* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 205.

<sup>16</sup> Abbot, A.R., M.D., "The Employment of Negroes in the Philippines," *Anglo-American Magazine* 6 (September, 1901): 196-201.

the place of the African American soldier in the Army. Both historians paid special attention to the perception of African American soldiers by their superiors, themselves, and the public.

Fletcher's work, *The Black Soldier and Officer in the United States Army*, focuses more on army perception of black soldiers than it does on their actual service. Fletcher's other major work detailed the military career of General Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., the first black general in the U. S. Army. Fletcher's works describe how the military viewed its African American soldiers. The Army treated black soldiers leniently when it needed them; and discriminated when black soldiers lacked usefulness. *The Black Soldier* briefly discusses the Philippine War and the soldiers there. Fletcher focused much of *The Black Soldier* on the Indian Wars and the years following the Philippine War.

Willard Gatewood, Jr., was the first author to focus solely on the influence of black soldiers during America's age of imperialism with his works, "*Smoked Yankees*" and *the Struggle for Empire; Letters from Negro Soldiers* and *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden*. He argued African Americans held a special view of imperialism due to their own place in American society. According to Gatewood, black soldiers understood American society and what imperialism meant for any people subjugated by the Army. This awareness affected the behavior of black soldiers and their civilian counterparts when making decisions regarding the Philippines.

Other writers from this period focused on the concept of American imperialism. Writers mentioned African American soldiers only in the context of imperialism. Works such as *Republic or Empire* by Daniel B. Schirmer and *Response to Imperialism* by Richard E. Welch glance over the soldiers themselves. Instead of military life, Schirmer and Welch focus on depictions of African American soldiers by anti-imperialists and racists.

Research following the 1970's and early 1980's was sparse. Brian McAllister Linn, who has written the standard accounts of the Philippine War, mentions African American regiments but does not focus on them. Linn's two major works on the war, *The Philippine-American War* and *The U. S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War*, provide excellent studies of American operations in the Philippines. These two works are key to understanding and explaining the behavior of the Army as a whole during this time.

Writing since the 1980's follows the path forged by Gatewood and Fletcher. No writers examine the overall role of black soldiers in the Philippines from a military perspective. Two more recent articles, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons" by Paul A. Kramer and "African American Soldiers and Filipinos" by Scot Ngozi-Brown both focus on how America treated African Americans and the Filipino population. These writings explain the racism black soldiers faced, they do not examine the military contribution of the soldiers.

With so much focus on the implications of the war, the soldiers do not take center stage. This work will fill the gap in the research. Focusing on the contributions of these soldiers will add to the general knowledge of America's war in the Philippines. Likewise, the work will add to the overall understanding of the black experience during the Philippine War.

The primary sources for this work consist mainly of U. S. Army records and personal accounts of soldiers. The majority of this research took place at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in Washington, D.C.. By examining the records of the Adjutant General and the U. S. Army Overseas Command, this dissertation will detail the operational side of military life for African American soldiers. The Records of the U. S. Regular Army Mobile Units, 1815 – 1970, Record Group 391 is of extreme value. This collection offers records and personal accounts from the conflict including casualty reports, daily orders, and communications

between officers. Likewise, the records of the volunteer regiments, record group 94, is of great service. These records include information regarding enlistment, promotion, and accommodations.

Some of the most valuable records in these collections include the letters sent and received by each company and regiment. These records outline the day-to-day activities of the regiments while deployed in the Philippines. Included in these records are daily orders, accounts of patrols, and descriptions of the activities of the soldiers. These records, formulaic at times, offer insight into how various officers viewed their men and how the men reacted to the challenges of a war of pacification.

The U. S. Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, contains several other valuable sources. The AHEC records include personal accounts of the war. Among these sources are a research collection assembled by Marvin Fletcher. *The Marvin Fletcher Collection, 1887-1896* (Coll. 47671349) includes questionnaires from the soldiers and officers of the regiments. These prove invaluable to this study, as they show how the men involved in the Philippine War fought and lived. The lack of firsthand accounts makes it difficult for this dissertation to address the opinions of the African American soldiers themselves. Collections like Fletcher's, while rare, provide wonderful insight into the individual soldiers.

One final source of great value from the AHEC is the *Spanish American War, Philippine Insurrection, and Boxer Rebellion Veterans Research Project* (Coll. 302362264). In the late 1960's the AHEC sent out two questionnaires. The first questionnaire asked basic questions such as where and when a soldier enlisted. The second questionnaire asked specific questions ranging from "why did you enlist?" to "were the enemy well trained and led?" These forms offer a wide range of opinions from the soldiers in question.

The *Veterans Research Project* forms offer some difficulty. The advanced age of the surviving veterans, mid-80's to 90's for most, posed limitations on their responses. Several of the questionnaires start with statements from the veteran explaining they are old and unable to remember everything clearly or require assistance from nurses or family members to answer the questions. While these accounts came much later in life, they still offer a valuable look into the personal lives of soldiers. Many of the soldiers lacked the ability to read and write at the time of the war and left no record of service beyond these questionnaires.

Besides the primary sources, this dissertation will make thorough use of newspapers. Personal accounts of soldiers are difficult to find. Illiteracy combined with a lack of interest from the American public led to a lack of publication from the participants themselves. Newspapers are the main source of surviving letters from African American soldiers. Willard Gatewood, Jr., pioneered the use of African American newspapers to research black soldiers from this era. Gatewood's works, "*Smoked Yankees*" and *The White Man's Burden*, rely heavily on letters from newspapers. The Library of Congress offers digitized copies of newspapers from this era, which are keyword searchable. This service made it possible to access a great number of papers from all over the country without requiring a massive amount of travel. Newspaper letters make it possible for this dissertation to provide much more detail into the service of African American soldiers than if it used military records alone.

The newspapers examined came from both white and black publishers. White papers ignored the experiences of black soldiers in the war. These papers focused primarily on how black soldiers in America behaved and ignored their counterparts in the Philippines. There are instances in the Southwest of conflict between white citizens and black soldiers. These events,



precursors of the Brownsville Raid of 1906, made up the majority of white newspaper stories.<sup>17</sup> The only major comments on the Philippines came from white officers. These stories attempted recounting anecdotes intended to be amusing to the public, many of which made black soldiers seem silly and childlike. White papers only paid serious attention to black servicemen in the Philippines when Private David Fagen deserted to the Filipino cause. Fagen became a general in the Filipino insurgency and caused trouble for the U. S. Army until his death.

Black soldiers relied upon African American papers to explain conditions in the Philippines. African American papers printed little in regards to military campaigns. Instead, these papers printed letters home from black soldiers. These letters offer some of the best examples of how these soldiers felt during the time of their service. The *Richmond Planet*, *New-York Tribune*, and *The Afro-American* have all proven to be valuable resources. Each paper carries multiple letters from soldiers expressing their opinions on the war and their personal service. The editorials provide an abundance of opinions on the conflict. Editorials discussed the Philippines in terms of the overall good of black service in America's war. The goal of this dissertation is to examine the experiences of black soldiers in the Philippines. With this goal in mind, the editorials discussing larger social issues are not used. Only those editorials focusing on the lives and actions of the soldiers are used.

This dissertation will use the term Philippine War to describe the conflict in the Philippines. Many authors refer to the war as the Philippine-American War or the Philippine Insurrection. This work shall follow the lead of Brian McAllister Linn and refer to the conflict as the Philippine War.<sup>18</sup> During the war and subsequent writings, this title is commonly used and is

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<sup>17</sup> The Brownsville Raid of 1906 took place in Texas. Citizens of Brownsville claimed African American soldiers attacked the town one night. The resulting fallout saw around 100 soldiers dismissed, including several Medal of Honor holders.

<sup>18</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, x.

the most neutral. As this work does not seek to redefine or explain the war as a whole a neutral term is best.

When referring to the Filipino fighters the work will largely use the terms insurgents and ladrones. The military used these terms during and after the war. Insurgents refers to those fighting for a united and independent Philippines. Ladrones, Spanish for thief, refers to Filipinos who turned to lives of crime to support themselves. Records relating to African American service show these identifications used heavily at the time by officers and soldiers alike. Using the vocabulary of the soldiers will keep the focus of the work on the soldiers.

## CHAPTER 2

### BUFFALO SOLDIERS AND THE PHILIPPINES

In 1866, the United States Congress passed legislation that created six regiments of black soldiers. By 1870, the government condensed these six regiments into four.<sup>1</sup> The Ninth and Tenth Cavalry as well as the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantry offered black men a chance to serve their country. The Army at the time consisted of roughly 26,000 men.<sup>2</sup> Infantry units consisted of between 300 and 600 men, while cavalry units held between 900 and 1,250.<sup>3</sup> With their four regiments, black soldiers made up roughly 11% of the Army from 1870 until 1898. These men famously took the name of Buffalo Soldiers, a name given them by the Native Americans they fought.

Early on, the Army struggled with decisions regarding the placement of black soldiers. The Army originally planned to keep two black regiments in the newly Reconstructed South. This plan quickly proved untenable after several incidents between locals and soldiers.<sup>4</sup> The Army adopted an unofficial policy to keep black soldiers from service east of the Mississippi.<sup>5</sup> One letter revealed how the Army felt about the South, upon requesting his men move to New Orleans one officer received word, “However senseless and unreasonable it may be regarded, there is no doubt of the fact a strong prejudice exist in the South against colored troops.”<sup>6</sup>

The Army found the west the safest place to send black soldiers. On the edge of

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<sup>1</sup> Arlen L. Fowler, *The Black Infantry in the West: 1869-1891* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Maurice Matloff, *Winning the West the Army in the Indian Wars, 1865-1890* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1969), 301.

<sup>3</sup> Clayton Chun, *U. S. Army in the Plains Indian Wars, 1865-1891* (New York: Osprey Publishing, 2004), 38.

<sup>4</sup> Fowler, *Black Infantry*, 12.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Van Zile Scott, *The Unwept: Black American Soldiers and the Spanish American War* (Montgomery: The Black Belt Press, 1996), 70.

<sup>6</sup> Fowler, *Black Infantry*, 48.

American society, the black soldiers avoided contact with large populations of whites. Examination of the Court-Martial records for the period of 1868 through 1890 reveals almost all legal actions against black soldiers took place in the “frontier” territories and states.<sup>7</sup> The records show the crimes committed on par with the performance of similar white units. The majority of these trials took place in Texas. The trials involved black soldiers fighting with aggressive Texans. In other areas, trials covered everyday army crimes such as drunkenness, disobedience, or sleeping on duty.<sup>8</sup> Papers in the South routinely published and exaggerated any crimes or disputes involving black soldiers.<sup>9</sup> Though few records exist of black soldiers provoking conflicts, the Army felt it best to keep them in the West away from large population centers.

Those whites Buffalo Soldiers met depended upon the actions of the black men for protection. In Texas, the Buffalo Soldiers defended the American border from raids coming out of Mexico. Throughout the American West, those same soldiers defended citizens from hostile Indian forces. Citizens grew to feel grateful for the service of the black soldiers who protected them. As the Twenty-Fifth Infantry prepared to leave Montana, in 1898, one of the local papers commented that the populace expected to miss the officers as well as the black soldiers, who “Comported themselves in a manner to win the respect of all citizens.”<sup>10</sup>

The views of Indians also greatly influenced the Army’s decision to move black soldiers west. Shortly after their first engagements, Native tribes began to show a high level of respect for their foes. One newspaper article informed its readers Indians appeared deathly afraid of even the mildest tempered black man. The author went on to explain he felt Indians “attribute uncanny

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<sup>7</sup> United States Army. *Proceedings of the U. S. Army General Court-Martials: 1869-1883. Microcopy M1105, Roll 7/8.* Record Group 153 (Washington D.C.: National Archives Microfilm Publications, 2012)

<sup>8</sup> Frank N. Schubert, *Voices of the Buffalo Soldiers; Records, Reports, and Recollections of Military Life and Service in the West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 114.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 68.

<sup>10</sup> Scott, *Unwept*, 68.

and eerie qualities to the blacks.”<sup>11</sup> Even if black soldiers lacked mystical abilities, Indians soon came to respect the fighting tenacity of their foes.

In the West, Native warriors and American citizens quickly started referring to black soldiers as Buffalo Soldiers. Cheyenne warriors first provided the nickname, claiming black soldiers, “Fought like buffalo, survived wounds the way buffalo did, and had long curly hair like buffalo.”<sup>12</sup> The term proved a favorite among the black units. They wore the title with honor until the Army desegregated in 1948.

Blacks who joined the Army hoped to find a way to escape the South and agricultural work. Along with escape, the Army offered men steady pay and the possibility of an education denied them in American society.<sup>13</sup> When not fighting Indians, black soldiers endured rather mundane tasks. In areas such as Texas, Montana, and the Dakotas black men worked “civilizing” what Eastern Americans considered the wilderness. This work included setting up telegraph lines and building roads.<sup>14</sup> These kinds of duties kept black soldiers isolated from white civilians, as soldiers spent weeks or months in the countryside completing their task. In some cases, the return trip to civilization required the use of private stagecoaches or the mail service. After their time in the west, Buffalo Soldiers faced discrimination when trying to return home. When these services failed to provide transport for black soldiers, officers such as William Rufus Shafter and John J. Pershing complained through official channels.<sup>15</sup> Heeding the warnings of its officers, the Army agreed to take care of its soldiers. The Army forced public officials to provide the same services for black soldiers as whites.

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<sup>11</sup> Edward A. Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers in the Spanish American War, and Other Items of Interest* (Raleigh: Capital Printing Co. 1899), 31.

<sup>12</sup> John Perry, *Pershing: Commander of the Great War* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011), 31.

<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth D. Leonard, *Men of Color to Arms! Black Soldiers, Indian Wars, and the Quest for Equality* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012), 140.

<sup>14</sup> Fowler, *Black Infantry*, 24.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 26.

Throughout the West, examples exist of white officers defending their men. In the Dakotas and Montana, white officers lived lives of relative ease. Black soldiers suffered in drafty, poorly roofed housing during cold winters. These officers complained to the Army and gained permission to build better housing for their men.<sup>16</sup> As with other parts of life, familiarity made white officers respect black soldiers as their fellow man. White officers made sure their men received treatment comparable to their white counterparts. The lack of education and high rates of illiteracy appeared as the common complaints concerning the Buffalo Soldiers from officers.<sup>17</sup> While the Army wanted educated soldiers, it offered few educational programs. This proved a disappointment to any who expected the Army to educate them.

The creation and use of black officers provided a constant source of trouble for the Army. Field promotions existed, though few black officers advanced higher than the rank of captain. The Army feared black officers might practice the privilege of their rank over white soldiers. Society and the Army assumed Southern, as well as Northern, soldiers would ignore or resent taking orders from a black officer. To circumvent the issue, the Army placed black officers in command of only black soldiers, while keeping black and white units segregated.<sup>18</sup> This topic came to a head during the Spanish American and Philippine Wars, when Southern newspapers complained about the threat of black leadership.

The Army understood the difficulties of issuing commissions to black soldiers yet still tried to offer a way to advance. Army officers who changed their minds on racial issues felt black soldiers fought better with their own leadership. With this in mind Henry Ossian Flipper, a black youth, attended West Point, graduating in 1877. While at West Point, Flipper gained

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<sup>16</sup> Leonard, *Men of Color to Arms*, 221.

<sup>17</sup> Fowler, *Black Infantry*, 18.

<sup>18</sup> Don Cusic, *The Trials of Henry Flipper, First Black Graduate of West Point* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2009), 44.

firsthand knowledge of how some viewed black officers. Democratic and Southern newspapers constantly printed stories about Flipper, claiming he stole, cheated, and missed classes.<sup>19</sup> The Southern press never questioned Flipper's guilt and continued to support the charges against the young officer. Flipper found his treatment by the Army itself generally fair. He felt his fellow officers treated him as one of them, stating "They are gentlemen themselves. They are perhaps as much prejudiced as the others, but prejudice does not prevent all from being gentlemen."<sup>20</sup> Racists in and out of the military considered Flipper a danger to white supremacy. While black officers faced discrimination, Flipper's distinction as the first black West Point graduate singled him out for ill treatment. The Army found Flipper guilty of stealing funds from his unit after he went to active duty in the West. Pro-black newspapers at the time speculated racist officers framed Flipper. The Army revoked Flipper's commission and he returned to civilian life. On February 19, 1999, President Bill Clinton pardoned Flipper, after researchers found no evidence in Army records that Flipper stole funds.<sup>21</sup>

A small number of black youth continued to attend West Point. This number remained low throughout the end of the 1800's. Only three other African American cadets attended after Flipper.<sup>22</sup> They faced less discrimination than Flipper. Charles Young garnered most of the fame and attention black officers received during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Young faced an American public and many in the Army who claimed black men were not mentally fit to command, a ridiculous notion white America clung to for decades. Young continually proved black officers capable of command and other duties requiring strong leadership. His service in the Philippines challenged fears concerning the use of black officers in

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<sup>19</sup> Henry Ossian Flipper, *The Colored Cadet at West Point* (New York: Homer Lee & Co., 1878), 73.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 75.

<sup>21</sup> Cusic. *Trials of Henry Flipper*, 186.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 137.

combat roles. Despite this contribution, the Army maintained a low number of black officers.

Throughout the 1880's much of the West followed the South's use of segregation laws. In towns protected by black soldiers citizens usually ignored segregation laws. Brothels populated by white women remained the exception to this willful ignorance of the laws. When soldiers entered new areas, they faced initial resistance. In the majority of cases white citizens warmed to or at least tolerated their new protectors over time.<sup>23</sup>

Despite poor initial reactions on the part of citizens, many eventually found black soldiers worthy of respect. Texans especially resisted the presence of black soldiers, though those who lived along the Mexican border came to appreciate their black protectors. Buffalo Soldiers held Indian and Mexican raiders at bay. Buffalo Soldiers performed so well the *San Antonio Herald* praised the soldiers. Even though editorials admitted the racist notions of the paper, they still gave credit to the Buffalo Soldiers.<sup>24</sup> Officers and citizens quickly recognized black soldiers stood up to the rigors of service. The Buffalo Soldiers received high praise for possessing better discipline than their white counterparts. When black soldiers first came to Cheyenne, Wyoming, local papers announced they expected good behavior due to the reputation of the soldiers.<sup>25</sup>

For white communities black soldiers brought something unexpected. Several areas benefited from black soldiers at social functions due to the fact black units took a great deal of pride in producing bands. These bands, in Western areas such as the Dakotas and Montana, played during dances and social functions.<sup>26</sup> Black soldiers never fully integrated into social life with white citizens. Only white officers received social invitations to local functions where the

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<sup>23</sup> Bruce A. Glasrud & Michael N. Searles eds., *Buffalo Soldiers in the West: A Black Soldiers Anthology* (College Station, Texas A&M University Press, 2007), 177-78.

<sup>24</sup> Charles L. Kenner, *Buffalo Soldiers and Officers of the Ninth Cavalry: 1867-1898* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 56.

<sup>25</sup> Glasrud, *Buffalo Soldiers*, 178-179.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, 57.



band played. Despite this lack of total equality black soldiers managed to leave a good impression upon those they served. For the people in the West the soldiers stood as a shield from a harsh and dangerous “frontier.” Local citizens found it difficult to criticize and attack those who protected them.

Black soldiers in the West quickly proved their fighting abilities, battling accusations from white America that these men would not fight well due to claims of racial inferiority. These soldiers also proved black men could serve in peacetime.<sup>27</sup> The policy of Uplift played a small role in the behavior of black soldiers. Many black soldiers saw the Army simply as a job, one that freed them from laboring in the South. For some soldiers the idea that service could help combat racism also played a role. As explained by Kevin Gaines, Uplift “Describes the group struggle for freedom and social advancement, Uplift also suggest that African Americans have, with an almost religious fervor, regarded education as the key to liberation.”<sup>28</sup> According to leaders, like Booker T. Washington, vocations which demonstrated African American commitment to hard work demonstrated the worth of African Americans to whites. Through hard work, African American proponents of Uplift hoped they could dispel racism and gain the rights promised after the Civil War. However, the Uplift movement consisted mainly of middle-class blacks, while soldiering remained a lower-class occupation. As a result, these soldiers never completely fit into the framework of Uplift.

Within the Army, Major Guy Henry championed the Buffalo Soldiers. Henry claimed the soldiers showed themselves among the best in the world and spent his military career fighting for their cause. Henry’s compliments stated black soldiers seldom appeared drunk, treated their

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<sup>27</sup> Leonard, *Men of Color to Arms*, 244.

<sup>28</sup> Kevin K. Gaines, *Uplifting the Race; Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 1-2.

horses well (a vital duty in a horse drawn army), and rarely deserted.<sup>29</sup> When he passed away in 1899 members of the Guy V. Henry Colored Veterans Association led the procession at his funeral.<sup>30</sup> Black soldiers demonstrated the falsehood of racial notions and their officers supported them.

Although black soldiers challenged racial notions and stereotypes in the American West, they lacked influence upon the racial views of the South. While Henry and Washington proclaimed the worth of black soldiers, the South only heard about the ill actions of these men. For Buffalo Soldiers the West taught them their hard work and military careers earned them a level of respect. While this proved true in the West, black soldiers experienced a completely different treatment when war broke out in 1898. They encountered the Southern part of the country many of them originally fled.

The year of 1898 forever changed America as a nation, converting the United States into an imperialist nation. For the Buffalo Soldiers the year also greatly affected their self and national images. The Spanish American War offered these soldiers their first chance at traditional, European, fighting. Speculations over how the Army would perform after decades of only fighting Native Americans circulated. For the Buffalo Soldiers the war offered an opportunity to prove themselves every bit the equal of their white counterparts, as they did in the American West.

The Spanish American War's roots lay in the winter of 1895. Cuban insurrectionists, made up of farmers and merchants, revolted against their Spanish rulers. The people fought for independence, stating Spain over taxed and mistreated them. Spain responded to the rebellion by attacking the Cuban people. By destroying the farms and families of anyone suspected of

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<sup>29</sup> Kenner, *Buffalo Soldiers*, 121.

<sup>30</sup> Editorial, *Semi Weekly Messenger* (Wilmington, North Carolina), November 3, 1899.

participating in the rebellion, Spain hoped to make the war too brutal for the people of Cuba to bear.<sup>31</sup> This process affected 500,000 Cubans through relocation, outright killing, or jailing.<sup>32</sup>

Over the next three years, Americans watched as the Spanish brutalized their subjects. Eventually the American public refused to accept Spanish behavior. The United States repeatedly demanded Spain cease its war against the Cubans. Spurred on by newspapers, the American people saw the struggle of the Cubans as similar to America's War for Independence. Newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst diligently campaigned for American involvement in the conflict. Hearst worked to associate the struggle of the Cuban people with the American Revolution and American values. Americans, influenced by this Yellow Journalism, took up the cause of the Cuban rebels as their own. At the same time, President William McKinley worked to keep peace through diplomacy.<sup>33</sup> McKinley tried to persuade Spain to use a policy known as home-rule. Under home-rule, Spain would retain ownership of Cuba, but the Cuban people would take over local government. While Spain signaled an openness to this plan of limited Cuban independence, Spain took no steps to implement home-rule in Cuba.

McKinley sent the U. S. S. *Maine* to Havana harbor to pressure Spain on the home-rule question.<sup>34</sup> On February 15, 1898, the *Maine* exploded in Havana harbor. The American press was indignant and blamed Spain for the explosion. With the *Maine* dead in a Cuban harbor, war loomed large. After several investigations, and the failure of Spain to end hostilities in Cuba, America declared war on April 25, 1898. President William McKinley called for the Army to

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<sup>31</sup> David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 1-7.

<sup>32</sup> Geoffrey Wawro, *Warfare and Society in Europe, 1792 – 1914* (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2000), 168.

<sup>33</sup> Wawro, *Warfare*, 168-170.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 28-30.

begin preparations for war against Spain and ordered the Atlantic Fleet to steam to Cuba.<sup>35</sup> The main thrust of the war focused on taking Spain's colonial empire in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Spanish naval base of Manila in the Philippines.

By 1898, the Buffalo Soldier regiments of the West spent most of their time on routine work. These once proud soldiers turned into road builders and manual laborers in the 1890's.<sup>36</sup> As the nation moved towards war, black units all over the West prepared again to see battle. Black members of state militias for years hoped to prove they, and their black officers, capable of fighting for the flag.<sup>37</sup> Along with freeing another people, these men saw the war as a chance to prove America was capable of improving. According to papers, the war held the potential to erase old racism. To support this idea papers used the evidence of General Fitzhugh Lee, a former Confederate officer, offering to command black troops.<sup>38</sup> Black soldiers and their supporters also relied upon history to dispel notions of racial inferiority and stereotypes. During the Civil War, black soldiers broke stereotypes, namely service dispelled myths of black cowardice in combat. The *Richmond Planet*, an African American run newspaper, championed the African American soldier, retelling stories of the Civil War, "Success was impossible; yet they behaved as cool as if veterans and when ordered to retire, marched off as if on parade. . . the hardest fighting was done by black troops."<sup>39</sup> For militias the chance to serve never came. The Army only called upon state sponsored units, these units refused the participation of black

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<sup>35</sup> William McKinley, *Speech given to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America* (Executive Mansion: Washington, April 25, 1898).

<sup>36</sup> Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers*, 30.

<sup>37</sup> Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 78.

<sup>38</sup> Editorial, *Princeton Union*, (Princeton, Minnesota), April 28, 1898.

<sup>39</sup> Editorial, *Richmond Planet*, July 9, 1898.

citizens.<sup>40</sup> Each state wanted representation in the conflict, as service was attached to American patriotism. The federal government let states choose which volunteer regiments would serve. To keep white voters happy, state governments only chose white militias for volunteer service during the war.

Like the rest of the Army, the Buffalo Soldiers suffered from years of neglect and their numbers dwindled throughout the 1880's and 90's. The Army needed black volunteers to bring the fighting strength of the Buffalo Soldiers up to wartime capabilities. Outside of these volunteers, the average black man stood no chance of serving his country in Cuba.

As they moved east, black soldiers faced a troublesome trend in America. American society embraced pseudo-scientific notions of race and culture. This shift in thinking directly affected the treatment of the nation's black citizens. Leading "scientific" theories, such as Social Darwinism and Eugenics, asserted the idea of superior and inferior races. Intellectuals across America subscribed to the science of their day. Through primitive genetics and anthropology, scientist sought to explain why certain groups held superiority over others. Historian C. Vann Woodward argues the doctrine of racism spread at the same pace as imperialism.<sup>41</sup> It moved in to "respectable scholarly and intellectual circles," the world of higher education seethed with a desire to explain why different groups, perceived as races, existed. More importantly, these institutions fought hard to explain why the Anglo-Saxons boasted superiority over the world.

Charles Francis Adams, one of the leading anti-imperialists of the time, wrote after the war denouncing the expansion of the United States' power. Throughout his speeches, Adams railed against the effects of building empires. The elder statesmen argued America managed to

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<sup>40</sup> Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish American War* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1971), 130.

<sup>41</sup> C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), 74.

achieve greatness because of its increasingly brutal treatment towards inferior races.<sup>42</sup> Due to this brutality, the “Anglo-Saxon Race” managed to keep its stock, “from being a nation of half-breeds, miscegenates.”<sup>43</sup> According to the anti-empire Adams, Americans followed a long-standing tradition of avoiding contact with “lesser” races, a tradition he argued needed to continue. He further went on to explain while America avoided contact with “lesser” peoples, the nation “lamented the presence of the African.”<sup>44</sup> Adams felt the nation needed to learn how to treat blacks and Indians better, before embarking upon a policy to bring even more “lesser” people under its sway. Elsewhere in America, men of “science” explained why America needed to aid Cuba, a land with a large black population. A man by the name of Dr. Thomas stated for newspapers, blacks in Cuba “Came from a different part of Africa and are a much more intelligent class. They have finer features, are not so ungainly and are not so much given to laughing and joking as our American Negroes.”<sup>45</sup> The nation, armed with “science” moved steadily towards a world where blacks never gained the equality the Civil War and Reconstruction promised them.

Theodore Roosevelt, one of the leading lights for American imperialism, years before the war, expressed reservations about the spread of Americans into “primitive” lands. Roosevelt understood the dangers of racial conflict, “What occurs in our own Southern states at the least sign of race war between the blacks and whites seems to me to foreshadow what would occur on a much bigger scale if any black or yellow people should really menace the whites.” He further explained this menace created opportunities for “something approaching to a war of

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<sup>42</sup> Charles Francis Adams, *“Imperialism” and “The Tracks of Our Forefathers”* (Boston: Dana Estes & Company, 1899), 10.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid*, 13.

<sup>45</sup> Letter from Dr. Thomas, *Omaha Daily Bee*, May 30, 1898.

extermination.”<sup>46</sup> America continued along these lines of thought for the next several decades, constantly focusing on the inferiority of anyone who lacked white skin.

As Buffalo Soldiers headed east to fight in America’s war, they encountered these ever-growing theories on race as well as the previously existing issues in the South. The Army made sure to move its African American units through the South as quickly as possible, providing few chances for soldiers to interact with locals. Florida and Georgia worked as staging grounds for the Army’s invasion of Cuba. These states presented a true taste of what changed while the Buffalo Soldiers lived in the West. The majority of the soldiers of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry as well as the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantry went to Lakeland and Tampa, Florida, with a few going to Camp Chickamauga in Georgia. Here the Soldiers waited to board transports and start towards Cuba.<sup>47</sup>

Florida newspapers began to complain immediately of the presence of African American soldiers, they foretold ill behavior and disastrous consequences. Southerners held tight to old beliefs proposed by the press of how black soldiers behaved in the West. For all the claims made against these soldiers, a look at the Court-Martial records from the period of 1868 through 1890 proves these fears unfounded. Both black and white Court-Martial only made up roughly fifteen percent of their respective populations.<sup>48</sup> Black soldiers differed from their white counterparts in one key area. Throughout the 1880’s and 90’s, black soldiers deserted from the Army at a much lower rate.<sup>49</sup> Overall, the active duty records of black soldiers showed a great level of commitment and dedication to service. The lack of difference between Court-Martial records shows no grounds for assuming blacks caused more trouble than whites did. The press in Florida

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<sup>46</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *Letters and Speeches* (New York: The Library of America, 2004), 57.

<sup>47</sup> Fletcher, *Black Soldier and Officer*, 34.

<sup>48</sup> U. S. Army, *Proceedings*.

<sup>49</sup> Fowler, *Black Infantry*, 60.

ignored this evidence.

Several companies of the Tenth Cavalry arrived in Florida before the regular army. These companies filled the role of Provost Guard. The Provost Guard's duties included enforcing local and military laws for soldiers. A northern volunteer soldier, Charles Post, recorded in his diary the reaction of local whites to black police. A local sheriff approached Post and asked him if the soldiers found any trouble with, "Niggra cops roundin you up an' throing' you in the jug?" Post politely responded that in the Army black and white mattered little. Post later admitted in his diary letting the Tenth serve as Provost Guard seemed a mistake, probably made by "some throbbing sociologist in the Army." Nevertheless, Post saw the problem for what it was, "The Tenth Cavalry was Provost Guard, and it did arrest both white and black soldiers. . . This in a town where black men stepped off the sidewalk, and said, 'Howdy, suh,' when a white passed by." Post described the sheriff as unsure how to react to arguments of army solidarity. The local man went on to explain if Post, or any of his friends, ever tangled with the "black bastards on a horse," they need only yell for support. The sheriff assured Post of the townspeople's willingness to protect the white soldiers, "Us folks is with you boys every time."<sup>50</sup> The locals poorly hid their dislike of their new guests.

Shortly after the arrival of the Tenth Cavalry in Florida, two companies of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry arrived in Key West. Their reception signified the treatment other black units received upon reaching their staging grounds. *The Red Cloud Chief*, a Colorado newspaper, commented, "The troops are Negroes and are said to be about the best in the United States." Colorado directly benefited from the wars of pacification the Buffalo Soldiers fought in during the 1870's. "The Only persons to welcome them when they staked their rifles on the wharf were

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<sup>50</sup> Charles Johnson Post, *The Little War of Private Post: The Spanish American War Seen Up Close* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960), 53-56.



Negro citizens of the town . . . The Southern whites did not turn out because their dignity was offended at the Negro troops being sent.”<sup>51</sup> White communities initially held off on violent actions towards armed black soldiers. The pervasive racism of the South started to affect the black soldiers almost immediately.

In one instance, later in the war, black soldiers of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry escorted Spanish prisoners to a local base. These prisoners surrendered during a small naval engagement, and the local population came out to witness their march. Much to the surprise of the Buffalo Soldiers, the crowd lacked interest in the Spanish prisoners. Instead, the crowd came to see if black men really escorted white prisoners. The local Catholic priest protested, calling the actions of the Army “an outrage.”<sup>52</sup> The local white population hated to see black men placed in a position of superiority over white men.

Black soldiers found little opportunity to get themselves into the kind of trouble whites expected of them. Despite this lack of opportunity, Southern Americans expected trouble from black soldiers once they moved into the South. The *Richmond Planet* summed up what other papers stated:

Ever since these colored regiments have been in the South they have been giving more or less trouble, and the sooner they are sent away the better it will be for all concerned. Yet we do not know that we would be entirely justified in sending them to Cuba, Porto Rico, or the Philippines. We do not know what excesses they might commit against the natives, and their crimes would be imputed to us.<sup>53</sup>

Buffalo Soldiers in Florida faced a low bar when it came to impressing the citizens. Florida’s citizens expected trouble from the beginning, all trouble encountered by black soldiers came from the behavior of local civilians.

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<sup>51</sup> Editorial, *Red Cloud Chief*, April 22, 1898.

<sup>52</sup> Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., “Negro Troops in Florida, 1898,” *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (July 1970): 1 – 15.

<sup>53</sup> Editorial, *Richmond Planet*, June 18, 1898.

The white bars and stores in Florida refused service to black soldiers.<sup>54</sup> While the nation waved flags and praised its troops, a portion of its own soldiers lacked basic services while they waited to fight. These soldiers faced enforced segregation for the first time in recent memory. In one instance, soldiers shot and killed a white store clerk over a dispute concerning not allowing black men to use his store. In a surprising turn of events, the Army's leader, General William Rufus Shafter, refused to provide witnesses to the local investigating sheriff. While serving as an officer in the West, Shafter campaigned for the fair treatment of his black soldiers. After political pressure, Shafter reluctantly gave up the men.<sup>55</sup> In the end, a jury acquitted one of the accused soldiers and found his partner guilty.<sup>56</sup> Other soldiers commented, through newspapers, following the shooting the white population appeared less openly hostile.<sup>57</sup>

The treatment of local black citizens came as a shock to these soldiers. John E. Lewis of the Tenth Cavalry commented, with contempt, at how local blacks lived, "It is hell for the colored people who live here, and they live in dread at all times. If one colored man commits a crime, it does not make any particular difference whether they get the right party or not; all they want is a black."<sup>58</sup> These soldiers witnessed the rise of violent racism in the South. Lynching became commonplace for black citizens. Not far from where black soldiers camped in Georgia a local black man faced accusations of killing a white. After a mob found the man, they told him to run, as he ran the crowd of about fifty people shot the man in the back.<sup>59</sup> For black men, grown accustomed to a certain level of respect from whites, lynching seemed a fresh new hell, one their

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<sup>54</sup> Evans Thomas, *The War Lovers: Roosevelt, Lodge, Hearst, and the Rush to Empire, 1898* (New York: Little Brown and Company, 2010), 336.

<sup>55</sup> Editorial, *Atlanta Constitution*, June 10, 1898.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, June 12, 1898.

<sup>57</sup> Herbert Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1988.), 87.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 87.

<sup>59</sup> Editorial, *Atlanta Constitution*, June 13, 1898.

civilian counterparts lived with every day.

On June 6, men of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry encountered a horror they found difficult to tolerate. White volunteer soldiers from Ohio kidnapped a local black child. The soldiers then took turns shooting at the child to see who could put holes in his shirt without hitting his body. Soldiers of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry found the incident outrageous. The event allowed for all the pent up frustration of racism to boil over and the soldiers from the Twenty-Fourth Infantry rioted. They marched into town firing their guns into the air and breaking into stores and bars that previously denied them service. After the local police failed to calm the situation, volunteer soldiers from Georgia arrived to put down the riot.<sup>60</sup> The government tried its best to censor the story and prevent its spread. The *Richmond Dispatch* contained the most complete narrative of the riot, though not the cause, “The facts are that on Monday evening the Negro regulars went to the city and started drinking bad whiskey. In short time they were hilarious and attempted to take the town.”<sup>61</sup> The *Dispatch* went on to explain Northern troops sided with the black soldiers, helping in the fight against the Southern troops. No papers made any mention of the real reason for the riot; they all used the excuse of “bad whiskey.” The government foresaw racial conflict if the story broke nationally and chose to keep the story out of the press. The government asked General Shafter to keep his black troops within their camps to avoid any future contact with white citizens.<sup>62</sup>

By June 13, the Army prepared to move its troops to Cuba. Black soldiers left the shores of Florida for combat, after two long months with the local population. The Army and Navy proved poorly equipped to transport soldiers. The transports used by the Army came primarily

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<sup>60</sup> Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., “Negro Troops in Florida, 1898,” *The Florida Historical Society Quarterly* 49, no. 1, (July 1970): 1 – 15.

<sup>61</sup> “Negro Soldiers Riotous,” *Richmond Dispatch*, June 11, 1898.

<sup>62</sup> “Negro Soldiers Riotous,” *Houston Daily Post*, June 10, 1898.

from private merchant vessels contracted to haul men. To complicate the issue the American military possessed no experience organizing men to travel overseas. The Army left it up to officers, on the regimental and company levels, to make sure their men made it onto transports. The resulting chaos meant every ship that carried black soldiers also carried whites.<sup>63</sup> To make matters worse for the black soldiers, white volunteers and their officers demanded segregation on the ships. Historians Joe Knetsch and Nick Wynne argue the Army allowed this because it tried to avoid upsetting Southern troops.<sup>64</sup>

Once the transports left port, white officers took control and demanded segregation without asking permission from the Army. On these transports, black soldiers took the lowest levels with few portholes and poor ventilation. One ship offered only one bathroom to every 1,256 men on their several day voyage.<sup>65</sup> On another ship, which transported cattle weeks before, a literal color line went down the decks. Black soldiers confined to one side of the boat, whites to the other. The highest-ranking officer of the ship ordered whites to make their coffee first. Guards assured black soldiers waited to begin heating water until after whites finished brewing their coffee.<sup>66</sup> They sailed towards Cuba on six ships, the *Miami*, *Alamo*, *Comal*, *Concho*, *City of Washington*, and the *Leona*.<sup>67</sup>

Months before America sent troops to Cuba it sent several observers tasked with finding out the fighting strength of the Cuban insurrectionists. The Army sent General Fredrick Funston to observe actions in Cuba. Funston served with the Cuban insurgents until the war ended. Funston then went to the Philippines to command a part of the Army of conquest against the

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<sup>63</sup> Scott, *Unwept*, 83.

<sup>64</sup> Joe Knetsch & Nick Wynne, *Florida in The Spanish American War* (Charleston: The History Press, 2011), 132.

<sup>65</sup> Scott, *Unwept*, 83.

<sup>66</sup> Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers*, 25.

<sup>67</sup> Fletcher, *Black Soldiers*, 34.

Filipino insurrectionists. Following his time in the Philippines, Funston stayed in the Army. Funston alternated between trouble spots in Cuba, the Philippines, and the American border with Mexico. Towards the end of his career, Funston sat at the top of the list of candidates to lead the American Expeditionary Force in Europe during World War I. Funston died before receiving the command.<sup>68</sup> Funston's writings cover the operational strength of the Cuban insurrectionists. Funston also offers a good look at the racial views of the Army.

One of the areas Funston and the Army agreed upon focused on the idea black people possessed a natural immunity to tropical environments and diseases. Funston assumed darker skin provided a reason for why Cuba's black population avoided contracting tropical diseases. This belief proved influential when the Army decided to send all its Buffalo Soldiers.<sup>69</sup> Even Theodore Roosevelt commented on his shock when it seemed evident African American soldiers lacked immunity to tropical diseases, declaring, "A curious feature was that the colored troops seemed to suffer as heavily as the whites."<sup>70</sup> The Army maintained its belief in immunity throughout the war and into the conflict in the Philippines.

Funston's memoirs of the war contain comments about the state of black Cubans. He found them unable to comprehend military tactics, declaring they lacked a fear of direct assaults against Spanish fortifications.<sup>71</sup> The U. S. Army later operated in exactly the same way as the Cuban insurgents, marching head long into machine gun and rifle fire. One of the more telling statements of Funston comes from his explanation of the Cuban black as a man:

The Cuban Negroes in the insurgent army were to me a most interesting study. They seemed much more forceful and aggressive than our own colored population as a rule, probably the result of most of the older ones having served in the Ten

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<sup>68</sup> Frederick Funston, *Memories of Two Wars: Cuban and Philippine Experiences* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), ix/x.

<sup>69</sup> Gatewood, *Smoked Yankees*, 6.

<sup>70</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2004, Original 1899), 117.

<sup>71</sup> Funston, *Memories*, 71.

Years' War. And then, too, they had lived a more out-door life than the majority of the Negroes of our Northern States, being plantation hands and small farmers, and had not been weakened and demoralized by city life.<sup>72</sup>

Funston summed up the prevailing attitude in America, with blacks portrayed as docile, lazy, and ignorant. Funston found the Cuban blacks odd because they behaved differently from his stereotype of American blacks. He explained this condition as the result of a hard outdoor life, as though the Southern sharecroppers never experienced a strenuous outdoor life.

Once the Army landed on Cuban shores, the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry faced the Spanish before other Army units. Under a command from General Joseph Wheeler, a former Confederate general, the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry marched from their beachhead on the coast and headed into the interior of Cuba. The Ninth and Tenth Cavalry fought on foot, the Army proving unable to transport enough horses for the cavalry. At 3:30 a.m. on 23 June, these men marched from the coast of Cuba to the interior of the island, accompanied by the soon famous volunteer Rough Rider Regiment.<sup>73</sup> As the U. S. Army pushed into the dense jungle, it appeared the Spanish lacked plans to dispute the United States' landing sites. The first action the U. S. Army faced came at Las Guasimas. On June 23, the Tenth as well as the Rough Riders went to scout a main road for the Army. The Tenth marched head long into a Spanish ambush, the soldiers faced fire front, left, and right. The men held their ground until the Rough Riders arrived, who also walked directly into the ambush. As a Rough Rider ran up to one of the soldiers of the Tenth he noticed a ragged hole ripped through the man's leg from Spanish fire. When the Rough Rider pressed the man about his wound, he replied, "Oh, that's all right. That's been there for some time!"<sup>74</sup> After two hours of heavy rifle and machine gun fire, Roosevelt led a charge against the main Spanish line. The Spanish soldiers broke and ran from their position. Newspapers proved reluctant to

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>73</sup> Fletcher, *Black Soldier*, 35.

<sup>74</sup> Letter to, *Tarrytown Argus*, (Tarrytown, New York), July 2, 1898.

provide stories of black soldiers throughout the war. The Battle of Las Guasimas provided one of the few instances where black units gained fame. B. M. Channing wrote a poem, widely published in black newspapers, about the event.

### **The Negro Soldier**

We used to think the Negro didn't count for very much –  
Light-fingered in the melon patch, and chicken yard, and such;  
Much mixed in points of morals and absurd in point of dress,  
The butt of droll cartoonist and the target of the press;  
But we've got to reconstruct our view on color, more or less,

Now we know about the Tenth at La Quasina! (sic)  
When a rain of shot was falling, with a song upon his lips,  
In the horror where such gallant lives went out in death's eclipse,  
Face to face with Spanish bullets, on the slope of San Juan,  
The Negro soldier showed himself another type of man;  
Read the story of his courage, coldly, carelessly, who can –

The story of the Tenth at La Quasina!  
We have heaped the Cuban soil above their bodies, black and white –  
The strangely sorted comrade of that grand and glorious fight –  
And many a fair-skinned volunteer goes whole and sound today  
For the succor of the colored troops, the battle records say  
And the feud is done forever, of the blue coat and the gray –

All Honor to the Tenth at La Quasina!<sup>75</sup>

Channing summed up the hope African American service might prove worth. Roosevelt commented members of the Ninth arrived after the battle. The future president claimed the Ninth appeared disappointed over missing the fighting. Men of the Ninth claimed they arrived in time to save Roosevelt from destruction.<sup>76</sup> The fact the men of the Ninth suffered multiple casualties proves they arrived in time to fight. Roosevelt went on to explain, as he held his position, an officer from the Ninth “good-naturedly” gave them tips on how to set up an outpost.<sup>77</sup> While

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<sup>75</sup> B. M. Channing, “The Negro Soldier,” *Salt Lake Herald*, September 16, 1898. (Channing misspelled the name of Las Guasimas as he heard it phonetically as La Quasina)

<sup>76</sup> Roosevelt, *Rough Riders*, 37.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid*, 59.

Roosevelt praised black soldiers, he still showed a level of superiority in his tone when addressing them in his writings.

Havana was the capital of Cuba, and contained the majority of the Spanish Army in Cuba. Santiago de Cuba became the target of the U. S. Army and Navy after the Atlantic Fleet trapped Spanish Admiral Pascual Cervera and his fleet in the harbor. As the war intensified, Santiago became the de facto capital of the Spanish in Cuba.<sup>78</sup> Between the Army and the city lay the San Juan Heights, a series of hills overlooking Santiago, defended by the Spanish. American leadership needed the hills for victory. Six days after the battle of Las Guasimas, the Army marched again. The plan for taking the heights lacked creativity. The U. S. Army marched forward and pushed the Spanish out of their positions. The defenses of the San Juan Heights consisted of a series of defensive trenches and blockhouses. Blockhouses, early forms of bunkers, consisted of wood and dirt with firing holes cut into them. In one section, the Spanish used the wall of an old church as part of their defenses.<sup>79</sup> These defenses made it possible for a relatively small force of Spanish soldiers to offer a fight to their overwhelming opponent.

On July 1, 1898, at 6:30 a.m. the Army pressed on towards a hill known as El Caney. The Spanish forces numbered four to five hundred, the U. S. Army brought over six thousand to the fight. Despite the numerical advantage, the Army suffered heavy losses. Men who marched all night suffered the coming of the morning heat. The U. S. Army marched head long into an enemy dug in with Mauser rifles.<sup>80</sup> The Twenty-Fifth Infantry marched forward to the heavy fighting around El Caney. They met retreating Massachusetts volunteers who informed the Twenty-Fifth Infantry of the heavy fighting and urged the black troops retreat as well.<sup>81</sup> With

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<sup>78</sup> Trask, *War with Spain*, 117.

<sup>79</sup> Fletcher, *Black Soldier*, 38.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid*, 38.

<sup>81</sup> Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers*, 28.



little reaction, the soldiers marched on to the fight. Once on the front lines the black soldiers endured rifle and light artillery fire for nine hours.

Many of the officers of the Twenty-Fifth received wounds or died in the nine-hour wait. When the orders finally came to advance few officers remained to take command. Without direct orders, knowing the intention of their fallen officers, the men of the Twenty-Fifth charged forward. By themselves, the black soldiers took the fortified field positions on El Caney, capturing the Spanish defenders' flag. After the war ended, white observers claimed black soldiers were unable to function without white officers. Theodore Roosevelt received much more publication than stories of the Twenty-Fifth. Roosevelt found black troops unfit to lead themselves. As evidence, Roosevelt and others pointed to the lack of black officers, while neglecting to mention the Army's active decision not to raise more black men to officer's ranks. "They are of course, peculiarly dependent upon their white officers. Occasionally they produced non-commissioned officers (NCOs) who could take the initiative and accept responsibility precisely like the best class of whites; but this cannot be expected normally, nor is it fair to expect it."<sup>82</sup> The men of the Twenty-Fifth would not receive the recognition they deserved until after the war ended.

As white soldiers caught up with the men of the Twenty-Fifth, an officer from the white Twelfth Infantry Regiment demanded the black soldiers surrender the captured Spanish flag to him.<sup>83</sup> Eventually the Twenty-Fifth received credit for the victory, even though they lost the chance to take the spoils of their victory back to the States. Black newspapers reprinted stories of the Twenty-Fifth's victory following the war. They called for official recognition of the Twenty-Fifth's contributions and the return of the Spanish flag. The only trophy from the battle came

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<sup>82</sup> Roosevelt, *Rough Riders*, 85.

<sup>83</sup> Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers*, 28.

from a chunk of the Spanish flag a soldier managed to cut away before the Twelfth Regiment claimed the remainder.

Despite the success of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry, newspapers paid little attention to black soldiers. As Roosevelt explained, much attention went to, “The Rough Riders, who were volunteer troops, and the Tenth Cavalry, who were colored.”<sup>84</sup> Excepting the less than positive portrayal of Roosevelt, the deeds of the black soldiers never reached the American public. The black press waited for black soldiers to return home to tell their own versions of the war. For the bulk of Americans, the short newspaper reports of Roosevelt, later turned into the book *The Rough Riders*, offered the only proof black soldiers fought in Cuba.

Black soldiers commonly received harder work details than their white counterparts. While white soldiers waited for their next orders, the men of the Twenty-Fifth dug trenches to prevent against a possible Spanish counter attack.<sup>85</sup> Many in the Army noticed the hard work of the black soldiers. Anecdotes sent back to the states managed to praise the black soldiers, while still insulting them based on racial notions. When the Army marched again, a white officer resting on the side of the road noticed a black soldier carrying his unit’s mascot, a dog. The officer asked the man about his duties and got a surprising answer; “‘Sergeant,’ he asked, ‘didn’t you march all night before last?’ ‘Yes, sah.’ ‘And didn’t you fight all day yesterday at El Caney?’ ‘‘Deed, I did.’ ‘Didn’t you march all night last night too?’ ‘Yes, sah.’ ‘Then why are you carrying that dog?’ ‘Why, boss, the dawg’s tired.’”<sup>86</sup> This story was heavily repeated throughout the American press, essentially labeling these hard working soldiers as beast of burden and not men. Black soldiers continually proved symbols of hard work and dedication

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<sup>84</sup> Roosevelt, *Rough Riders*, 61.

<sup>85</sup> Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers*, 30.

<sup>86</sup> Willis John Abbot, *Blue Jackets of '98: History of the Spanish American War* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1899), 241.

throughout the war.

A few miles away from the fighting on El Caney, the Army struggled to take Kettle Hill. Kettle Hill also went by the now better-known title of San Juan Hill.<sup>87</sup> The Twenty-Fourth Infantry as well as the Tenth Cavalry made their presence known on the battlefield. Roosevelt and his men also went into battle. Roosevelt later praised the men of the Tenth for practically winning the day. “General Sumner in person gave the Tenth the order to charge the hills.” Again, American forces marched head long into heavily defended Spanish positions. “Up Kettle Hill Sergeant George Berry of the Tenth, bore not only his own regimental colors, but those of the Third (a white unit) . . . He kept shouting: ‘dress on the colors, boys, dress, on the colors!’”<sup>88</sup> The Tenth took the heaviest number of casualties that day. The cavalry operated largely without officers throughout the battle, having lost eleven out of their twenty-two commanders. Despite heavy losses, the Tenth pushed on, backed up and surrounded by white units. By the end of the day, the hill fell into the hands of the United States, and the Spanish retreated to Santiago.<sup>89</sup>

Although Roosevelt later praised the Buffalo Soldiers, he still possessed the prejudice of his time. Years after the war Roosevelt recalled in a letter how one incident stained his image among black citizens. The letter retold the tale of how Roosevelt stopped the “retreat” of black soldiers, who started towards the rear to tend to their wounded.<sup>90</sup> The story Roosevelt told to the press proved simple; the soldiers started to retreat so he stopped them at the point of a gun. He told the white press this ended the trouble, “They flashed their white teeth at one another, as they broke into broad grins, and I had no more trouble with them, they seemed to accept me as one of

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<sup>87</sup> Fletcher, *Black Soldier*, 39.

<sup>88</sup> Roosevelt, *Rough Riders*. 76.

<sup>89</sup> “General Shafter Criticized,” *The Times*, August 21, 1898.

<sup>90</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt* (Blacksburg: Wilder Publications, LLC, 2008), 174.

their own officers.”<sup>91</sup> The black press took the stereotypical depiction of black men poorly. It took several years before Roosevelt redeemed himself in the eyes of the black community.

Following the taking of Kettle Hill, the Army needed only to fortify its positions. With Santiago in clear view, the Army hoped the Spanish would surrender quickly. In the process of creating new defenses black soldiers again found themselves used as labor. While the white Army units waited under trees, the Buffalo Soldiers dug new trenches to defend against possible Spanish counter attacks.<sup>92</sup>

For black soldiers the victories at El Caney and Kettle or San Juan Hill seemed tainted. The American public showed no interest in the victories of the Buffalo Soldiers. The volunteer troops looked down on black soldiers and stole the spoils of their battles. African American soldiers themselves felt they finally proved equality with white men in battle. Buffalo Soldiers fought a European power, marched against modern weapons, and never flinched in their service. Back in America, the press largely ignored the service of these men, in fact the press continued to speak harshly of black soldiers. The majority of Americans concerned themselves little with the way black soldiers fought.

Fighting in Cuba ended once the San Juan Heights fell to American soldiers. The Army settled in to a siege of Santiago waiting for Spanish surrender. Surrender finally came on July 16, 1898.<sup>93</sup> With the war over it proved imperative to remove the American troops from Cuban soil. The entire Army suffered heavily from yellow fever. Both Generals Shafter and Wheeler, the two top commanders of the Army, came down with the fever, as did large numbers of troops. Only six days after the surrender of Santiago, General Shafter wrote to Washington begging to return his Army to the States. He commented every unit in the Army suffered from yellow fever,

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<sup>91</sup> Roosevelt, *Rough Riders*, 86.

<sup>92</sup> Fletcher, *Black Soldier*, 37.

<sup>93</sup> Trask, *War with Spain*, 315.

making a special note the black Twenty-Fifth Infantry suffered more than other regiments.<sup>94</sup> The Army lacked an answer for why the crippling disease affected the entire Army equally.<sup>95</sup> Eventually the government recalled the Army to America. The Ninth and Tenth Cavalry gained the honor of leaving Cuba last and arrived in Florida shortly after August 10.<sup>96</sup>

Once back in America the black soldiers again experienced how little Americans respected their service. In a popular work of the time, *The American-Spanish War: A History by the War Leaders*, black soldiers found their actions during the war mentioned just once. The treasurer of an army hospital, Mrs. Amos G. Draper, gave them credit for, “The colored cook who for two days, steadily, in a hot kitchen, strained and prepared the grape-juice, which was so refreshing to the fever-stricken patients.”<sup>97</sup> Throughout the 607-page book, with articles written by twenty-nine separate leaders, from both sides of the war, hospital service alone received mention. As Jim Crow policies took hold of America, segregation worked its way into journalism and the academic world. White readers ignored the contributions of African Americans as readily as they denied civil rights or segregated public institutions.<sup>98</sup>

When the press did discuss black soldiers, it discussed the idea of immigration. Before the war, one paper ran reports by a doctor declaring America needed to use the island of Cuba as a colony for African Americans. The article argued the climate and types of work found in Cuba better suited black citizens.<sup>99</sup> This type of argument appeared later in the Philippines. *The Richmond Planet* made attacks by white citizens its personal business. In almost every issue the *Planet* answered a few derogatory letters. In one letter, the author insisted whites needed to

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<sup>94</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 171.

<sup>95</sup> Gatewood, *Smoked Yankees*, 6.

<sup>96</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 216.

<sup>97</sup> Various Authors, *The American-Spanish War: A History by the War Leaders* (London: Chas. C. Haskell & Son, 1898), 454.

<sup>98</sup> Woodward, *Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 73-73.

<sup>99</sup> Editorial, *San Francisco Call*, May 07, 1898.

command black soldiers because, “They have to be held in check like a branch of cattle. Lest they break out and devour white soldiers and commit other crimes; because there is not a Negro in America possessed of enough military tactics to shoot a wild hog, much less command a company of soldiers.” This type of statement appeared frequently in the *Planet*, offering a chance to attack the racist notions of America’s population. The replies followed similar lines “arguing with this creature is like reasoning with a mule,” followed by an explanation of how black soldiers carried themselves well in the past.<sup>100</sup> Outside of its black readership, *The Planet* failed to alter the views of the average American citizen.

The men of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry and those of the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantry returned to America, receiving little praise for their accomplishments. In the coming months, these men again went west. This time west meant the West Coast, and on to the Philippines. Along the way, they suffered the indignation of the white population. Once in the Philippine islands the Buffalo Soldiers faced resentment and racism from white soldiers as well as the American press.

Initial war plans in the Philippines avoided the use of black soldiers. The naval attacks at Manila and the subsequent taking of the city involved only white regular army units or white volunteers, as the black regiments were in use in Cuba. This first attempt at building an empire proved problematic for both America and the Philippines. The Army only found use for black soldiers in the Philippines as the Filipino insurgents took to guerilla warfare.

American leadership grew to respect the theories of Frederick Jackson Turner during this period. Leaders, like Theodore Roosevelt, found Turner’s “Frontier Thesis” an attractive model for what made America great. According to the census bureau, the frontier of the American West officially closed in the year of 1890. To Frederick Jackson Turner the nation lost something

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<sup>100</sup> Editorial, *Richmond Planet*, July 16, 1898.

important when the frontier closed. America needed space to grow and keep the pioneering values that made it a great country.<sup>101</sup> Turner argued the conflict of the American frontier fundamentally influenced America's development. The constant expansion on the frontier ensured America remained healthy as a nation. He argued expansion created good leaders, material wealth, and influenced the morals of the nation. The loss of the frontier threatened America with decay and corruption. Gilded Age Americans readily accepted Turner's "Frontier Thesis." Younger leaders, like Theodore Roosevelt, particularly felt the loss and feared their own urbanization.<sup>102</sup> As the nation moved forward, imperial ventures seemed a good replacement for the American West. Foreign territory, taken through war or otherwise acquired, would provide new frontiers to subjugate and settle. Some hoped these new frontiers would in turn revitalize the country and insure future prosperity. Although the concept of the frontier is challenged in modern academia, men like Roosevelt believed in the frontier and the effect it had on America.

Also in 1890, Alfred Thayer Mahan published, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*.<sup>103</sup> Mahan insisted England held the title of world power because the small island nation controlled the seas. Mahan described a maritime frontier, one Europeans dominated. This explanation of the world seemed of vital importance to any who wanted America to be a world power. The world's oceans also offered up a new frontier for the more adventuring sort, which Turner found so vital to the nation.

The close of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of America's presence on the world stage. The country no longer needed to sit idly by while the powers of Europe divided the

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<sup>101</sup> Fredrick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Barnes & Nobel, 2009, Originally Published 1920), 1.

<sup>102</sup> G. J. A. O'Toole, *The Spanish American War: An American Epic – 1898* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1984), 91.

<sup>103</sup> A. T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660 – 1783* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 2004 Originally Published 1890).

world. For America to maintain its strength, it needed to expand beyond its continental borders. Theodore Roosevelt evolved into one of the preeminent expansionists of the time. He expressed his faith in expansionist foreign policies directly to Mahan, “I suppose I need not tell you that as regards Hawaii I take your views absolutely, as indeed I do on foreign policy in general. If I had my way we would annex those islands tomorrow.”<sup>104</sup> The loyalty Roosevelt professed proved common among a growing number of leaders within the United States. The growing trend in America required foreign territory to protect the future of the nation from European empires and decay.

Where would America go? European powers claimed much of the rest of the world. The British sociologist Benjamin Kidd, in 1898, addressed this issue. Kidd saw the world in the same way as American expansionists. The Europeans divided all the prime territory and left few areas for America to expand into. Kidd’s answer lay in the tropical regions. Throughout his work, *The Control of the Tropics*, Kidd argued Europeans expanded into all the lands they wanted to live in, namely the temperate regions. Though European powers divided the tropical regions, they mismanaged their empires. The future seemed a vast race between empires to develop tropical possessions.<sup>105</sup>

Kidd outlined three systems of governing the tropics. The first he termed as the Spanish system. The Spanish treated a territory as a possession and ran it as a means of making money. Kidd related this system to a legal form of slavery. The French provided the second system. The French came late to the empire game. To counter the lack of growing room France claimed tropical lands for colonization. This system hoped to allow France to compete with the temperate regions England possessed, such as Australia and Canada. Ultimately, Kidd found, the French

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<sup>104</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *Letters and Speeches* (New York: The Library of America, 2004), 94-96.

<sup>105</sup> Benjamin Kidd, *The Control of the Tropics* (London: The Macmillan Company, 1898), 5.



system reverted to the Spanish system. Few French colonists attempted to recreate France in the tropical regions. The English system offered the last form of running the tropics. Under the English, the tropics needed to transform into independent territories on their own “they were, in short, expected to develop into modern states.” Kidd expressed a great disbelief in this method, stating it played on experiences with temperate regions and ignored the necessities of the tropics.<sup>106</sup>

Kidd lacked faith in non-Europeans to govern themselves. He insisted the future of the tropics required, “That the European races will gradually come to realize that the tropics must be administered from the temperate regions.”<sup>107</sup> To those in America this meant the United States also needed to govern the tropics.

As with Cuba, the Philippines claimed a troubled past with their Spanish rulers. For several years the Philippines went through cycles of revolutions and reprisals similar to those of Cuba. Spain, short on European allies, attempted throughout the end of the nineteenth century to assert a centralized rule over the Philippines and Cuba. Spanish leaders intended for centralization to maintain a constant flow of wealth to Spain from the colonies.<sup>108</sup> Far from America, the Philippines drew less attention than Cuba.

During the Spanish American War, the Philippines drew the attention of the American Navy. The Spanish fleet stayed in the harbor of Manila Bay in the Philippines. Admiral George Dewey aimed his fleet at the Philippines and steamed on at the urging of his president, stating, “Should war be the word I believe we will make short work of the Spanish reign in the Philippines. The insurgents are ready to rise at our first gun, and long before this reaches you we

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid, 20-36.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid, 85.

<sup>108</sup> Wawro, *Warfare*, 168-170.

may be masters of Manila and other Philippine cities.”<sup>109</sup> Leading the way with his flagship, the USS *Olympia*, Dewey entered Manila Bay early on the morning of May 1, 1898. Shortly after finding the Spanish fleet, Dewey’s ships opened fire. Dewey later described the battle, “With magnificent coolness and order, but with the greatest promptness, our fleet, in battle array, headed by the flagship, answered the Spanish attack, and for about two and a half hours a most terrific fire ensued.”<sup>110</sup> The work ended relatively quickly, by the afternoon the American fleet obliterated the Spanish ships. The Spanish lost 381 sailors the Americans lost only one man, who died of heat stroke.<sup>111</sup> Soon all of America knew the names Admiral Dewey and Manila Bay.

With the Spanish naval threat neutralized, Dewey faced a new problem. What to do with the Spanish soldiers remaining in the city of Manila? Dewey chose to use revolutionaries to aid him in achieving his goal to take Manila. The Filipino people again found themselves in conflict with their Spanish rulers. The Philippines claimed a clear leader. Don Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy, led a rebellion against Spain throughout the 1890’s. Born into a lower rung elite family, Aguinaldo grew up working for the local government until he joined the revolutionary group known as Katipunan. The group called for the removal of Spanish influence and the freedom of the Philippines.<sup>112</sup> Aguinaldo quickly started leading the revolutionary group. After several attempts to effect change through violence Spain offered Aguinaldo and his subordinates a chance at peace and reform. While the Spanish relied upon violence, they also engaged in the bribery of revolutionaries.<sup>113</sup> Peace came in the form of a large sum of money, promises of

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<sup>109</sup> Adelbert M. Dewey, *The Life and Letters of Admiral Dewey: From Montpelier to Manila* (New York: Eaton & Matins, 1898), 197.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, 269.

<sup>111</sup> Gregg Jones, *Honor in the Dust: Theodore Roosevelt, War in the Philippines, and the Rise and Fall of America’s Imperial Dream* (New York: New American Library, 2012), 49.

<sup>112</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 20.

<sup>113</sup> Trumbull White, *Our New Possessions. Four Books in One* (Philadelphia: International Publishing Company, 1898), 57.

political reform, and the exile of Aguinaldo and his top supporters. Aguinaldo took the money, with which he planned to buy guns for his revolution, and went to Hong Kong.<sup>114</sup>

America understood the problems the Philippines faced. Admiral Dewey and other American leaders prepared a deal for Aguinaldo. The American government offered to return Aguinaldo and his subordinates to the Philippines. In return, America expected Aguinaldo to raise an Insurgent Army to aid the U. S. Navy in fighting the Spanish, until the U. S. Army arrived.<sup>115</sup> Aguinaldo agreed and his army set about to, “Harass and annoy Spanish troops, to wear them out in the trenches, to blockade Manila on the landside, and to do as much damage as possible to the Spanish government prior to the arrival of troops.”<sup>116</sup> Shortly after returning to his native soil, Aguinaldo held true to his promise and began to relight the old fires of revolution. In short order the revolutionaries produced an army and managed to defeat several small Spanish garrisons. Once the Spanish pulled back into fortifications around Manila, the insurrectionists prepared defensive trenches in an effort to prevent the Spanish from making an escape.<sup>117</sup> So Manila sat, the Spanish held the city, the U. S. Navy held the bay, and the insurrectionists held the countryside. The Spanish Army in Manila proved too weak to break through the insurrectionists or expel the Navy. The U. S. Navy received orders to avoid shelling the city and its inhabitants. The Insurrection Army lacked the strength and skill to storm the Spanish trenches and blockhouses ringing the city. All sides sat waiting on the arrival of the U. S. Army.

During the strategic lull, Aguinaldo went about consolidating his control. He anticipated free rein to create a new independent government, free of United States interference. Though Dewey never officially recognized the new government, Aguinaldo recorded any perceived

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<sup>114</sup> Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 45.

<sup>115</sup> Dewey, *Life and Letters*, 200.

<sup>116</sup> White, *Possessions*, 110.

<sup>117</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 23.

recognition Dewey offered.<sup>118</sup> Several times Aguinaldo flew the new Filipino flag on ships captured from Spain. He reported when this action took place American ships responded with a show of respect. He also reported Dewey said, “In view of the courage and steadfastness of purpose displayed in the war against the Spanish the Filipinos deserved the right to use their flag.”<sup>119</sup> In reality, Dewey seldom communicated directly with Aguinaldo. The admiral preferred to await Washington’s orders in regards to what role the insurrectionists would play following the war. On June 12, Aguinaldo prepared to announce the official independence of the Philippine Islands, declaring them a new nation. Dewey’s views show in his response to Aguinaldo’s invitation to the ceremony. “The Admiral sent his secretary to excuse him from taking part in the proceedings, stating the day fixed for the ceremony was mail day.”<sup>120</sup> Dewey’s unwillingness to confirm or deny Filipino independence allowed Aguinaldo to continue believing in progress towards independence for the Philippines.

By mid-June, many suspected the American president and his party intended to keep the Philippines. By the end of July, American forces in Cuba forced Spain to sue for peace. Shortly thereafter, the United States Expeditionary Force arrived in the Philippines. Under the command of General Wesley Merritt, American troops proceeded to the Filipino trenches.<sup>121</sup> Merritt’s orders told the Army to assume the positions of the Filipinos. The move attempted to keep the Filipino Army out of American attempts to take the city.

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<sup>118</sup> Aguinaldo’s work, *True Version of the Philippine Revolution* was written in an attempt to explain to Americans and Europeans that the Filipino insurrection was justified, and that America underhandedly stolen independence after promising it. With this in mind it can be difficult to take Aguinaldo at his full word. However there are some telling examples that prove that Aguinaldo may have simply misinterpreted American intentions. Dewey’s excuse for not attending the announcement of Philippine independence offers a good example.

<sup>119</sup> Emilio Aguinaldo, *True Version of the Philippine Revolution* (Tarlak: Reprinted by Valde Books, 1899), 17.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>121</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 24.

Aguinaldo possessed his own opinion on the matter, although once again misinformed or misled. “American troops arrived and asked that we allow them to occupy our trenches. This I agreed to on account of the solemn promises of the admiral and the trust naturally placed in them owing to the assistance rendered and recognition of independence.”<sup>122</sup> American leaders felt they understood the intentions of the Filipino leader. General Thomas M. Anderson went to serve as Aguinaldo’s American contact. Anderson found Aguinaldo unimpressive, “When we first landed he seemed very suspicious and not at all friendly . . . he has declared himself dictator and president and is trying to take Manila without our assistance. This is not probable but if he can affect his purpose he will, I apprehend, antagonize any attempt on our part to establish a provisional government.”<sup>123</sup> By the time American troops moved to take Manila, Spanish and American forces knew of the peace between the two nations. On August 13, 1898, American forces entered Manila with only enough fighting to preserve Spanish honor.<sup>124</sup> As American troops took Manila, Aguinaldo and his men received orders to remain outside the city. Once American troops took the city they prevented the Filipinos from entering, allowing them to come only as far as the suburbs.

Aguinaldo quickly complained to General Anderson. The Filipino leader explained for all their hard fighting his men deserved to enter the city side by side with the U. S. Army. No official reply to these complaints ever reached Aguinaldo. Shortly after the denial of the right to conquer Manila, the Filipino forces suffered another blow. Within days, Admiral Dewey seized the small Filipino Navy. The Army also ordered Aguinaldo and his men to remove themselves

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<sup>122</sup> Aguinaldo, *True Version*, 25.

<sup>123</sup> United States Army, Center of Military History, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain. Including the Insurrection in the Philippine Islands. Two Volumes* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), 778.

<sup>124</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 24.

from the city suburbs, or the Army would attack them.<sup>125</sup> Shortly after these events, which left Aguinaldo stunned, he learned America intended to keep the Philippines as part of the peace settlement with Spain. Aguinaldo later stated he, “Cursed the hour and the day we treated verbally with the Americans.”<sup>126</sup> Never the less Aguinaldo held out hope the American Congress would refuse a treaty which denied the Filipinos their freedom.

Aguinaldo’s hopes almost came true, as the American government debated the annexation efforts. Even the peace commission found it hard to create a treaty fulfilling the president’s wishes for annexation of the Philippines. One of the delegates, George Grey, wrote back to Washington stating, “The undersigned cannot agree it is wise to take the Philippines in whole or part. To do so would be to reverse accepted continental policy of country declared and acted upon throughout our history.”<sup>127</sup> In the end, Grey’s opinion mattered little. The only honest debate among the American treaty makers dealt with how much of the Philippines the annexation affected. The commission decided taking only a portion of the Islands created future risks. In the end, the Treaty of Paris called for America to pay Spain \$20,000,000 for the entirety of the islands.<sup>128</sup>

Once the treaty arrived in America, debates began immediately over the proposed annexation of the Philippines. Within governmental and public spheres, debate arose over the intelligence of embarking upon an imperial venture. Those who feared the actions of imperialists made calls to protect America from the stain of colonial experiences. Among the anti-imperialists existed four main concerns. First, anti-imperialists feared power hungry officers

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<sup>125</sup> Aguinaldo, *True Version*, 27.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*, 29.

<sup>127</sup> H. Wayne Morgan, ed., *Making Peace with Spain: The Diary of Whitelaw Reid: September – December, 1898* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965), 241.

<sup>128</sup> United States, 1898, Treaty of Paris, December 10, 1898, *United States Statues at Large* 30 (1898): 1754.

returning home. Those who supported the use of force to subdue the Philippines insisted America needed free reign to win the war. For anti-imperialists the thought of a conquering Caesar returning to America to undo democracy seemed a real threat.<sup>129</sup> Second, the stealing of Philippine independence went against all America stood for. For anti-imperialists the idea of taking the God given right of the Philippine people to govern themselves proved deplorable. For the supporters of this theory taking the Philippines created a constitutional issue. One senator declared, “The Constitution must be interpreted in the light of the Declaration of Independence, and, therefore we have no right under the Constitution to acquire territory for the purpose of governing a people without their consent.”<sup>130</sup> America needed to tax the Filipinos to run their government. These taxes would lack the consent of the Filipinos. Taxation without representation went against the Declaration of Independence and therefore the constitution.<sup>131</sup> Third, if America extended its reach beyond the Western Hemisphere, it nullified the Monroe Doctrine. Interfering outside the Western Hemisphere allowed European powers to interfere in America’s back yard.<sup>132</sup> This argument found little traction. Fourth, opponents argued that America lacked preparation to undertake the serious act of governing another people. Charles Francis Adams, one of the leading anti-imperialists, made the claim American greatness came from not embarking on imperial ventures. He further explained America needed to look internally before exporting American values, “Recent lynching and shotgun experiences, too fresh in memory to call for reminder, and too painful in detail to describe, give us at least reason to pause before we leave our own hearthstone to seek new and distant fields for missionary

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<sup>129</sup> Robert L. Beisner, *Twelve against Empire: The Anti-Imperialist, 1898 – 1900* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 32.

<sup>130</sup> William Mason, *Speech of Hon. Wm. E. Mason of Illinois, in the Senate of the United States, Tuesday, January 10, 1899* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899), 4.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>132</sup> Beisner, *Twelve Against*, 156.

labors.”<sup>133</sup> Some anti-imperialists found it morally unacceptable to suppress the freedom of another people.

Those who supported taking the Philippines offered numerous reasons. Initial arguments focused on the economic impact. One author wrote detailing the products available for sale and purchase once America improved the dilapidated Spanish agricultural system, “Rice, Tobacco, Coffee, Cocoa, Sugar-Cane, Cocoa-Nut, Yams, Pineapple, Oranges, Nutmeg, Cinnamon, Chilies, Ginger, Vanilla, Honey, Guavas, Bread Fruit, and Cattle.”<sup>134</sup> Purportedly altruistic reasons abounded, some called on America to take care of the Filipino people until they proved capable of ruling themselves. One author, calling himself Publicola, outlined fears of the islands reverting to Spain or another European power, if America failed to adopt the Treaty of Paris. Publicola expressed the belief of his day, “The conclusion is inevitable for their own sakes and the peace of the world these islands must be controlled from the outside.”<sup>135</sup> Ultimately, the imperialists won the war of words with the antis. Imperialists proclaimed America’s sacred duty to aid the people of the Philippines. Expansionists argued America never expected to end up with the Philippines, but once America took possession it owed the world its best effort, “By the Providence of God and the unforeseen issues of war, but by no fault of ours, we have unexpectedly, and without previously formed purpose or concerted plan, come into the possession of a group of islands in the Pacific.”<sup>136</sup> The supporters of this line of thinking quickly gained strength. They claimed their anti-imperialists foes wanted America to abandon its duties, turn tail, run, and never again live up to America’s globe spanning potential. The treaty required

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<sup>133</sup> Charles Francis Adams, *“Imperialism” and “The Tracks of Our Fathers”* (Boston: Dana Estes & Company, 1899), 17.

<sup>134</sup> John W. Taylor, *Facts about the Philippines* (San Francisco: Cunningham, Curtiss & Welch., 1899), 37-38.

<sup>135</sup> Publicola, *The Duty of the American People as to the Philippines* (Privately Printed, 1898), 9.

<sup>136</sup> Thayer M. Russell. *The Philippines: What is Demanded of the United States by the Obligations of Duty and National Honor* (Philadelphia: Privately Published, 1898), 5.



a two-thirds vote within the Senate. The campaigning of the anti-imperialists placed the final decision in question. Until the day of the vote, no one knew for sure whether America would accept the treaty or decline. In the end, the Treaty of Paris vote confirmed America's annexation, fifty-seven to twenty-seven, two votes shy of the treaty failing.<sup>137</sup>

Back in the Philippines, Aguinaldo and his men sat waiting to find out how America planned to proceed. At the end of August, a new American commander arrived in the Philippines. General Elwell S. Otis, a sixty-one year old veteran of the Civil War. The general made the majority of American plans during the initial phase of the war. Otis faced a great deal of criticism during his time leading the Army, even though the insurgent forces never beat him in the field.<sup>138</sup> After assuming command, Otis received orders from President McKinley. The Army needed to make sure America secured its rule of the Philippines quickly.<sup>139</sup> The predominant theory for this states McKinley feared the rejection of the Treaty of Paris. If the treaty failed, McKinley wanted to insure America retained control of the islands as a new treaty came about.

Early in January, General Otis began meeting with Aguinaldo to try to defuse the tense situation created by the Filipino "siege" of Manila. Insurgent and U. S. forces sat facing each others' trenches surrounding the city. Occasionally short firefights broke out between the groups.<sup>140</sup> As communications broke down things grew worse on the city's outskirts. Both sides prepared for the possibility of war. Finally, on February 4, 1899, Aguinaldo, disillusioned by American actions, declared war upon the United States. The following day the largest battle of the Philippine War commenced as American and Filipino troops opened fire upon one another. For America, the battle shined as an outstanding victory with the Filipino Army driven from the

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<sup>137</sup> Beisner, *Twelve Against*, 156.

<sup>138</sup> Russell Roth, *Muddy Glory: America's 'Indian Wars' In the Philippines 1899 – 1941* (Hanover: The Christopher Publishing House, 1981), 16.

<sup>139</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 31.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, 37.

city.<sup>141</sup> For Aguinaldo the future looked grim. One of the last lines of his work *True Version* stated, “You have aroused the ambition of the Imperialists and Expansionists of North America and both have placed their sharp claws upon your entrails.”<sup>142</sup> Aguinaldo feared for the future though he continued to fight on for several years.

The initial phase of the war for General Otis focused on clearing the city of Manila. The Army made short work of clearing the trenches surrounding the city. Villagers in towns surrounding Manila received orders to vacate their homes. General Frederick Funston, fresh from Cuba, took charge of the area around Manila. He commented later, “While not very capable troops on the offensive, these insurgents showed no little mettle in defending positions, for they often stuck to them until the bottoms of the trenches were literally covered with their dead.”<sup>143</sup> The Filipino insurrectionists fought fiercely throughout the early phase of the war.

The following weeks turned into dark times for the Philippine Army of Liberation. The routine turned into one of falling back, holding ground, and retreating before better armed and trained American forces. The Americans faced few organized defenses during the offensive. The Filipinos controlled fortified positions, though they lacked the training to stop the Americans. This proved surprising since the U. S. Army advanced over open ground.<sup>144</sup> In Cuba, the Army suffered greatly trying to take such field fortifications as San Juan Hill or El Caney. In the Philippines, the Army found an untrained enemy unfamiliar with the proper way to defend from entrenchments. As the Americans began to clear the area around Manila of insurgents, the war took on uglier tones. Admiral Dewey warned American commanders, “It would be a grave error to look upon all the Filipinos as savages, though there are thousands of them in the interior who

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid, 53.

<sup>142</sup> Aguinaldo, *True Version*, 38.

<sup>143</sup> Funston, *Memories*, 226.

<sup>144</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 57.

are as barbarous as the Sioux Indians in our own country.”<sup>145</sup> The U. S. Army ignored Dewey and quickly began to see their enemy as savages. Soldiers routinely found it easier to kill and rule people they see as lesser or inhuman. Sometimes generals and soldiers saw no reason not to subdue their enemy with as much brutal force as possible.

With Manila safe, the Army prepared to march on Malolos, the capital of the revolutionary government. Under the command of General Arthur MacArthur, the father of Douglas MacArthur, portions of the Army spent four days chasing the retreating Filipino Army. On the way to Malolos, the Army encountered several areas of defenses. General Funston described them as “the finest firing the Insurgents had ever done.”<sup>146</sup> The efforts of the insurgents made little difference. American forces, barely slowing their advance due to surprise defenses, pushed on. Finally, the first soldiers reached the outskirts of the city.<sup>147</sup> The insurgents lacked a way to defend their city once the U. S. Army arrived. Aguinaldo, his government, and his army started the process of retreat once again. General Otis sent word to Washington, “MacArthur captured Malolos at 10.15 this morning. Enemy retired after slight resistance and firing the city.”<sup>148</sup> With the city secure, the Army spent several weeks in Malolos resting and planning the next phase of the assault.

Shortly after the taking of Malolos, McKinley sent a commission to examine the state of the Philippines. The Army firmly controlled those areas visited by the commission. The commission’s job consisted of estimating the best course of action towards preparing the Philippines for independence. The U. S. Army and government believed the war would end in a

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<sup>145</sup> Dewey, *Life and Letters*, 520.

<sup>146</sup> Funston, *Memories*, 256.

<sup>147</sup> Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 119.

<sup>148</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 953.

month or two. America needed to start fulfilling its promise of an independent Philippines shaped by American aid.<sup>149</sup>

The remainder of April saw actions similar to the taking of Malolos. The U. S. Army followed the Insurrection Army constantly overcoming ambushes and defenses. Although the Filipino Army gave its best efforts, American forces continued to push forward.

With the insurgents falling back every day the U. S. Army seemed poised for victory. The rainy season put a hold on the expected victory. From the middle of June until October, it rained almost daily. It seemed nearly impossible for the United States' forces to move against their foes.<sup>150</sup> In a letter to Washington, General Otis explained the rainy season and the situation the Army faced:

Rainy season. Little island campaigning possible in Luzon. We occupy large portion Tagalog country. . . Insurgent armies have suffered great losses and are scattered; only large force held together about 4,000. . . provinces could assemble possibly 2,000 though demoralized from recent defeat; mass of people terrorized by insurgent soldiers, desire peace and American protection; no longer flee on approach of our troops unless forced by insurgents.<sup>51</sup>

The Army made its presence felt not only to the insurgents but also to the people of the Philippines. Reports of less hostile, or openly friendly, Filipinos started to come out of areas where the Army showed less violence. To control the population, General Otis instituted General Order 43 in the summer of 1899. Under the order, the U. S. Army took command of districts and began setting up local governments. Communications proved a constant difficulty for the Army, to facilitate an effective campaign it proved necessary to maintain local control. Under General Order 43, towns received an army officer or local official as mayor. A town council and police

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<sup>149</sup> Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 123.

<sup>150</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 122.

<sup>151</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1019.

force made up of local citizens ran day-to-day affairs.<sup>152</sup> To win over the Filipino people the Army set up departments for schools, post offices, financial issues, and judicial duties.<sup>153</sup> The commission divided the islands into fifteen departments, roughly drawn upon ethnic lines.<sup>154</sup> The Army felt these divisions worked since different ethnic groups reacted differently to American occupation. The people of the Philippines observed the United States' intentions. Through building new institutions, the Army hoped to emphasize the benefits America brought.

The Army as a whole operated under General Orders 100, established in 1863. The Orders expected an army of occupation to protect the local population by enforcing the laws of the occupied people.<sup>155</sup> To this purpose, American forces set about creating a system of government capable of protecting the people. The Army also attempted to win over the people by granting greater rights. In areas such as the island of Negros, with a less hostile population, self-government took hold.<sup>156</sup> The Army believed troublesome districts needed to see cooperative areas rewarded with the representation they all desired. These new governments also maintained a level of military control. In the coming years, the Army attempted to win over the people through government and civil works projects such as roads, public sanitation, and schools.

Throughout the rainy season, General MacArthur worked out a plan. He wanted the Army to capture Aguinaldo before the winter season set in. The Army divided into three prongs. These prongs marched north, towards the coast, where rumors claimed Aguinaldo hid. Once there the prongs came together, attempting to capture Aguinaldo and his army and end the war.

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<sup>152</sup> Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899 – 1902* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 21.

<sup>153</sup> Theodore Roosevelt & William Howard Taft, *The Philippines, The First Civil Governor and Civil Government in the Philippines* (New York: The Outlook Company, 1902), 30-34.

<sup>154</sup> J. M. Dickinson & William Howard Taft, *Special Reports on the Philippines to the President* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 18.

<sup>155</sup> Andrew J. Birtle, *U. S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860 – 1941* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History United States Army, 2004), 101.

<sup>156</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 82.

The weather and the Filipino Army refused to follow MacArthur's plan. The rainy season was in full swing when the Army started marching in late October. Army reports told of "country submerged; bridges washed out," and "typhoon prevailing, nearly four inches this month."<sup>157</sup> In spite of the weather, the Army pressed on to capture the town of San Jacinto, where it was believed Aguinaldo made his secret camp. A large number of guns and insurrection supplies, including printing presses, fell with the town. The victory found no Insurgent Army or Aguinaldo.<sup>158</sup> Aguinaldo escaped and sent his army home. General Funston recorded the war took on a markedly different tone after November 1899, "Aguinaldo had directed his subordinates to return to their homes with their men and arms and after a rest to carry on relentless guerilla warfare against the Americans."<sup>159</sup> With the end of traditional warfare, the dawn of the twentieth century brought a new type of war to America.

Back in America debate continued over the war in the Philippines. Roosevelt wrote to a friend stating he expected the war to end soon, "We have blundered for a year. We at least seem to have things pretty well in hand, and I guess there will be no troubles of any serious kind save in administering the islands."<sup>160</sup> Imperialists in America shared Roosevelt's sentiments. The only real dissent came from the anti-imperialists. Justice David Brewer offered a plea to Americans to end the war in the Philippines:

All this talk about destiny is wearisome. We make our own destiny. We are not the victims, but the masters, of fate, and to attempt to unload upon the Almighty responsibility for that which we choose to do is not only an insult to Him, but to ordinary human intelligence. We are told we have become so great and powerful that the world needs us, but what the world needs is not the touch of our power, but the blessing of our example. It needs the bright example of a free people not disturbed by any illusions of territorial acquisition, of pecuniary gain, or military glory, but content with possessions and strength through all the abilities,

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<sup>157</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1098, 1101.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, 1101.

<sup>159</sup> Funston, *Memories*, 313.

<sup>160</sup> Roosevelt. *Letters*, 185.

activities, and industries of their wisest and most earnest to make the life of each individual citizen happier, better, and more content.<sup>161</sup>

Other opponents of the war expressed their concerns in less eloquent terms, Senator W. G. Brantley of Georgia explained, “I am not so much concerned about the style and form of the government the Filipinos should have as I am concerned we should absolve ourselves from their government at the earliest date.”<sup>162</sup> Another complaint arose from how McKinley managed the war. Several representatives complained McKinley deliberately misled the American people in regards to the war. One senator referred to the war as a course of action stating, “He (McKinley) is fully committed to it and has endeavored to carry it out so far as lay in his power.”<sup>163</sup> Still another senator expressed dismay over the censored news Americans received, “Such information was withheld as the Administration desired to suppress; the American people are no longer trusted by the party in power; they are no longer taken into the confidence of their administrative servants and entrusted with facts.”<sup>164</sup> Democratic opposition lacked the strength to effect change, or even elect a democratic president until Woodrow Wilson. For a time the majority of the American people elected imperialists leaning republicans. McKinley felt safe to carry the war forward.

Were American efforts to build an independent government in the Philippines working? Once the president gave the Army a clear course of direction things changed drastically. The U. S. Army continued to pursue its enemy with a great force of concentration. Acting under

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<sup>161</sup> David Brewer, *The Philippines. Justice Brewer's Opinion* (New York: Anti-Imperialist League of New York, 1899), 9.

<sup>162</sup> W. G. Brantley, *What is to be Done with the Philippines? Speech by Hon. W. G. Brantley, of Georgia, in the House of Representatives, Thursday, February 22, 1900* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 7.

<sup>163</sup> George Turner, *The Philippines. Speech of Hon. George Turner, of Washington, in the Senate of the United States, Monday, January 22, and Tuesday, January 23, 1900* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 3.

<sup>164</sup> Richard F. Pettigrew, *Government of the Philippines. Speech of Hon. Richard F. Pettigrew, of South Dakota, in the Senate of the United States, Monday, June 4, and Tuesday, June 5, 1900* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 3.

General Order 43 and General Order 100, the Army set about the work of bringing order to the islands. General Otis' letters to Washington contained numerous reports of "inhabitants remained in houses, receiving troops hospitably" or "cordially received by inhabitants."<sup>165</sup> Whether or not the Army succeeded in winning over the locals or if the locals simply grew accustomed to getting out of the way is debatable. The fact Otis' earlier remarks stated locals stopped fleeing American forces tells much about the situation. In areas where the Army granted government and aided the population, resistance dropped dramatically.<sup>166</sup> The U. S. Army attempted to prepare the people of the Philippines for their new government, by removing the old Spanish one and preventing a new insurrection government from taking root.

Over the next year and a half, the U. S. Army faced a difficult task, fighting a guerilla war. Over the first year of fighting, in order to reestablish government, the Army scattered its forces to small towns and vital areas.<sup>167</sup> The U. S. Army spread itself thin. To open the campaign year of 1900 the insurgents launched an attack upon a small garrison of thirty-one men in the town of Catubig. On April 15, 1900, 600 insurgents attacked the local force, which retreated to a local convent. The insurgents set the convent on fire and the remaining soldiers retreated to the local river and dug in. From the riverbed, the survivors held out for two days before relief arrived. In the end, "Lieutenant Sweeny reports streets covered with dead insurgents."<sup>168</sup> This turned into the style of battles fought for the remainder of the war. Surprise attacks in areas where the insurgents thought minor victories possible. The insurgents quickly blended back into the population, which proved a problem for the American fighting forces. American soldiers

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<sup>165</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1103.

<sup>166</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 230.

<sup>167</sup> Funston, *Memories*, 313.

<sup>168</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1168.



commonly referred to this style of warfare as “amigo war.” In the coming year, American troops struggled with how to identify their foe.<sup>169</sup>

The new tactics quickly showed themselves as effective. Throughout the last four months of 1899, the U. S. Army lost only 69 dead. The shift to guerilla tactics made that number jump to 130 in the first four months of 1900.<sup>170</sup> For the sudden shift in casualties, General Otis lost his command. Otis explained to Washington that he felt the war neared its end; however, the casualties continued to rise. To relieve General Otis the Army promoted General MacArthur. MacArthur early on accepted the war in the Philippines as a long fight, rejecting Otis’ short war plans.<sup>171</sup> A few months later General Funston suffered an ambush while on patrol, he described the battle as, “In ten seconds it was all over . . . there are some queer things in war. Owing to the intense darkness attempts of some of the men to chase down the now flying enemy was fruitless.”<sup>172</sup> The Army needed a way to stop the guerilla force from harassing the U. S. Army.

The difficulty for the Army came from how poorly it managed to organize local populations. Insurgents set up their own shadow governments in towns the U. S. Army held. These shadow governments collected taxes in the form of food, money, manpower, or weapons. Insurgents expected towns to hide them when pursued by American forces.<sup>173</sup> The insurgents faced trouble as they wholly depended upon the local populations. If a local population favored the Americans than insurgents resorted to force to get what they needed. On both sides, violence turned the locals against their attackers.<sup>174</sup> MacArthur felt the best way to strike back at the insurrectionists involved making sure the people saw no profit in aiding rebels. For neutral or

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<sup>169</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 191.

<sup>170</sup> Jones, *Honor in the Dust*, 152.

<sup>171</sup> Roth, *Muddy Glory*, 18.

<sup>172</sup> Funston, *Memories*, 328.

<sup>173</sup> Linn, *Counterinsurgency*, 35.

<sup>174</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 197.

peaceful areas, this meant winning over the people and convincing them not to aid the insurgents.<sup>175</sup> To carry this out the Army created services the locals needed. Local constabularies and the foundations for what later turned into proper schools aided the local populations.<sup>176</sup> The success of these attempts depended upon where they took place. Some areas accepted the Army's actions with open arms. Other areas simply played along while lending aid to the insurgents when the opportunity arose.

While MacArthur wanted to win over the people, defeating the insurrection remained the primary goal of the Army. MacArthur saw the role of the Army as harassment and destruction of the insurgent forces. Through constant pressure, the U. S. Army captured enemy leadership and showed the population the cause of the revolutionary government was lost.<sup>177</sup> General J. Franklin Bell summarized the plan perfectly in a report, "Make the existing state of war and martial law so inconvenient and unprofitable to the people they will earnestly desire and work for the reestablishment of peace and civil government, and for the purpose of throwing the burden of the war upon the disloyal element."<sup>178</sup> To achieve this Bell, and others, implemented a system known as concentration. Communities were relocated to areas easily guarded by the Army in an attempt to cut contact with insurgent forces.

Buffalo Soldiers, under the command of Captain Charles Young took up the job of concentrating civilians. Young took charge of building new towns and collecting the local population.<sup>179</sup> Young and his men found a willing population who wanted protection from insurgent violence. Other areas faced a more difficult time depending on the attitude of the locals, the proximity of insurgents, and the behavior of Army leadership. The Army managed to

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid, 213.

<sup>176</sup> Roth, *Muddy Glory*, 119.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 114.

<sup>178</sup> Linn, *Counterinsurgency*, 153.

<sup>179</sup> Shellum, *Black Officer*, 122-123.

prevent further aid to local insurgents through concentration, although success varied. While the Army never fully managed to break into the shadow governments, it proved able to prevent their operation by denying them access to civilians who might support the insurgency with food or funds. American forces proceeded carefully in their use of concentration. American leaders understood what happened in Spanish concentration camps in Cuba and English concentration camps in South Africa. Both of these attempts at concentrating civilians ended with civilians abused and starving. Fearing a similar abuse of power the American military tried not to emulate the European nations.<sup>180</sup>

When the first units of the Buffalo Soldier regiments began arriving in the Philippines in late October of, 1900 they faced a war unlike their previous experiences. Although the Filipino Army faced defeat, its soldiers remained committed to their cause. The American government attempted to establish a new Filipino led government, although it made mistakes. The war turned to guerilla fighting and the conflicts American soldiers faced involved quick ambush attacks. The Army tried to ease tensions with locals through social programs, self-government, and the use of concentration.

This was the type of war the men of the Buffalo Soldier regiments came to know well in the Philippines. Not a conventional war rather one of quick hit and run tactics. The primary role of these soldiers came in safeguarding friendly villages, transporting supplies, and hunting down the members of Aguinaldo's failing revolution. Despite expectations of failure from white America, the Buffalo Soldiers headed to the Philippines expecting to perform well.

The Buffalo Soldiers offered just under two years of service in the name of their country. The men of the Ninth, Tenth, Twenty-Fourth, Twenty-Fifth, Forty-Eighth, and Forty-Ninth Regiments challenged racial notions and stereotypes on the battlefield as well as in the role of

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<sup>180</sup> Birtle, *Counterinsurgency*, 130.

peacekeepers among the Filipino civilians. For the black community the actions of black soldiers barely affected American attitudes. Debates in America continued over the use of black soldiers, even as they prepared to head to the Philippines.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE NINTH CAVALRY

The Ninth Cavalry started its career in August of 1866 in New Orleans, Louisiana.<sup>1</sup> Later that same year the regiment moved to southwestern Texas, where it served for several years. The regiment worked to, “Open up and protect the mail and stage route from San Antonio to El Paso; to establish law and order in the country contiguous to the Rio Grande frontier.”<sup>2</sup> To the south, the Ninth made sure Mexican bandits kept out of American territory. Throughout Texas, the Ninth also policed Native Americans and fought to keep them confined to reservations. *The San Antonio Herald* later praised the men of the Ninth for their service. *The Herald*, openly critical of black soldiers, commented that the Ninth proved itself worthy of respect and capable of the job at hand.<sup>3</sup> One officer described the work as, “Their part in the great work of opening to settlement the vast resources of the great West.”<sup>4</sup> Romantic images of the West bore few comparisons to the real life duties of the men of the Ninth.

White officers and black enlisted men possessed varying reasons for joining the Army during this period. One black enlisted man, John B. Johnson, stated he joined because, “I was tired of farming and the way I was treated at home and because I had lost my mother.”<sup>5</sup> In contrast, Captain Vance Marchbanks, who entered service around the same time as Johnson, stated he joined, “To see the world so to speak, I had never been farther from the place where I was born.” Marchbanks also stated he felt compelled to join the Army after hearing of the

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<sup>1</sup> Theophilus Rodenbough, ed., *The Army of the United States Historical Sketches of Staff and Line with Portraits of Generals-In-Chief* (New York: Maynard, Merrill & Co. 1896), 282.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 283.

<sup>3</sup> Kenner, *Buffalo Soldiers*, 56.

<sup>4</sup> Rodenbough, *Army of the United States*, 283.

<sup>5</sup> John B. Johnson. Box 43, Spanish American War Veterans Survey Collections 1861 – 1998, Coll. 302362264, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pa. (hereafter cited as Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.)

excitement from fighting Indians in the West.<sup>6</sup> A desire to serve America proved a common theme between both officers and enlisted throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century.

For the men of the Ninth life took on a routine in the West. Men drilled regularly on foot and horseback. Regular duties included building and repairing barracks, caring for the horses, and scouting for Natives who left their designated reservations. Over the next three decades, the Ninth performed similar duties in New Mexico, Montana, South Dakota, Kansas, Indian Territory (Oklahoma), Nebraska, and Utah.<sup>7</sup> Officers serving with the Ninth found the men good soldiers. Major Guy Henry, who commanded the Ninth for several years, later championed all Buffalo Soldiers as sober respectful men.<sup>8</sup>

By the 1890's the Ninth existed as a skeleton of its original strength. When war started between Spain and America in 1898, the Army needed to refill its ranks and took on state volunteer regiments. Like the other Buffalo Regiments, the Ninth replenished its ranks with volunteers. These volunteers consisted of men passed over for state volunteer regiments.<sup>9</sup> The Ninth upheld the reputation it gained in the American West. Notably the Ninth led several charges during the attack upon San Juan Ridge. As one unofficial history of the regiment concluded, "This campaign gave to the regiment a confirmation of its previous good reputation and added confidence in itself and its ability to perform any duty."<sup>10</sup>

Following the war in Cuba, the Ninth returned to life on the plains. According to the initial reports, and later reports from General Otis, the Philippines presented no concern. Army leadership insisted war in the Philippines would end shortly, with Aguinaldo's followers

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<sup>6</sup> Captain Vance Marchbanks, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>7</sup> Rodenbough, *The Army of the United States*, 283.

<sup>8</sup> Kenner, *Buffalo Soldiers*, 121.

<sup>9</sup> Cosmas, *An Army for Empire*, 130.

<sup>10</sup> Miscellaneous Records Box no. 2, Records of the U.S. Regular Army Mobile Units, 1815 – 1970, Record Group 391, Records of the 7<sup>th</sup> – Tenth Cavalry Regiments, Record Group 391.3.4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C., Entry 938. (hereafter cited as Record Group 391, NARA, Entry #.)

defeated through conventional means. This meant the Ninth spent the first year after the war with Spain patrolling areas in Utah, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona Territory.<sup>11</sup> All over the American West, the Ninth returned to the mundane duties of pre-war life.

Papers continued the trend of focusing primarily on the negative aspects of black soldiers. One story out of Salt Lake City, Utah, made the rounds in national papers in early August 1899. The story reported on a soldier ordered to a guardhouse as punishment for lack of attention while on duty. The soldier instead retrieved his gun and shot his sergeant. The soldier then proceeded to escape and forced the Army to hunt him down. The paper provided no names, only stating, “Both are colored and belonged to the Ninth United States Cavalry.”<sup>12</sup>

Other, less violent, crimes also found their way into American newspapers. *The Salt Lake Herald* carried a story claiming men of the Ninth Cavalry, stationed in Fort Duchesne, drove an old soldier crazy. The story focused on an old soldier who “served in the War of Rebellion,” and worked for the Army as a corral boss. The soldiers of the Ninth received blame for the man’s mental imbalance due to repeated attempts at intimidation through, “drawing guns on him and otherwise mistreating him.”<sup>13</sup> *The Salt Lake Herald* failed to follow up on the story and demonstrated the press’ insistence on focusing on the negative aspects of the Ninth’s service.

In May of 1900, General Otis lost command of the Army in the Philippines. President William McKinley and the United States government lost faith in Otis’ ability to tell the truth and win the war in the Philippines. General Arthur MacArthur took command and prepared to wage war against Aguinaldo’s now guerilla army.<sup>14</sup> MacArthur understood how the war changed, and knew it would not end with conventional fighting. Rather, the Army needed a twofold

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<sup>11</sup> Unofficial History of the Ninth Cavalry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 938.

<sup>12</sup> “The Ninth Cavalry,” *The San Francisco Call*, August 9, 1899.

<sup>13</sup> Editorial, *Salt Lake Herald*, March 9, 1899.

<sup>14</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 204.

approach to the Philippines. First, the Army needed to win the Filipino people over in regards to American rule. Second, the Army needed to hunt down and destroy the remnants of Aguinaldo's army, and the copycat bandits who used insurrection as a cover for criminal behavior. The two goals went hand in hand in areas in and around Luzon where the Ninth would operate.

Following the president's orders, MacArthur worked quickly to expand the Army in the Philippines. Starting in June 1900 various troops of the Ninth Cavalry received orders to start the trek to San Francisco.<sup>15</sup> San Francisco served as the main staging ground for all troops embarking for the Philippines. Awaiting transport, the soldiers of the Ninth busied themselves with receiving vaccinations for tropical diseases and caring for their horses. Regimental records for July and August focus on medical issues for both the men and their horses.<sup>16</sup>

The men serving with the Ninth made up a wide range of African American citizens. Army enlistment papers described them by skin color as "black, light, chocolate, mulatto, and yellow." In terms of where these men came from, the majority called the South their home. The majority of the soldiers serving in the Ninth, in 1899, called Virginia home. South Carolina, Kentucky, Maryland, and Georgia all came in close second. Although few states lacked contribution to the regiment, most of the men in the Ninth came from the South.<sup>17</sup>

The horses of the Ninth and their transportation presented special problems. The men and officers possessed no experience with moving horses on transports for long journeys. The Army also lacked a through plan for moving the animals necessary for the cavalry. During the war in Cuba, the Army opted to leave behind the horses used by the cavalry. The Army eventually

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<sup>15</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1009.

<sup>16</sup> Colonel Ninth Cavalry To Chief Quartermaster Department of California, San Francisco, California, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>17</sup> Descriptive Book for Troop H, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 918.



learned through trial and error, the Ninth found itself caught up in the trials. The regiment continually asked the Army about veterinarian services in the Philippines.<sup>18</sup>

Outside of logistical concerns the Ninth, and the rest of the Army, struggled with glanders. Glanders infects the respiratory systems of horses and mules. The disease easily spreads among these animals through contact or cross contamination of food and water. In its later stages glanders produces a high fever and shuts down the respiratory system or infection spreads to other organs and the blood.<sup>19</sup> During the Philippine War, the only preventative was to isolate sick animals. Euthanasia proved the best way to prevent the spread of the disease. When horses of the Ninth Cavalry tested positive for glanders, while stationed in the Philippines, the order on how to deal with the disease left little chance of its spreading. “The animals will be shot and together with halters and straps will be burned and buried”<sup>20</sup> The regiment spent much of July and August attempting to deal with an outbreak of glanders in the horses of Troop F.<sup>21</sup> This concern continued throughout the Philippine War and offered one more hardship for the men as they cared for their sick animals.

In mid-August 1900, after nearly two months of waiting, the Ninth finally received orders to start boarding the United States transport *Warren*. Two other ships followed, the *Athenian* carrying the horses of the regiment and the *Strathgyle* with more men.<sup>22</sup> When it finally came time to leave for the Philippines the Ninth stopped first in Hawaii and then at Nagasaki, Japan. Several troops of the regiment expected to go on to China to aid with the China Relief

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<sup>18</sup> Colonel of Ninth Cavalry to Chief Quartermaster Department of California. San Francisco, California, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>19</sup> Merck Vet Manual, [http://www.merckvetmanual.com/mvm/generalized\\_conditions/glanders/overview\\_of\\_glanders.html](http://www.merckvetmanual.com/mvm/generalized_conditions/glanders/overview_of_glanders.html), accessed July 15, 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Special Orders #45, April 20, 1901, Guinobatan, Philippine Islands, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.

<sup>21</sup> Colonel of Ninth Cavalry to Chief Quartermaster Department of California, August 10, 1900, San Francisco, California, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>22</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1213, 1216.

Expedition. At least one soldier expressed disappointment in the change of plans, “We were much disappointed to find orders directing the regiment to proceed to the Philippino Islands (sic).”<sup>23</sup> In spite of the soldier’s disappointment, the Ninth started arriving at Manila Harbor in the beginning of October. By the end of October, the Ninth moved into the Province of Albay in southern Luzon.<sup>24</sup> The Army used the recently vacated areas around Manila to train soldiers arriving from America. Every regiment arriving received rudimentary instructions on the fighting they would partake in.<sup>25</sup> One officer summed up the Philippines as such, “I wondered why the United States wanted to take charge of the Philippine Islands in the first place. It was 10,000 miles from the United States and it was hot and wet part of the time and hot and dry the rest of the times.”<sup>26</sup>

The Ninth arrived too late to participate in any of the final battles of the conventional war. When the *Warren* and *Strathgyle* unloaded their men, the war consisted completely of guerilla fighting. For the next two years, the Ninth engaged an opponent who remained hidden and only showed themselves when ambush proved possible. The unofficial history of the Ninth described the next two years as, “Very heart-breaking work was performed pursuing insurrectors in the heat of the tropics through rice-paddy and forest, over mountain and river, on foot, by banca (canoes) and on horse.”<sup>27</sup> The Ninth filled these two years safeguarding towns and hunting insurrectionists and bandits in southern Luzon, the main island of the Philippine archipelago.

The war in the Philippines varied depending upon region and local ethnicities. Southern Luzon presented the Ninth with remnants of Aguinaldo’s original Army of Liberation.

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<sup>23</sup> Letter from F.S. Armstrong. Marvin Fletcher Collection, 1887 – 1896, Coll. 47671349, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, PA. (hereafter cited as Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.)

<sup>24</sup> Adjutant General to Colonel Commanding Ninth Cavalry, October 20, 1900, Neuva Caracus, Philippine Islands, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>25</sup> Fletcher, *Black Soldier and Officer*, 53.

<sup>26</sup> Captain Vance Marchbanks, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>27</sup> Unofficial History of the Ninth Cavalry. Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 938.

Aguinaldo himself effected little control over the region. Instead, the behavior of insurgents in southern Luzon followed basic guidelines detailed by Aguinaldo and his supporters. Insurgents received general orders to wear down American will through constant harassment and prevent the local populations from supporting American efforts.<sup>28</sup> Aguinaldo wanted to place pressure on the American government. Aguinaldo hoped the protracted violence of guerilla warfare would oust President McKinley in favor of the Anti-Imperialist William Jennings Bryan in the elections of 1900.<sup>29</sup>

The main area of service for the Ninth fell under the command of the Third District, Department of southern Luzon in the Province of Albay. The insurgent forces in this region fell under the leadership of Major General Vito Belarmino. Aguinaldo trusted Belarmino as a longtime supporter whose fighting in previous revolutions earned him a reputation as a loyal and respected commander. The region of southern Luzon made some of the best abaca (hemp) in the world. This hemp product provided cordage for much of the world and made the region the most profitable in the archipelago.<sup>30</sup>

Belarmino and other revolutionary leaders focused their efforts on collecting hemp taxes from the local populations. Locals received encouragement, both intimidating and conciliatory, to abandon their homes and move into the volcanic mountains.<sup>31</sup> Keeping locals away from American forces maintained a system of compulsory loyalty to the insurgency and a steady supply of food and profitable hemp. Unlike other areas, insurgents in southern Luzon did not focus primarily on inflicting a high death toll on American forces. Instead, the insurgents focused

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<sup>28</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 186-187.

<sup>29</sup> Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines*, (New York: Balantine Books, 1989), 177-179.

<sup>30</sup> Linn, *Counterinsurgency*, 96-97.

<sup>31</sup> Captain M. W. Day to Colonel Commanding Ninth Cavalry, October 15, 1900, Camabig, Province Albay Luzon, Philippine Islands, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

only on harassing the Americans when it proved convenient to do so. As a result the Ninth avoided the more brutal fighting other regiments suffered.

Once released from initial training around Manila the Ninth Cavalry moved on to Albay Province. The Ninth's initial focus fell on the town of Camalig. Insurgent forces pushed the local population into hiding on the slopes of the volcano Mayon.<sup>32</sup> These villagers worked the local hemp fields and returned to their new homes when ordered by the insurgents. The Ninth received orders to return these villagers to their old homes and shut down the system of taxes, which kept the insurgents fighting.

Upon arriving in the town of Camalig in October of 1900, the Ninth found only one family residing in the town. This family informed the men of the Ninth the insurgents wanted them to move before the American soldiers arrived. If they failed to leave, insurgents would force them out of the town. The Ninth planned to make its headquarters in Guinobatan. When the Ninth continued on the commanding officer left twenty-four men to guard the family who refused to obey the insurgents.<sup>33</sup>

As the Ninth made Albay province its home, it discovered the tax system in place. Captured documents showed the insurgents took up to one third of all hemp production. These taxes, or aduana as the locals referred to them, moved to the town of Legazpi on the coast for sale and shipment. Orders went out directing men of the Ninth stationed in towns such as Camalig to hunt down those collecting taxes and return families to their homes.<sup>34</sup>

The duty of clearing Camalig of insurgent taxmen and returning people to their homes fell to Captain M. W. Day of Troop G. By mid-October 1900, Captain Day oversaw the safe return of the locals he found around the volcano Mayon. By October 14, Captain Day reported

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

four stores reopened in the town as a clear sign of progress. Citizens received orders to clear the brush from around their buildings and start planting crops again in the local fields. Captain Day used his men in an effort to clear brush from the entire town of Camalig. Day intended for this to rid the town of possible hiding places for insurgent tax collectors.<sup>35</sup> This policy took hold wherever the insurgency took place. By clearing towns, or outright moving them, the Army attempted to cut ties between civilians and the insurgency.

The local population supported American efforts to rid the town of insurgent tax collectors. On the fifteenth, Captain Day received word from villagers of a tax collector in the town. Captain Day ordered the man captured. The collector fled into the hemp fields and past a trench of insurgents waiting to ambush pursuing American soldiers. The American soldiers spotted the ambush before stumbling into it. The pursuing lieutenant commented, “Having with him some of the recruits gave them a little practice in firing volleys at 1000 yards.”<sup>36</sup> The report continues stating, “The insurgents fled after firing for ten minutes.”<sup>37</sup> Tax collectors received a clear message that they would not continue working in Camalig.

Captain Day went as far as he felt comfortable to make the citizens feel safe in their town. After chasing off the tax collector, Captain Day issued a statement to the families of Camalig, which he summed up in his official report to the Ninth’s headquarters.

While I have no right to promise this I feel that I have in no way bound the military authorities to do more than carryout out their present policy i.e. to occupy this very substantial town, to prevent its being burned by insurrectos. When I tell the people that as long as they comply with the demand of the military authorities, not to bear arms, the United States will not abandon to the mercy of the insurrectos those who disobey the insurrectos by returning to the town with their

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

families, thus clearing the mountains of the friendly and peaceable people who have been forced away from there by threats and acts of violence.<sup>38</sup>

Captain Day's insistence to protect the townspeople led to the majority of the towns occupants returning to their homes over the next month.

Elsewhere the Ninth carried out tactics similar to those undertaken by Captain Day. Orders throughout October and November sent scouting missions to hunt town insurgent tax collectors and ensure locals returned to their homes and occupations.<sup>39</sup> On 5 November, the major commanding the Ninth issued orders to arrest anyone carrying rice.<sup>40</sup> By encouraging the locals to return home, the Ninth cut off the aid the insurgents received from the locals in taxes and work. By hunting taxmen, the Ninth cut off supplies the insurgents desperately needed to keep their revolution alive.

At the Ninth's headquarters in Guinobatan the major commanding ordered the creation of a civil government to run the day-to-day affairs of the larger town.<sup>41</sup> The major commanding told the Adjutant General, "after consulting some of the prominent people," he appointed a new presidente of the town as well as a chief of police, five policemen, a provost marshal, and a provost court.<sup>42</sup> Across the Philippines, wherever civil governments began operation, the American policy focused on the upper classes. Governor William Howard Taft, the head of the civilian government throughout the war, felt prominent civilians possessed a greater capacity to lead the Philippines. However, Taft lacked trust that the Filipinos, regardless of their social

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<sup>38</sup> Captain M. W. Day to Major Commanding, October 15, 1900, Camalig, Philippine Islands, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>39</sup> Major Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Captain Davidson of Eleventh Cavalry, Nov 22, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>40</sup> Major Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Lieutenant Barbar, November 5, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>41</sup> Major Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Adjutant General, October 31, 1900, Guinobatan, Philippine Islands, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

standing, would ever truly govern themselves.<sup>43</sup> In spite of this mistrust, the Army and the civilian government focused efforts on placing prominent civilians in charge of the pacified areas of the Philippines.

By October of 1901, the situation in the territory under the command of the Ninth Cavalry improved. The insurgency continued, although in a diminished fashion. One report contains a list of local insurgents who attempted to recruit people in the town of Camalig to their cause.<sup>44</sup> The willingness of the people to turn in insurgents shows a local population willing to cooperate with American interest. In Guinobatan, the arrest of insurgents continued uninterrupted. By October of 1901, the officer commanding the Ninth in Guinobatan spent more time dealing with ladrones (bandits) than with insurgents. In his report detailing the hunting of a band of 150 ladrones, the officer expressed his dislike of the civil government reporting the “presidente and local police worthless.”<sup>45</sup> The opinions on the civilian government from other black regiments mirrored those of the Ninth. While the Army worked to restore local control in peaceful areas, the officers running those areas expressed a great deal of mistrust in the locals’ ability to govern themselves.

This mistrust of the locals extended into the black soldiers as well. The chaplain of the Ninth Cavalry, George W. Prioleau, wrote to the *Colored American* expressing his views on local government. His first comment in July of 1901 stated the government as, “Wise in not giving to these people, ‘self-government.’” Prioleau continued declaring a number of those claiming loyalty only months or weeks before served in the slowly failing insurrection. Furthermore, the people of the Philippines failed to deserve self-government because they knew

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<sup>43</sup> Karnow, *In Our Image*, 230.

<sup>44</sup> Captain Ninth Cavalry to Adjutant General, October 30, 1901, Camalig, Philippine Islands, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>45</sup> Commanding Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron Ninth Cavalry to Adjutant General, October 30, 1901, Guinobatan, Philippine Islands, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

too little about “agriculture, business, and very little about government.” Prioleau describes the average Filipino as hardworking, deliberate, and courteous but he found the upper crust of Filipino society contained, “Some intelligent men among them, and they are so conceited that they think that what they do not know is not worth knowing.”<sup>46</sup> This general respect for the average Filipino and contempt for the Filipinos in higher society echoed across the rest of the black regiments as well as the Army. The civilian government also followed similar paths, focusing on using only the higher classes to run the Philippines. Although America strived for a functional civil government in the Philippines the Ninth Cavalry left before home-rule came about.

The Ninth Cavalry seldom faced the insurrectionists in “traditional” styles of combat. Fighting proved reactive, fending off insurgent ambushes. Fighting in the Philippines took place in a brutal fashion, small ambushes set up to take advantage of strung out troops as they moved along roads carrying supplies.

Primarily coming from the farming class, the men challenging the U. S. Army lacked professional training. As one officer of the Ninth Cavalry explained, Filipino soldiers possessed few soldierly qualities. The insurrectionists also lacked proper weapons to fight American forces. Reports only list men as caring bolos (long knives or short swords) or machetes, rifles were reserved for more experienced insurrectionists. When asked in a questionnaire about the weaponry of the enemy, Captain Vance Marchbanks stated his men feared bolos and machetes more than other weapons. “Machetes razor-sharp our soldiers would rather be shot than chopped up with these knives but we carried .38 Smith & Wesson pistols those days; if they did not cut your head off before you could draw.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Letter from George W. Prioleau, *Colored American*, (Washington, D.C.), July 13, 1901.

<sup>47</sup> Captain Vance Marchbanks, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.



By the time the Ninth arrived in the Philippines, the Army possessed knowledge of how to defend itself from these types of attacks. In November 1900, the Ninth Cavalry received Order 27 from the commanding officer. The order outlined how the town of Guinobatan would defend itself in case of surprise attack. The order called for men to quickly advance to the east, west, north, and south to defend the town from any attacks. Special instructions called for men to go to protect the house of the presidente. The leadership of the regiment, following initial dispersion, reported to headquarters to receive further orders on how to repel the attack.<sup>48</sup> In other towns similar orders came down, laying out broad plans to cover the outskirts of towns. This order offered quick responses to sudden attacks launched by the insurrectionists. The order also placed a high degree of autonomy upon the NCOs. In case of attack, NCOs needed to take charge of their men and make sure a practical response happened for each situation. They needed to adjust and adapt to any kind of changing situation. Perry Jamison, in *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, states the following, “Initiative became increasingly important for the NCOs as they found themselves cut off from their commanders and forced to make fast decisions on their own.”<sup>49</sup> This high level of initiative extended throughout the ranks into combat situations in the field.

The insurgents in the province of Albay preferred attacks upon soldiers when in the field. Insurgents routinely ambushed supply and scouting missions. One report issued in American papers, provided by Captain Day of the Ninth Cavalry, outlined the traditional way of fighting for the insurgents. The report carried an account from an actual insurrectionist. The paper jokingly implied the insurrectionist took lessons in “yellow journalism” as the account calls the death of three American soldiers the slaughter of the entire Ninth Regiment. The insurrectionist described the basic way of attacking American columns moving in the field. “Our men were

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<sup>48</sup> Major Forbush to Ninth Regiment Cavalry, November 19, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>49</sup> Perry D. Jamison, *Crossing the Deadly Ground; United States Army Tactics, 1865 – 1899* (Tuscaloosa; University of Alabama press, 1994), 138.

prepared for the fight and obeyed their orders to follow the rearguard of the enemy, soon as the latter succeeded in passing our post, until there was an opportunity to inflict more losses.”<sup>50</sup>

Other reports of attacks on American soldiers recount similar styles of fighting. Filipino soldiers waited in trenches just off the side of the road, hiding in hemp fields. The U. S. Army routinely sent scouts ahead of the main body and followed the main body with a rearguard. Filipino soldiers learned this method and instead of attacking scouts or rear guards, waited for the main body to appear.

The insurrectionist journalist explained how he and other Filipino soldiers surrounded an American camp at night and offered “continued hostility without interruption, inflicting considerable losses.”<sup>51</sup> Across the archipelago guerrilla tactics called for the surrounding of American soldiers, firing on their position, and running before the enemy responded.<sup>52</sup> Insurgents waited for inopportune times for the U. S. Army to defend itself. One soldier described such an attack, “Early in the morning of May 28 insurgents opened fire on our camp about 150 yards from where I was sleeping. Our guard immediately returned the fire and the insurgents left. Immediately sent out scouting parties to find them but they got out of the country and we saw no more of them.”<sup>53</sup> By attacking in such ways, Filipino leadership hoped to counteract the fact American soldiers possessed better training and equipment.

This ambush style of fighting led to the war’s greatest excesses of violence. Notably the actions of General Jacob H. Smith, who ordered an entire town burned and its civilians over the age of ten killed.<sup>54</sup> Smith claimed he and his men suffered from several surprise attacks prior to

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<sup>50</sup> “Record of Black Troops in the Philippines Falsified,” *Indianapolis Journal*, May 13, 1901.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, May 13, 1901.

<sup>52</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 189.

<sup>53</sup> Letter from S. F. S. Armstrong Answering questionnaires provided by Marvin Fletcher, Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>54</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1328.

the massacre. Smith felt his reaction justified as the nearby town possibly supported the surprise attacks.<sup>55</sup>

The Filipino journalist went on to describe the effects of an ambush. Stating insurgent soldiers found fifty dead Americans buried in a field, barely covered up with dry leaves. Stating, “They were already in a state of putrefaction, which was beginning to infest that region with its odors.”<sup>56</sup> The Filipino author further explained reports of dead Filipino fighters as false claiming bodies found as, “Those of hogs killed at the point named and dressed for the several masses.”<sup>57</sup> While the author took liberties with the amount of American dead, only three died during the fighting, the author adequately explained the style of fighting the Filipinos preferred. Insurgents waited in ambush to inflict the heaviest losses or waited for opportune times, such as nighttime, to attack.

American responses to ambush tactics focused on inflicting heavy casualties on the guerilla warriors. When ambushed American soldiers returned fire immediately, attempting to flush out the insurgent forces. One instance on October 11, 1900 outlines the response to surprise attacks. After a surprise attack a patrol from the Ninth went into action. The insurgents, having fired, ran for prepared trenches in rice paddies. When the insurgents reached their trenches, the men of the Ninth fired on the insurgents to hold them in place. The rear guard of the scouting mission flanked the insurgent trenches. At a range of 100 yards, the flanking men opened fire upon the trenches and charged, driving out the enemy. The officer commanding stated confusion over losing no men and commented on the death of four insurgents, with the possibility of more

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 1336.

<sup>56</sup> “Record of Black Troops in the Philippines Falsified,” *Indianapolis Journal*, May 13, 1901.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

hidden in nearby hemp fields.<sup>58</sup> In returning fire and trying to capture or kill insurgent ambushers men of the Ninth worked diligently to whittle away at the Filipino resistance.

As the war progressed, the Army learned to anticipate attacks and turn the tables on the ambushers. On October 16, 1900, Troop H of the Ninth observed an estimated seventy insurgents moving to ambush a scouting mission from Troop G. Rushing out men from both troops formed a skirmish line. This line fired into the waiting insurgent fighters. “The insurrectos fled from one point to another before the volleys, we therefore assembled all the men in a line with one yard intervals and all fired.” After the insurgents fled, the men of the Ninth reported no casualties. As with previous interactions the Ninth failed to acquire accurate numbers of insurgent dead and wounded as insurgents removed their casualties from the field.<sup>59</sup>

Scouting the local countryside occupied the majority of the Ninth’s time. Scouting missions provided opportunities to train fresh troops in the local countryside, educated soldiers on the ways of the local people, and informed soldiers of the tactics used by the insurgents. Scouting identified areas controlled by insurgents, either through combat or gathered information. Scouting weakened the enemy through combat loses or missions to hunt down specific insurgents. Lastly, scouting gathered locals into towns and promised them safety under American protection. Although the Ninth brought horses, scouting missions took place dismounted to offer the men stealth and prevent them from becoming easy targets for insurgent snipers.<sup>60</sup>

The Philippines presented the Army with a wide range of problems. Each island provided unique challenges such as; terrain, ethnic divisions, local politics, and the different leadership

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<sup>58</sup> Captain M. W. Day to Adjutant General, October 11, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>59</sup> Major Commanding the Ninth Cavalry to Adjutant General, October 21, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>60</sup> Major Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Ninth Cavalry, October 3, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

styles of the insurgent officers. Because of the wide range of issues, the Army relied upon General Orders to quell the Filipino insurrection.<sup>61</sup> These orders put a great deal of responsibility on the officers of the Ninth Cavalry. Within certain guidelines the regiment's leadership ultimately chose how to best proceed. General Orders no. 3 outlined the basic rules of scouting for the Ninth Cavalry. The Army's main concern focused on learning the lay of the land. Officers submitted detailed reports of every scouting mission complete with sketched maps including locations of, "All military features, especially of all trails, and notes to be made as to whether these trails are practicable for cavalry."<sup>62</sup> Through scouting missions, the Army learned a great deal about the Philippines. Following the war General Fredrick Funston expressed his embarrassment over the Army's lack of knowledge complaining at times he and his fellow officers lacked maps with which to make plans.<sup>63</sup> Upon arriving in Albay Province, the commander of the Ninth immediately requested his men go on scouting missions with the men of the Eleventh Cavalry, whom they replaced, to familiarize the regiment with the land.<sup>64</sup>

The basic scouting patrol consisted of around thirty dismounted men. Scouting patrols of this size provided an excellent way to familiarize fresh soldiers with the surrounding countryside. Men carried their regular carbine rifles, the Krag-Jorgensen, as well as revolvers and ammunition. These men marched in loose order with point and rear guards. The guards worked to prevent insurgent ambushes, although insurgent forces learned to wait for the main body of the scouting patrol. These training scouts rarely exceeded a roundtrip distance of 10 miles and served to educate new arrivals in the basics of their duties in the Philippines.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 136.

<sup>62</sup> General Orders no. 3, June 21, 1901, Sub District Albay, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.

<sup>63</sup> Funston, *Memories*, 246.

<sup>64</sup> Major Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Ninth Cavalry, October 3, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

One of the first scouts undertaken by the Ninth Cavalry in the Province of Albay consisted of hunting for a new insurgent governor and his son. This mission, conducted by Captain M. W. Day of Troop G in October of 1900, offers a detailed account of scouting in the Philippines. Upon finding the location of the insurgent governor, with the aid of a freshly captured prisoner, the scouting patrol moved on the governor's house divided into three groups. Initially the patrol fought off a wave of bolomen. After a volley of fire, the bolomen retreated into the woods around the house, only to run into another group of Captain Day's men. Upon capturing the bolomen, a young lieutenant discovered among the insurgents the new governor and his sons. The lieutenant explained the governor and his sons, "Folded their arms in terror, and squealed and groaned like a mortally wounded antelope."<sup>66</sup> The information learned from the governor, his sons, and their papers allowed the Ninth Cavalry to make broad plans to pacify Albay Province. The location of town's people, relocated by the insurgents, proved the most useful information.

Scouting mission offered the Ninth a chance to directly strike at their enemy. Reports included estimated dead and wounded as well as those captured. As the Ninth spent more time in Albay Province its officers learned the tactics of the enemy. The Ninth suffered particularly from enemy riflemen. One officer commented after a scouting mission, "The insurgents place their bolomen on guard and the result is the riflemen escape after firing a few shots and live to fight another day."<sup>67</sup> Following reports such as this one, the Ninth made special orders for scouting missions to hunt and target enemy riflemen. With past scouting missions, the officers of the Ninth identified certain areas with the strong insurgent presence. The amount of scouting missions in these areas increased, with express orders to capture or kill riflemen. From October

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<sup>66</sup> Captain M. W. Day to Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry, October 15, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

to November of 1900, the Ninth targeted riflemen when on patrol. As a result the insurgents in and around Albay Province ceased much of their fighting.

For the next several months, the Ninth Cavalry focused its efforts on scouting to find relocated families. These families lived on the slopes of the volcano, which lay central to the territory under the Ninth's protection.<sup>68</sup> These missions served as the bases of the Ninth's plan to win the hearts and minds of the local population. The Ninth began the process of convincing the locals the United States offered them a beneficial life by returning them home.

African American soldiers faced difficulty when scouting. To alleviate issues such as lack of knowledge of local terrain, language, customs, and even the location of villages, the Army relied upon native scouts. As soon as the war started, General Otis called upon local scouts to aid the U. S. Army. These scouts came from local ethnic groups willing to fight against the predominantly Tagalog insurgents.<sup>69</sup> These scouts received rudimentary training in military fighting along with clothing and weapons. Native scouts worked to identify insurgent strongholds, find locals loyal to the insurgents, and received authorization to hunt down criminal ladres.<sup>70</sup>

When General MacArthur took command of the U. S. Army, he continued the practice of utilizing local scouts. MacArthur urged commanders on the local level to recruit those proven loyal to America; insisting these citizens already risked their lives and proved themselves loyal to American interest.<sup>71</sup> The Ninth Cavalry made active use of native scouts during its time in the

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> The island of Luzon contained five distinct ethnic groups, the Bicolano, Igorot, Ilocano, Kapampangan, and Tagalog. The Tagalog held a position of power in society and headed the efforts to create an independent Philippines. The Ilocano people often worked as scouts for the U. S. Army. Across the remainder of the archipelago there existed many other ethnic groups which do not play a part in the war. Linn, *Philippine War*, 15/53.

<sup>70</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 128.

<sup>71</sup> Linn, *Counterinsurgency*, 110.

Philippines.<sup>72</sup> These scouts aided in missions which included hunting insurgent leaders, finding and relocating refugees, and assisting local authorities with criminal investigations.<sup>73</sup> In one instance, the major commanding the Ninth received information from native scouts about the capture of a soldier identified only as “white.” The major’s report stated the “friendly native” heard the news as a boast.<sup>74</sup> The major failed to state if the Filipino worked close to the insurgents or if the insurgents openly bragged about the capture.

Few records deal directly with native scouts for the Ninth Cavalry. Native scouts only earn mention when associated with a particular action or officer.<sup>75</sup> Native scouts received credit for guiding the Ninth on scouting missions; if they conducted any actual fighting or provided greater service no records confirm these actions. Reports of scouting missions included the number of men from the Ninth as well as the number of native scouts, listed by name. Scouting missions took, on average, two native scouts.

One scout managed to achieve a certain level of importance for the Ninth. In a letter dated November 10, 1901, the major commanding the Ninth Cavalry ordered a captain in a neighboring area to send him one Marcella Mionsay. The Ninth required Mionsay to identify and rid the country and towns around Camalig of hidden insurrectionists.<sup>76</sup> Mionsay worked with several other units around the Ninth and those units promised the major the use of Mionsay. The major ordered the captain to send Mionsay as soon as possible. To gain access to the scout the major made a last line plea of sharing the scout if necessary. Mionsay’s exact talents, which

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<sup>72</sup> Commanding Officer Troop H to Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry, October 30, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>73</sup> Captain M. W. Day to Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry, October 15, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Commanding Officer Troop H to Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry, October 15, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>76</sup> Major Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Captain M. W. Day, November 10, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.



allowed him to work over several different towns and provinces, received little attention in the letter.

Not all information received by the Ninth came from friendly natives. The Ninth also relied upon information provided by prisoners. In October of 1901, Troop H of the Ninth received orders to use prisoners as scouts.<sup>77</sup> Local insurgents sold passes to natives, these passes acted as a tax proving the local supported the insurgents. Troop H used prisoners to hunt down the location of the insurgent band issuing such passes. In another instance, prisoners received motivation to assist the Ninth in capturing the remnants of their former band.<sup>78</sup> Reports lack information on exactly what compelled these prisoners to betray their cause. Torture proved a common tactic for the U. S. Army during the war. Little evidence exists to suggest the Ninth practiced this as a means of extracting information. Reports from those who served describe the people as treated with respect even when gathering information.<sup>79</sup> However extracted, the Ninth achieved its goals when using prisoners as scouts. In both of the above instances, the Ninth found the insurgent bands they hunted for.

In spite of the success of native scouts, many officers within the Army lacked trust in the Filipino scouts. Officers feared scouts drawn from the local population would mislead the Army or refuse to fight their fellow Filipinos.<sup>80</sup> This concern mirrors the fear over the loyalty of black soldiers when ordered to fight a dark skinned people. Both groups often proved their doubters wrong. Accusations of racial sympathy continued throughout the war.

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<sup>77</sup> Commanding Officer Troop H to Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry, October 30, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>78</sup> Captain M. W. Day to Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry. October 15, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>79</sup> Captain Vance Marchbanks, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>80</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 203.

The Ninth Cavalry consisted almost entirely of white officers. With the exception of Captain Charles Young and for a brief time Lieutenant Benjamin O. Davis, the only black officers in the regular army, aside from chaplains. Those officers who later reported on their experience with African American soldiers left glowing reviews. Captain Vance Marchbanks described African American soldiers as well as white soldiers, “There are no braver men than the United States have in its ranks. Color has nothing to do with bravery, white men are brave and black men are brave, American men are brave. Bravery depends on the love and respect one has for his country.”<sup>81</sup> The remainder of Captain Marchbanks questionnaire follows a similarly patriotic theme. Marchbanks continually touts the superiority of the American military and its effect on the country. Marchbanks leaves little doubt as to his pride in serving with the Ninth Cavalry.

Other officers expressed similar views of soldiers they served over. One officer, Guy V. Henry, Sr., answered his questionnaire stating, “In all my years of association with Negro troops I found them to be a happy well-behaved, in general, organization. They had many advantages over the white organization in that they were long time professional soldiers with few desertions, did not give a large portion of their time to training recruits as did the white organizations by length of service made themselves very proficient in their trade and especially in athletics.”<sup>82</sup> Henry’s opinion confirms the belief of many historians, the primary advantages of the African American units proved to be their long term service in the American West. The fact the Ninth contained regular soldiers gave them an advantage over volunteer units. Henry closed his summation of the African American soldiers, answering racist charges from the period,

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<sup>81</sup> Captain Vance Marchbanks, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>82</sup> Guy B. Henry, Sr., Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

“Officers’ families went freely among them and I never heard of a case of molestation or rape.”<sup>83</sup>

While Southern newspapers chose to focus on the delinquents among African American soldiers, Henry refused to see things that way.

One of the Army’s more troubling issues during this period concerned the use of African American officers. White officers and many Americans claimed black soldiers lacked the ability to follow orders from black officers. This notion on race was present throughout American history. Even in the Civil War the Army claimed black men were unable to respect one another in the line of duty. The Philippines provided the opportunity for black officers to disprove generations of racist thinking. However, racist thinking is not easily defeated and the achievements of these officers were ignored and old race notions persisted long after the conflict in the Philippines ended. As stated by one soldier from the Ninth, John H. Allen, “From my own experience what I’ve read, white officers are proud to command Negro soldiers. It hurts a white officer, seeing a Negro wearing ‘shoulder straps.’”<sup>84</sup> White officers expressed their doubts about the use of African American officers during this time as well. One officer, William W. Hey, interviewed in 1967, stated, “Properly officered there were no better soldiers than the Negro soldiers. Negro soldiers would not follow the Negro officers unless the latter proved themselves; had to prove himself superior before the men would follow him.”<sup>85</sup> As referenced in chapter 1, the Army withheld promotion past the rank of captain for African American soldiers. Only allowing African American officers to achieve the rank of captain, within their segregated companies, prevented the possibility of these men exercising the privilege of their rank over white officers and enlisted men. Others, such as Theodore Roosevelt, feared African American men only respected orders when they came from white men. Roosevelt stated in *The*

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> John H. Allen to Marvin Fletcher, January 24, 1967, Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>85</sup> Taped interview of William W. Hey, 1967, Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.

*Roughriders* he found himself forced to take command of African American soldiers, after finding them unable to lead themselves.<sup>86</sup>

Although the Army possessed few black officers, one of them served in the Philippines, specifically the Samar Island Campaign. Charles Young, who graduated from West Point in 1889, joined the Ninth Cavalry on its journey to the Philippines.<sup>87</sup> Despite racism, Young received praise from the American press, one paper commenting, “As an officer his ability to command is not questioned and he has obtained his present rank in the service by strict attention to duty.”<sup>88</sup>

Americans feared sending black soldiers because rumors circulated they called the Filipinos “their little brown brothers.”<sup>89</sup> This same fear led to mistrust of African American officers. Young’s career in the Philippines drew considerable attention from those maintaining records for the Army. Throughout the Ninth’s records, whenever Young received mention record keepers used his entire name. These record keepers also underlined Young’s name in bold black or red ink.<sup>90</sup> This makes identifying Young in the Ninth’s records particularly easy, as white officers failed to receive the same level of attention.

Captain Charles Young went into a particularly violent area of Samar Island to, “Sweep the countryside, destroy crops, and chase the guerillas out of their mountain sanctuaries.”<sup>91</sup> Despite traveling half a world away, Young and his men fought a similar style of war conducted in the American West against the Indians. Whether from personal experience or for personal reasons, Young managed to win over the hearts and minds of locals within his area. A fellow

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<sup>86</sup> Roosevelt, *Rough Riders*, 117.

<sup>87</sup> Editorial, *Alexandria Gazette*, April 15, 1899.

<sup>88</sup> “A Colored Captain,” *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, (Honolulu, Hawaii), April 24, 1899.

<sup>89</sup> Shellum, *Black Officer*, 116.

<sup>90</sup> Military History of Officers, 1898-1919, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 910.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

officer commenting on Young years later stated he “was very sensitive of his color.”<sup>92</sup> This sensitivity possibly played a part in Young’s ability to win over natives. While the white army was busy violently suppressing locals, Young took a less violent approach and worked with natives. While the majority of white units constantly used guards to prevent surprise attacks, Young removed his daytime guards and feared little.<sup>93</sup> The situation proved similar in other areas where African Americans received even nominal amounts of authority. The trend seemed to support the way papers wrote about black soldiers and natives. In reality, soldiers of the Ninth treated the locals as average people. White soldiers treated locals as lesser beings in need of taming or death. The Filipinos reacted the way all people do; when treated well they gave little resistance, when the Army burned their homes or stripped their fields bare they reacted violently.

Young’s interactions with the Filipinos, treating them fairly and working with them, ended with positive results. Young continued his career with the Army for the majority of his life. Young later worked as an educator of officers, or advisor on racial issues. Both these positions allowed Young to be promoted to higher ranks while simultaneously removing him from commanding regular soldiers who might take issue with his skin color. Writing in 1912, Young commented on his views of America and its racial makeup. Young called for a “Square Deal” for American blacks, and called upon the American love of justice, “This eminently American characteristic of loving to see justice and fair play is the glory of the people . . . greater, indeed, than their reputation for wealth and power . . . the life is always and ever more than meant. The American cannot afford and will not allow this glory to depart from his country.”<sup>94</sup> Young further continued stating the only way for America to heal its racial wounds

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<sup>92</sup> Interview with General Davis, Marvin Fletcher, Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>93</sup> Shellum, *Black Officer*, 125.

<sup>94</sup> Charles Young, *Military Morale of Nations and Races* (Kansas City: Franklin Hudson Publishing Co., 1912), 60-62.

led through equality and urged other African Americans to prove themselves through service and hard work.

The majority of the time spent in the Philippines by the Ninth Cavalry, for both officers and enlisted men, centered on routine. While not typical for all of the Philippines, soldiers later recalled few interactions with the insurgents while in towns.<sup>95</sup> The majority of conflicts for the Ninth took place while escorting supplies or going on scouting missions. Throughout the whole of the Ninth Cavalry, and other regiments, the majority of records kept by officers dealt with the promotion or the transfer of soldiers. This shows the tedium faced by officers and men alike.

Officers spent their free time trying to improve conditions for themselves and their men. The commanding major of the Ninth Cavalry started calling for improvements in communications in late 1900. The major urged the Army to begin construction of a telegraph line connecting the major towns in his area.<sup>96</sup> Officers asking the Army to perform extra work needed to include all pertinent information. The major included locations for all materials needed, ending with the statement the work should fall to the Signal Corps in Manila. Keeping towns and barracks open to Army access also proved important. When roads proved unable to support shipments of food and supplies the men of the Ninth received orders to improve the roads or build completely new paths through the countryside.<sup>97</sup> Other forms of improvement for the soldiers included request for better food and clothing, such as leather shoestrings, which suffered in the humidity of the Philippines.<sup>98</sup> As the war neared an end, the Army ordered the Ninth to cut

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<sup>95</sup> Letter from F.S. Armstrong, Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>96</sup> Major Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Adjutant General, October 21, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>97</sup> Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Adjutant General, November 14, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>98</sup> Quartermaster to Officer Commanding Ninth Cavalry, June 7, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

back on paperwork. By January of 1902, a general order issued to the Ninth commanded officers to stop sending in daily sickness reports.<sup>99</sup>

For the enlisted men of the Ninth life in town or camp resembled life in the American West. Early orders outlined the day-to-day duties of the soldiers such as guard duty, maintaining weapons and clothing, and maintaining military discipline while in towns. While the general routine in camp remained the same, army reports tried to remind the men of the dangers they faced. Orders from late 1900 urged men to maintain vigilance. When crossing rivers or disembarking from boats mounted men remained on guard. Men needed to remain armed unless in their barracks. If men left their camps, they needed to go in squads of at least, “Four under a noncommissioned officer and upon passed approval by post commander.”<sup>100</sup> These orders attempted to prevent men from feeling overly safe while in camp or in towns considered friendly.

By 1902, the Army shifted focus to soldiers’ discipline. In early 1902 Troop H issued orders, “No man being of this troop will be permitted to have in his possession any other firearms than those regularly issued to him by the government.”<sup>101</sup> Judging from other records, this order focuses on trophy weapons such as bolos or bamboo rifles/cannons, not on privately supplemented weapons. The Army also feared the condition of weapons, issuing orders in late January of 1902 that all troops inspect weapons daily to prevent damage and rust.<sup>102</sup> The Army feared both white and black soldiers becoming too relaxed in their discipline as the war slowed down.

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<sup>99</sup> Chief Surgeon Department of Luzon to Officer Commanding Ninth Cavalry, September 1, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 901.

<sup>100</sup> Major Commanding Ninth Cavalry to Ninth Cavalry, October 3, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>101</sup> General Orders no. 4, to Headquarters Troop H, January 15, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.

<sup>102</sup> Orders no. 5 to Troop H, January 26, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.

One issue, which ranged over the whole of the black regiments, focused on clothing and lapses in discipline when it came to proper dress. Troop H received chastising because men appeared outside of barracks in unbuttoned blouses and white canvas shoes. Orders issued to all of the Ninth Cavalry called for men to wear full tropical uniform in accordance with General Order no. 103. The tropical uniform consisted of khaki pants and blouses with campaign hat, leggings, and ruppert shoes.<sup>103</sup> The only exception to this rule came when on patrol or scouting missions when soldiers unbuttoned their blouses “at the discretion of the troop commander.”<sup>104</sup>

The Army and American government paid particular attention to the interactions of black soldiers with Filipino women. This fear played into racist ideas in America. White and black soldiers both interacted with native women, however the Army only focused on the interactions between black soldiers and Filipino women. The interactions of the Ninth Cavalry with native women offers a glimpse into the fears of the Army and government. These interactions also show how the soldiers themselves viewed local women. Overall, the Army found the easy mixing of black soldiers with native women a problem. The reports from the Ninth Cavalry explain why the Army found mixing disagreeable. First, the Army feared mixing led to desertion. Second, the Army feared the impression mixing left with the natives.

The topic of desertion frequently appears around black soldiers during this time. Racial sympathy proved a major issue for the Army and the American press. Leaders, like General Otis, feared black soldiers would associate the plight of the Filipinos with the plight of African American citizens of the South. These fears coupled with instances of actual desertion provided

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<sup>103</sup> Ruppert shoes refer to a brand of shoe famous for keeping socks dry. Likely, these shoes used some form of rubber coating to achieve this effect.

<sup>104</sup> Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry to Headquarters Troop H, January 17, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.



those in America, predisposed against black soldiers, with an excuse to blame black soldiers for the Army's woes.

One newspaper report lay much of the blame for desertion on the women of the Philippines. The article described how, "It is the commonest of sights to see the Negro soldier of the Ninth Cavalry walking the street with their straight haired native girl." The paper went on to explain the Ninth suffered nine desertions. Desertions attributed to "the influence of the native women."<sup>105</sup> The *Tribune* continued stating the men went on to serve with the insurgents, as officers. The Army feared desertion from black soldiers because these soldiers provided aid to the enemy. Stephen Bonsal, writing in 1907, summarized the issue in his work "The Negro Soldier in War and Peace." Bonsal makes stark distinction between white and black desertion. Whites, he contended, ran from duty because of laziness. Black soldiers left because of closeness to the natives.<sup>106</sup> Bonsal fails to mention why black soldiers did not desert to the cause of the Native Americans. Likewise Bonsal fails to discuss a lack of desertion for black soldiers stationed in Cuba after the war. Both instances offered black soldiers an opportunity to identify with people mistreated by whites, yet black soldiers did not join those causes. Racial notions supported this idea of affinity between non-whites, as though they all shared the common notion that they were not as good as whites and were therefore similar to each other in some way.

The Army also feared soldiers mixing with native women hurt efforts to win the hearts and minds of locals. The Army focused a great deal of attention on actions that potentially harmed its reputation with the locals. One Circular Order from October 1900 outlined both the problem and solution. A few soldiers of the Ninth took up the habit of entering private houses, welcomed and unwelcomed, and remaining for the night. The report went on to describe soldiers

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<sup>105</sup> "Commission's Southern Tour," *New-York Tribune*, June 13, 1901.

<sup>106</sup> Stephen Bonsal, "The Negro Soldier in War and Peace," *The North American Review* 185, no. 616 (June 1907): 325, 326.

accused of making, “Indecent proposals to respectable women, offering money to have their desires gratified and upon being informed by the women, that their proposals would not be tolerated, have persisted.”<sup>107</sup> This focus echoed racist sentiments in America that black men were somehow unable to control themselves sexually. The Army assumed this racist notion held true outside of America and worked to control black soldiers in the Philippines.

The major commanding the second squadron explained exactly why this behavior needed to stop. First, these actions so terrified the locals they started fleeing back into the mountains. After months of convincing the people of their safety under American protection, the actions of a few soldiers started driving the locals away again. Second, the major describes the natives as “people of good morals and standing in the community.” He goes on to explain they only live in shacks because the insurgents burned down their former homes. To prevent future incidents the major issued warnings of “extreme and sever punishment,” for any soldiers of the Ninth who entered into any Filipino residence without orders.<sup>108</sup> This issue was not confined to black regiments. White soldiers engaged in similar activates, although the Army and American public were not as preoccupied with this issue as they were with black soldiers.

The Army viewed its plans to win over the Filipinos as the primary issue in southern Luzon. Restrictions against interacting with native women fell primarily upon black soldiers. Later writers contended the Army restricted the types of duties performed by black soldiers with this idea in mind. Richard Welch argued Governor William Howard Taft, the head of the new civilian government, particularly disliked mixing between black soldiers and native women.<sup>109</sup> This decision focused on racist notions that black men were unable to control themselves

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<sup>107</sup> Circular no. 1, October 8, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Richard E. Welch, Jr., *Response to Imperialism; the United States and the Philippine-American War, 1899 – 1902* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 113.

sexually. White soldiers engaged in similar activities, yet the Army and civilian government did not focus on white regiments. Welch and Willard Gatewood, Jr., both argue Taft let this judgement influence his decision to send the six black regiments back to America before white regiments.<sup>110</sup> Whatever influenced Taft the Army took a hard line against the attempts of black soldiers to mingle with native women.

The Army only concerned itself with the negative aspect of mixing between soldiers and native women. Positive interactions needed no disciplinary action and offered no threat to Army discipline. As a result, positive interactions with native women went unrecorded by the Army. Two examples of positive interactions came from personal reports of soldiers in the Philippines.

Captain Vance Marchbanks of the Ninth Cavalry reported on his own views regarding mixing between black soldiers and native women. When asked about what men spent their money on he commented some spent money to support “women and children they were obligated to support.”<sup>111</sup> Marchbanks went on to state several soldiers brought their native wives and children back to America after the war ended. The Army failed to report on men who made new lives with native families. Captain Marchbanks’ account offers a glimpse into the reasons men mixed with native women, beyond the more physical reasons focused on by the Army and newspapers.

One final example of mixing comes from Chaplain George W. Prioleau of the Ninth. Among his editorials sent to black newspapers in America, Prioleau commented on marriages between native women and black soldiers. The chaplain noticed, “The soldiers of the old Ninth Cavalry are on very friendly terms with the natives; in fact, I believe it so wherever Negro soldiers are stationed on the island.” By July of 1901, Prioleau preformed three marriages

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<sup>110</sup> Gatewood, *Smoked Yankees*, 243.

<sup>111</sup> Captain Vance Marchbanks, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

between native women and black soldiers. Focus falls on the negative reports of the Army and American press. In reality, some of these soldiers ended up starting families in the Philippines and after the war either remained in the Philippines or brought their new families to the States.

On December 4, 1901, *The Indianapolis Journal* stated soldiers who deserted from the Ninth Cavalry planned and executed an attack upon the Ninth Infantry. The paper referred to the attack as the “massacre of Company C.” The paper went on to explain the deserters used captured uniforms lost in the transfer of troops. These uniforms provided the insurgents access to the American lines from which they launched their massacre. The description given says the insurgent forces left notices written in English posted on trees and shrubbery, “Inviting Americans to join the insurgents and insurrection and instructing them how to enlist.”<sup>112</sup>

This newspaper report went on to explain much of the trouble faced on the island of Samar came from deserters of the Ninth Cavalry. The Army and the American public greatly feared desertion of black troops in the Philippines caused by ideas of racial sympathy. These fears, rooted in the possibility of racial sympathy, drove officers like General Otis to refuse the service of black troops in the Philippines. The Army and American people assumed the actions of the men of the Ninth Cavalry who deserted signaled African Americans would not fight against a people fighting for their own freedom because of ideas about racial sympathy. This notion is not credible, ideas on racial sympathy were used to discredit and marginalize the Ninth. Desertion played a small role in the story of the Ninth, yet it proved a useful tool to maintain racial stereotypes and was used as an excuse to ignore the achievements of the rest of the Ninth.

The theory of racial sympathy lacks credibility today as a reason for desertion among African American troops during the Philippine War. Stewart Creighton Miller, writing in 1982, adequately explained how this theory proved insufficient for describing desertions. He stated in

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<sup>112</sup> “Deserters,” *Indianapolis Journal*, December 4, 1901.

*Benevolent Assimilation*, “These men were both racially and culturally very different from Filipinos, and to assume a mutual attraction based on racial affinity is utterly romantic, possibly even racist.”<sup>113</sup> In 1975, Michael C. Robinson and Frank N. Schubert argued, desertion acted more as an armed resistance to American brutality towards African Americans than out of sympathy for the Filipino insurrectionists.<sup>114</sup> Other officers claimed one of the reasons for desertion came from the fact the insurgents utilized propaganda. Robert W. Mullen in *Blacks and America’s Wars* cites cases of letters left behind by insurgents detailing the mistreatment of African Americans back in the States. These letters reminded black soldiers that while they fought in the Philippines, lynchings continued in the south.<sup>115</sup> Richard E. Welch, Jr., in *Response to Imperialism*, cites the reason for black desertions during the Philippine War as the treatment from white officers. Stating those, “Who deserted did so not out of sympathy for the Filipinos but because their officers were too harsh.”<sup>116</sup>

Modern interpretations of why black soldiers deserted their regiments offer a wide variety of reasons. Soldiers possessed their own reasons for desertion. One-thing historians agree upon, deserters provided a scapegoat for American failures during the war. Every defeat or set back came not from insurgent ingenuity, but from the aid of deserters. Stephen Bonsal offers a contemporary view of why white Americans felt African Americans deserted their regiments. In “The Negro Soldier in War and Peace,” Bonsal claimed the desertions from black regiments “were large much larger, I believe, than from the white organizations.” Bonsal explained white soldiers deserted because they proved “lazy and idle and found service life irksome.” White men

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<sup>113</sup> Miller, “*Benevolent Assimilation*,” 193.

<sup>114</sup> Michael C. Robinson & Frank N. Shubert, “David Fagen: An Afro-American Rebel in the Philippines, 1899 – 1901” *Pacific Historical Review* 44, no. 1 (February, 1975): 68 – 83.

<sup>115</sup> Robert W. Mullen, *Blacks in America's Wars; Shifts in Attitudes from the Revolutionary War to Vietnam* (New York: Pathfinder, 1973), 41.

<sup>116</sup> Welch. *Response to Imperialism*, 112-113.

deserted because they disliked service. The article described black desertions as, “Negroes deserted and scores for the purpose of joining the insurgents, and many of them, like the celebrated Fagan (sic), became leaders and fought the white troops of their former comrades.”<sup>117</sup>

Newspapers and academic articles, such as the one written by Bonsal, alleged African American soldiers left in much greater numbers than their white counterparts did. These assertions of skin color equating to desertion rates lack evidence. Between 1899 and 1902, only fifteen, out of roughly 200,000, American soldiers deserted. Of those fifteen, nine came from the black regiments. Only nine men of the six black regiments deserted to fight for the Filipino cause. This fact does prove black soldiers deserted more than white soldiers. However, the numbers were so low, for both groups, that they had no major effect on the Army. These numbers, compared to the claims of Bonsal, offer insight into how much the American people and Army feared desertion from black soldiers.<sup>118</sup> Preoccupation with notions of black disloyalty, notions with almost no evidence, played a huge role in the writings of men like Bonsal.

Another issue, for the entire Army, was disease. Like most wars of the period, sickness claimed more lives in the Philippines than combat. Of the 4,196 deaths during the war, only 1,020 died from combat. The remaining, 3,176 soldiers, died from disease.<sup>119</sup> Scientific theory at the time proclaimed false sources for diseases, ranging from poor climate to polluted water. Science also insisted racial background provided immunity from certain diseases. These theories dated back as far as the days of Isaac Newton.<sup>120</sup> The public and military felt black skin equated

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<sup>117</sup> Bonsal, “Negro Soldier in War,” 325, 326.

<sup>118</sup> Miller, “*Benevolent Assimilation*,” 192.

<sup>119</sup> John W. Chambers, *The Oxford Companion to American Military History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 849.

<sup>120</sup> Erica Charters, “Making Bodies Modern: Race, Medicine and the Colonial Soldiers in the Mid-Eighteenth Century,” *University of Oxford. Patterns of Prejudice* 46, nos. 3-4 (2012): 219.

to a better tolerance to heat and tropical diseases. This misconception provided one of the reasons the Army kept Buffalo Soldiers in the Southwest during the 1870's-1890's.<sup>121</sup>

During the war with Spain, the Army focused on the supposed immunity of the Buffalo Soldiers. Black regiments, sometimes labeled Immune Regiments, took over areas in Cuba when large numbers of white soldiers became ill.<sup>122</sup> Yellow Fever scared both the Army and the federal government. The Army feared that men would become too weak from illness to fight on in Cuba.<sup>123</sup> The federal government feared the disease spreading back to America as a new plague. Both issues received the same solution through the decontamination of all clothing and soldiers returning home.<sup>124</sup> One black writer commented while Buffalo Soldiers suffered with malaria and yellow fever, "The blacks may be less liable to yellow fever and may more quickly rally from the effects of malarial fever."<sup>125</sup>

When it came time to send soldiers to the Philippines leaders stuck with the idea black soldiers possessed immunity. Science and contemporary historians still felt climate alone affected soldiers, claiming everyone understood Cuba and the Philippines would "severely try the constitution of the American Soldiers."<sup>126</sup> One editorial from the *Omaha Daily Bee* called for the exclusive use of black soldiers. The author stated, "They would suffer less than the white soldiers from exposure to the climate of the Philippines." Further clarifying the argument the author declared, "It is confidently asserted by the highest scientific authorities that white men cannot endure for protracted periods the exhaustions of the climatic condition of our distant

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<sup>121</sup> Fowler, *Black Infantry*, 68.

<sup>122</sup> T. G. Steward, *The Colored Regulars in the United States Army* (Philadelphia: A.M.E. Book Concern, 1904), 132-133.

<sup>123</sup> Trask, *War with Spain*, 328.

<sup>124</sup> Arthur E. Gentzen. *Diary*. April 16, 1899 (Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas).

<sup>125</sup> Steward, *Colored Regulars*, 134.

<sup>126</sup> John Clark Ridpath, *Ridpath's History of the World 9 Volumes* (Cincinnati, The Jones Brothers Publishing Company, 1916), 121.

tropical acquisitions.” The paper urged sending black soldiers because, “Colored men of the far south, accustomed from birth to similar conditions, could and would endure them without suffering.”<sup>127</sup> Other papers mirrored the call from the *Daily Bee*.

As in Cuba, the soldiers of the Ninth suffered in the Philippines at an equal rate to their white counterparts. The first death from dysentery, Thomas Davis of Troop D, came twenty-five days after the *Warren* unloaded the majority of the Ninth Cavalry.<sup>128</sup> Before shipping off to Cuba and the Philippines soldiers received vaccinations against various diseases. The common vaccine given fought against smallpox, alternatively called variola.<sup>129</sup> Other common maladies to inflict the Army in the Philippines included dysentery, malarial fever, and typhoid fever. Outside of disease, the major killer of Buffalo Soldiers in the Philippines came from drowning. Areas Buffalo soldiers worked in contained numerous rivers and streams, which lacked proper roads, bridges, or fords.<sup>130</sup>

To prevent the spread of disease the Army focused its efforts on sanitation. This meant boiling water for drinking and preventing getting water in the mouth during bathing. Other sanitation methods focused on keeping barracks and kitchen areas clean. The proscribed method for cleaning consisted of scrubbing hard surfaces with a mixture of bichloride and lime, a caustic mixture believed to cleanse areas of disease. Kitchen staff received orders to cover all food, and men received orders forbidding them to eat any uncanned or native foods.<sup>131</sup>

Once a soldier became ill, the usual treatment consisted of rest and hydration. Following a year in the Philippines, numerous reports from army hospitals started trickling into regimental headquarters calling for men to receive discharge on “surgeon certificate of disability.” Officers

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<sup>127</sup> “Why Not Colored Troops?” *Omaha Daily Bee*, (August 23, 1899).

<sup>128</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1220.

<sup>129</sup> Reenlistment Forms Troop H Ninth Cavalry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 918.

<sup>130</sup> United States Army. *Correspondence*.

<sup>131</sup> Order no. 24, November 14, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.



received better treatment than their men did. When reports went to the Ninth's regimental headquarters only officers received recommendations for sick leave in America over outright discharge.<sup>132</sup>

In terms of public health, the Army treated its soldiers equally. General orders no. 21 forbid all enlisted men in Santa Cruz from entering houses unless on military duty for fear of a local cholera epidemic.<sup>133</sup> Papers in America commented on the friendliness found between black soldiers and natives. *The Wichita Daily Eagle* commented stating, "The Colored Troops naturally mix more with the natives than the whites, drinking the water in shacks which they visit and eating native food, and they are thus much more liable to contract cholera."<sup>134</sup> Troop reports, like those sent by Troop H during 1901 and 1902, focused more on the fondness of black soldiers for local women. Special medical orders forbid natives from sleeping in barracks. Likewise, soldiers received orders not to spend the night in native dwellings.<sup>135</sup> These orders reflected the belief held by officers their soldiers favored native women, where white soldiers supposedly lacked such affection. Records suggest black soldiers took care of their Filipino neighbors. The Army found black soldiers providing medical products to Filipinos, not keeping them for official Army use. Regimental Circular no. 28 forbid using first aid packages on natives. The circular ordered officers to insure their men only used first aid packages for personal injuries and to "hold such men responsible for their use and condition."<sup>136</sup>

Not all interactions with black soldiers and natives proved as positive as the Army and American society expected. During negative situations between natives and the Ninth, the Army

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<sup>132</sup> Surgeon to Officer Commanding Ninth Cavalry, March 26, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>133</sup> General Orders no. 21, May 19, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.

<sup>134</sup> "Manila Reeking with Infection," *Wichita Daily Eagle*, June 14, 1902.

<sup>135</sup> Circular no. 7, April 11, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.

<sup>136</sup> Order no. 28, November 22, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 914.

supported its own. Two incidents stand out as examples of regimental officers defending their men.

The first incident focused on stolen cattle from Nueva Caceres, in November of 1901. A former insurgent, General Belarmino, claimed soldiers of the Ninth killed six of his cattle and then sold the meat for profit.<sup>137</sup> Orders went out to investigate the issue and provide evidence of the innocence or guilt of the regiment.<sup>138</sup>

The commander of Troop C, the accused troop, reported native cattle mixed with Army cattle. The report also claimed the cattle were returned to their owner, except two mistakenly slaughtered cows. With this information in hand, the Army investigated the situation and returned its report. The investigators found Belarmino's cattle mixed with army cattle. The same number of cattle went missing before slaughter. Furthermore, the investigation found it impossible to hold the Army responsible. The regimental butcher, Private James Fleming, sat under observation in an asylum in Manila, and the Army would not trouble him with an interrogation.<sup>139</sup>

The Army provided an alternative perpetrator for the crime. An unnamed local man, who earlier confessed to killing one cow, seemed the best candidate for the crime. The Army ultimately decided the Ninth held no responsibility for the disappearance of the general's cattle. The report wrapped up stating, "If any of Ex Insurgent General Belarmino's stock was killed, it has been at the hands of natives of Albay and not by American troops."<sup>140</sup> The Army protected

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<sup>137</sup> Brian McAllister Linn list, in *The Philippine War*, the insurgent army in and around Albay as being under the command of a General Vito Belarmino up to 1900. Linn states Belarmino went to a different province starting in 1901, and does not state if he ever returned. It is likely This General Belarmino is the same as the one who commanded the insurgents in and around Albay, but it is not confirmed at this time.

<sup>138</sup> Adjutant General to Commanding Officer Troop C, November 16, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>139</sup> Commissary Office to Adjutant General, November. 29, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid .

its own, despite their color, and made sure Ex Insurgent General Belarmino possessed no claim to any wrongdoing.

The second incident revolved around the presidente of Libon in the Province of Albay. The presidente claimed soldiers of the Ninth looted his house in late November of 1901. The presidente claimed a valuable watch among the stolen items. The rest of the stolen goods consisted primarily of paper money stored in the house. As with the cattle, the Army investigated the issue.<sup>141</sup>

Investigators found men of the Ninth broke into the presidente's house on the reported date looking for insurgents. A detachment of "Ray's Scouts" entered the home and proceeded to search for hidden insurgents. After breaking down a door, when the occupants would not open it, the scouts left the premises. The report states that items were possibly stolen, but the perpetrators were impossible to identify.<sup>142</sup>

The close of the report offers a great insight into how the Army viewed local leadership. The report ends stating, "This house undoubtedly sheltered insurgents." No evidence of insurgent support was provided other than the general statement, "It is a significant fact that the people of these towns never make any complaints or reports to the civil government or the military when the so called insurgents take from them money, aid, and other articles." This story shows the predicament of the average Filipino. Caught between insurgents and the Army, even inaction proved a mark of guilt.

These two incidents show the general feelings of the Army towards the Ninth. In both situations, the Ninth possibly acted in a criminal manner. In both cases, the Army shifted the blame to locals without a thorough investigation. Despite the Army's preoccupation with racial

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<sup>141</sup> Governor Province of Albay to Adjutant General, November 21, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>142</sup> Unidentified Letter, Nov, 29, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

ideas, race played no part in the investigation, aside from identifying specific soldiers as “colored.” Instead, the Army looked out for its own interest. It proved better to blame locals than to allow the Ninth to take the fall. In this way, the Ninth received the same treatment as their white counterparts.

As early as January of 1902 American papers started reporting on the Ninth Cavalry’s return to America. These reports occupied the back pages of the papers. In one instance the small notice lay between ads for a farmer’s almanac and a soap promising to “kill the dandruff germ.”<sup>143</sup> These reports came early; the war would not officially end until July 4, 1902.<sup>144</sup>

Between January and July of 1902, the Ninth continued with routine business. Complaints went to the Adjutant General’s office about the supplies issued to the Ninth. One officer outlined detailed plans to supply fresh beef to his men in Albay Province, stating he and his men suffered because “the proportion of salt meats now issued is excessive.”<sup>145</sup> Other complaints focused on the shipment of supplies. The regimental band expressed a great deal of concern over its lack of toilet paper. One letter stated the band resorted to using toilet paper in economy and sending more would prove “advantageous and advisable.”<sup>146</sup> As the war wound down and complaints increased the Army issued orders for officers to decrease the amount of paperwork sent to the Adjutant General’s office.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> “The Ninth is Ordered Home from the Philippines,” *Daily Journal*, (Salem, Oregon), January 18, 1902.

<sup>144</sup> Roosevelt, *Rough Riders*, 218.

<sup>145</sup> Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry to Adjutant General, January 2, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

<sup>146</sup> Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry to Band Ninth Cavalry, February 1, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 912.

<sup>147</sup> Adjutant General’s Office to Officer Commanding Ninth Cavalry, May 19, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 907.

By May, the regiment started receiving orders to send home soldiers instead of reenlisting them.<sup>148</sup> None of the regimental records recorded the message from President Roosevelt regarding the end of the war. Other regiments included notices of the war's end in their records. The first sign the Ninth knew the war ended came in June. The regiment received orders to make sure the horses received enough food and their tails were groomed properly for travel.<sup>149</sup> By September, General Adna Chaffee declared things were going so well in the Philippines the Ninth no longer needed to stay in the islands. Six companies of the Ninth set sail in early September on the transport *Lozan* headed to San Francisco.<sup>150</sup>

Why the Ninth, and other black regiments, went home so quickly comes from the head of the civilian government, Governor William Howard Taft.<sup>151</sup> Reports following the war speculated Taft feared locals disliked black soldiers due to improper interactions with local women.<sup>152</sup> Taft also lacked a basic trust in the Filipinos themselves, his views on the racial superiority of whites over all other races proved typical for his time.<sup>153</sup> Whatever the underlying cause, the Army complied with the government's request to send home black soldiers.

Upon returning home, the troops of the Ninth returned to old western locations such as Utah, Wyoming, and Texas. Life took on the simple routine of peacetime. Regimental records went from reports of firefights on scouting missions to ones detailing how civilian contractors

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<sup>148</sup> Adjutant General to Officer Commanding Ninth Cavalry, May 19, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.

<sup>149</sup> Adjutant General to Commanding Officer Ninth Cavalry, June, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 917.

<sup>150</sup> "Another Report by General Chafee," *The News Herald*, September 02, 1902.

<sup>151</sup> Willard Gatewood, Jr., "Black Americans and the Quest for Empire, 1898 – 1903," *The Journal of Southern History* 38, no. 4 (November 1972): 564.

<sup>152</sup> Bonsal, "The Negro Soldier in War," 325, 326.

<sup>153</sup> Karnow, *In Our Image*, 199.

supplying beef failed to follow Army regulations.<sup>154</sup> Repeating the aftermath of the Indian Wars, the Ninth went through a drastic reduction in numbers following its return to the United States.

One story shows the dichotomy of black soldiers returning to America. Wyoming wrote strict segregation laws and resembled the South in its treatment of black citizens. When a large number of the Ninth transferred to Wyoming in 1909 local papers declared they expected no trouble from the men. One contemporary author questioned if this came from the reputation of the Ninth or simply the local population being overawed by the large number of armed black soldiers.<sup>155</sup>

Before coming home, a chaplain of the Ninth issued a statement in *The Freeman* on how he saw the Philippines and the Filipinos. He declared the islands experienced prosperity in every way. He stated everyone in the islands benefited from American rule, “The laboring classes are better off, that is, they have an abundance; better clothed; they get more for their produce, more for their labor; the wealthier get better rent and are more promptly paid.” In spite of this, the letter stated the islands suffered from a continuing “spirit of unrest.” The remainder of the chaplain’s letter addressed the attitudes of the Filipinos. He claimed the Filipinos acted in a lazy manner and resisted American progress. While American leaders proclaimed success near at hand, the Filipino people slowed their own progress. The letter closes with the simple statement “we have a peculiar people to Americanize.”<sup>156</sup> Generalizing the views of every African American in terms of the Philippines proves impossible. This report sheds light on the view of some of the men in the military. American leadership feared an alliance between black soldiers and Filipinos simply based on both groups being non-white. As this letter shows, black soldiers

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<sup>154</sup> Commanding Officer Troop C to Adjutant General, November 30, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 913.

<sup>155</sup> Glasrud, *Buffalo Soldiers*, 179.

<sup>156</sup> Letter from the chaplain of the Ninth Cavalry, *The Freeman*, (Freemont, Ohio), January 25, 1902.

focused on their jobs and duty to America, not the preconceived notions of race espoused in America.

Throughout its two years of service, the Ninth United States Cavalry served admirably in the Philippines. The regiment disproved initial doubts concerning loyalty through consistently performing their duty. The services of Captain Charles Young dispelled the myth black soldiers lacked the capacity to act as officers. The men of the Ninth proved they served America by not siding with the Filipinos in racial commiseration. These men also provided evidence the Army's plan to win the hearts and minds of the locals worked. Although interactions between the Ninth and the local populations sometimes proved difficult, overall positive interactions with locals eased the transition from Spanish, to insurgent, to American rule.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE TENTH CAVALRY

On July 28, 1866, Congress approved the creation of the Tenth Cavalry. The duty of physically creating the Tenth Cavalry fell to Lieutenant General Sherman, the commander of the Military Division of the Mississippi. General Orders no. 6, issued August 9, 1866, outlined how General Sherman would proceed to create the Tenth.<sup>1</sup> The order called for men selected for service to report to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas for training and assignment.

Colonel Benjamin H. Grierson, a celebrated Civil War cavalry officer, commanded the Tenth Cavalry in its early years. The initial regimental return listed the number of recruits at 1092. The regiment remained in Fort Leavenworth throughout 1866. In 1867, the regiment suffered an outbreak of cholera. In August 1867, the regiment left Fort Leavenworth for Fort Riley, Kansas.<sup>2</sup> The regiment first saw battle August 2, 1867, when thirty-four men came under attack by around 300 hostile Natives.<sup>3</sup> The engagement, which lasted six hours and left one sergeant dead and one captain wounded, ended with the Tenth forced to retreat.<sup>4</sup>

According to an historical sketch of the Tenth the, “Fight was the beginning of twenty years of more fighting against Cheyenne, Comanche and Apaches, in Kansas, Indian Territory (Oklahoma), Texas, New Mexico, the Badlands, Black Hills and over the border into old Mexico. The Indian Wars era came filled with victories, hardships, perseverance and devotion to duty by the soldiers of the Tenth Cavalry.”<sup>5</sup> In 1885, the Tenth moved to Arizona where it took

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<sup>1</sup> Rodenbough, *Army of the United States*, 290.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 290-291.

<sup>3</sup> Headquarters Tenth Cavalry, Camp Winston, Fort Riley, Kansas, June 7, 1941, Historical Sketch of the Tenth United States Cavalry, Records of the U.S. Regular Army Mobile Units, 1815 – 1970, Record Group 391, Records of the Seventh – Tenth Cavalry Regiments, Record Group 391.3.4, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. Entry 938. (hereafter cited as Record Group 391, NARA, Entry #.)

<sup>4</sup> Rodenbough, *Army of the United States*, 292.

<sup>5</sup> Headquarters Tenth Cavalry, Camp Winston, Fort Riley, Kansas, June 7, 1941, Historical Sketch of the Tenth United States Cavalry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 398.



part in the campaigns attempting to capture the famous Apache leader Geronimo. The Tenth aided in capturing one of Geronimo's lieutenant, Chief Mangus. The primary duty of the Tenth in the Geronimo Campaign, "Was a dismal succession of inglorious days devoted to guarding of waterholes and mountain passes."<sup>6</sup> From the mid-1880s until 1898, the Tenth took up various stations throughout the American West.

When war with Spain came in 1898, the Army called upon the Tenth to serve. Veterans of the Tenth proved older and better trained than their state volunteer counterparts.<sup>7</sup> This experience proved useful when it came to fighting. Many in the black community felt service throughout the Spanish American War might earn them greater respect. This respect, in theory, would safeguard the rights promised after the Civil War.<sup>8</sup> With this hope in mind, the Tenth headed off to Lakeland, Florida, to await orders to head to Cuba.

During this time, several instances took place leading the local population and the Tenth to come to odds. In early June, two soldiers of the Tenth stood accused of committing a murder. The *Atlanta Constitution* commented local authorities faced difficulty; General Shafter refused to provide witnesses or allow the soldiers in question to suffer arrest. In the end, Shafter, compelled by the government, provided the soldiers in question both of whom received acquittals. The *Atlanta Constitution* carried a story the following day describing the lynching of a local black man, who after capture received orders to run, when he did the crowd shot him in the back.<sup>9</sup>

In Lakeland, the Tenth came across bigotry that they seldom encountered in the American West. The Tenth occasionally responded to this increased racial discrimination

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<sup>6</sup> Rodenbough, *Army of the United States*, Page 297.

<sup>7</sup> Robin Highham & Carol Brandt, eds., *The United States Army in Peacetime; Essays in Honor of the Bicentennial, 1775 – 1975* (Manhattan: Kansas State University, 1975, 109-111.

<sup>8</sup> Robert W. Mullen, *Blacks in America's Wars; Shifts in Attitudes from the Revolutionary War to Vietnam* (New York: Pathfinder, 1973), 35-36.

<sup>9</sup> Editorial, *Atlanta Constitution*, June 10,12,13, 1898.

through violence. Several members of the Tenth, upset over segregation laws, started a small riot in a barbershop when refused service. The riot took to the streets; local whites joined the scene and started hurling insults at the black soldiers. One civilian, Joab Collins, died because of the conflict. Two men from the Tenth went to trial for the incident.<sup>10</sup> One member of the Tenth, John E. Lewis, later commented this event proved a blessing in disguise. The white community of Lakeland offered the Tenth no more resistance after the death of one of their own.<sup>11</sup>

After leaving Florida, the men of the Tenth served gallantly in Cuba. The exploits of these men, detailed in chapter 1, spurred the black community to feel their rights guaranteed because of military service. The heroic efforts of the Tenth at Kettle Hill (San Juan Hill) demonstrated the false notion that African American soldiers lacked the ability to perform equal to white soldiers. The exploits of the Tenth went largely unnoticed back in America. Many in America refused to see black men as military heroes.<sup>12</sup>

Following victory in Cuba, the Tenth Cavalry returned to America for temporary station at Montauk Point, New York. The Tenth stayed there from August until October 1898. At the end of October, the Tenth went to Huntsville, Alabama.<sup>13</sup> Unlike other black regiments, the Tenth delayed proceeding directly to the Philippines in 1899. Instead, the regiment waited until April 1901 before shipping out. The Tenth spent part of the intervening years in Alabama and Texas. Parts of the regiment also went back to Cuba as a peacekeeping force.<sup>14</sup> These intervening years offer insight into how the black regiments appeared to both the Army and the American public.

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<sup>10</sup> Willard Gatewood, Jr., "Alabama's 'Negro Soldier Experiment,' 1898 – 1899," *The Journal of Negro History* 57, no. 4 (October 1972): 4-5.

<sup>11</sup> Herbert Schapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 87.

<sup>12</sup> Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 130-131.

<sup>13</sup> Unidentified Newspaper Article, Letter from Captain Bivins, Miscellaneous Records of the Tenth Cavalry Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 398.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

As the Army returned to America the nation's primary focus landed upon the Rough Riders. Members of the celebrated volunteer regiment went on speaking tours and started writing memoirs of the war. These works included accounts of the Tenth Cavalry and the aid they provided the Rough Riders at the Battle of San Juan Hill. Mason Mitchell an actor who "left the stage to join Roosevelt's Rough Riders," learned the American public possessed little interest in the Tenth. *The Star*, a newspaper out of Pennsylvania, reported Mitchell booed off the stage in Washington D.C. for giving a speech discussing what the Rough Riders went through in Cuba. Mitchell made the social faux pas of congratulating the Tenth for their bravery and the support they lent the Rough Riders in Cuba. The crowd quickly turned upon Mitchell and the paper reported shouts of "put him out, stop him, shut up!" The turmoil continued until Mitchell left the stage because the crowd would not quiet down.<sup>15</sup>

Another famous Rough Rider found it equally difficult to praise the works of the Tenth Cavalry in Cuba. One of Theodore Roosevelt's first comments following the war involved newspaper coverage of the Rough Riders and the Tenth. Roosevelt felt the regular army lacked proper coverage throughout the war. The reason for this, "There has been a good deal of question as to how the Rough Riders, or volunteer troops, and the Tenth cavalry, who were colored, would behave."<sup>16</sup> In spite of their years of service, according to Roosevelt, newspapers still questioned the Tenth's ability to fight in war. Later, as president, Roosevelt used his experiences with the Tenth to justify his support of African American causes. This justification pushed Governor Charles Brantley Aycock, of North Carolina, to chastise the president. Aycock charged Roosevelt, "The president is measuring life by war, which is abnormal, as life can only be considered properly in its whole aspect and the general condition of the United States is that of

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<sup>15</sup> "Can't Appreciate Negro Heroism," *The Star*, January 4, 1899.

<sup>16</sup> Editorial, *Anaconda Standard*, (Anaconda, Montana), March 2, 1899.

peace. The charge of the Tenth Cavalry cannot furnish a basis for action on the part of the president.”<sup>17</sup> Even someone as popular as Theodore Roosevelt, both the Rough Rider and the president, failed to win over the Southern public in regards to the Tenth Cavalry.

Other articles commented on the fame of the Tenth, complaining of perceived slights to local groups. One story, titled “A Hoosier Incident,” explained how President McKinley avoided an award ceremony for a volunteer regiment from Indiana; instead choosing to visit an award ceremony for the Tenth. The paper went on to explain that the Tenth “later disgraced itself by notorious conduct in the South.”<sup>18</sup> Other papers commented, negatively, when the president attended a ceremony for four members of the Tenth who received the Medal of Honor for their service in Cuba.<sup>19</sup>

Elsewhere in the country, primarily the South, papers returned focus to the negative actions of the Tenth Cavalry. One such story detailed the death sentence for Private Lindsay T. Holt. Holt, convicted of murder by the Army, received a sentence of death in mid-January. Holt and another man engaged in a fight over a Spanish gold coin brought back from Cuba. Papers focused upon the shame Holt brought upon the Tenth Cavalry, because for, “Thirty-five years the records of the Army have been clear of such a block.” The heavily repeated story waxed on poetic about the manner in which the execution would take place. The story carried with it a detailed woodcut showing the final moments of Holt’s life after which, “Nothing remains at the conclusion of the tragedy but to dispose of the corpse, just as if it died at a hospital. Decent

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<sup>17</sup> “Governor Aycock to President Theodore Roosevelt,” *The Semiweekly Messenger*, October 25, 1901.

<sup>18</sup> “A Hoosier Incident,” *Times*, (Richmond, Virginia), May 4, 1899.

<sup>19</sup> “Gallantry Rewarded,” *St. Paul Globe*, June 11, 1899.

burial will be given all that is left of him; the Tenth Cavalry will resume its daily life again as though Holt had never been alive.”<sup>20</sup>

Other papers carried stories meant to be humorous in describing the Tenth Cavalry. A young correspondent, Harding Davis, traveling on the same train as the Tenth Cavalry lost his luggage. Davis reported he discovered his luggage with the Tenth, members of which broke into the baggage and proceeded to wear the clothes and act in a jovial manner. Davis, upon finding an officer of the Tenth, retrieved his clothes and witnessed the soldier’s reprimanded for their behavior.<sup>21</sup>

These depictions by the American press treated African American soldiers as mere children. The case of Private Holt portrayed him as unable to control himself under the threatened loss of a small personal possession. The case of Harding Davis’ bags showed an inability to act professionally, unless a white officer maintained order. As America strove for an empire without its own borders, this way of depicting non-whites became common. Luis Perez states in *Cuba in the American Imagination*, “The depiction of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, and at times Guam and Hawaii as well, as orphaned children under the custodial care of the United States emerged as one of the principal turn-of-the-century metaphorical renderings of the emerging colonial project.”<sup>22</sup> As war in the Philippines developed, author Meg Wesling argues, the American press described the Filipinos as children. Soldiers and the American government acted as parents for the misbehaving children, who lacked understanding of the good brought to them through American rule.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the Tenth and other African

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<sup>20</sup> “First Murder in the Army to be Punished by Military Code,” *Marshall County Independent*, January 13, 1899.

<sup>21</sup> Editorial, *Fairfield News and Harold*, January 25, 1899.

<sup>22</sup> Louis A. Perez, Jr., *Cuba in the American Imagination; Metaphor and the Imperial Ethos* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina press, 2008), 259.

<sup>23</sup> Meg Wesling, *Empire’s Proxy: American Literature and U.S. Imperialism in the Philippines* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 112.

American regiments held a strange dichotomy in the American imagination. They proved capable soldiers so long as they fought in Cuba and the Philippines. Within the confines of America, African American soldiers received treatment as mere children, incapable of conducting themselves with any kind of military discipline.

When the Tenth left New York, it headed to Huntsville Alabama. The Tenth remained in Huntsville from October 1898 until February 1899. Conditions in Alabama proved less than ideal. According to one officer, here the Army failed to provide for its soldiers who served so gallantly in Cuba. The Lieutenant Colonel commanding the Tenth Cavalry issued several complaints in October 1898 to the Adjutant General. The camp at Huntsville lacked adequate housing for the soldiers there. The Colonel wrote the Adjutant General in October 28, 1899, "I would state that the men of the Tenth Cavalry as regular soldiers and wearing the uniform of the United States are entitled to the same treatment and privileges as other soldiers."<sup>24</sup> As later complaints revealed, non-black units stationed in Huntsville received better housing. More pressing, for the commander of the Tenth Cavalry, proved the wisdom of placing the soldiers in Alabama at all. In a separate letter sent on October 28, 1898 the commanding officer issued a dispatch imploring the Army to move the Tenth out of Alabama. When asked the reason for wishing the Tenth leave Alabama the commander replied:

The conduct and discipline of the Tenth Cavalry has been uniformly most excellent it must be recognized that the regiment is now stationed in the section of the country totally unaccustomed to the presence of colored troops in the instance of the white population hostile to their presence.

It is but the part of wisdom to avoid all opportunity for provocation or conflict and therefore the dispatch was but an act of prudence under existing circumstances and in no way reflects upon the discipline or soldiers qualities of the regiment.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Commanding Tenth Cavalry To Adjutant General, Huntsville, Alabama, October 28, 1898, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 924.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

The commander of the Tenth Cavalry understood the probability of trouble with the local population.

The Army in 1898, leading into the conflict in the Philippines, frequently promoted or moved officers. The average length of leadership for officers in the Tenth proved one to two months. The complaining Lieutenant Colonel moved on from the Tenth shortly after complaining of the conditions in Alabama.<sup>26</sup> Capt. S. L. Woodward assumed command of the Tenth in Alabama. Woodward took up the cause of the Tenth as if it were his own.

Woodward's first complaints dealt with the conditions under which the Tenth lived. Woodward directly compared the treatment of his soldiers to those of white soldiers within the camp. "I am relatively informed that some other regiments in this camp have been supplied with lumber sufficient to enable them to build houses for the officers, kitchens for the troops, and other luxuries which surely do not come under the head of 'flooring tents' I respectfully suggest that the Tenth Cavalry should receive its fair share of the favors."<sup>27</sup> If the treatment of the men of the Tenth proved unable to sway the Army, Woodward concluded his letter imploring the proper treatment of the Army's property, its horses. "The great exposure to which the horses of the regiment have been subjected for the past nine months, without the objects of even shelters from the cold of Montana to the heat, sand and drenching rains of Florida, there to the salt bogs and mud of Montauk Point and finally to the brick clay mud of Alabama has but many of them in such condition that these special supplies are necessary."<sup>28</sup> Woodward's pleas for a proper camp for his men and horses fell on deaf ears within the Army. By mid-November, Woodward still

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<sup>26</sup> Miscellaneous Records of Tenth Cavalry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 939.

<sup>27</sup> Captain S. L. Woodward to Adjutant General, Huntsville, Alabama, October 30 1898, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 924. (Previous letters replying to Captain Woodward's request for lumber to build housing with replied stating lumber was meant only for flooring.)

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

complained of the lack of lumber as well as necessary food to feed his horses throughout the winter.<sup>29</sup>

Woodward's other area of concern lay with the population of Alabama itself. In early November, the Provost Guard arrested several men of the Tenth while they were attending a circus in town. The men of the Tenth became involved in a small scuffle with teamsters from the town. The guard charged the men of the Tenth with possession of illegal firearms. Captain Woodward, in writing to the Adjutant General, defended his men, "From the fact that no pistols were found upon anyone but colored men, it is evident that no others were searched that the Provost guard were specially watching the Tenth Cavalry, in fact, the noncoms who accused the two previous stated that they had orders to search men of the Tenth as it was understood they were coming to the circus."<sup>30</sup> The previous commander's fears of trouble with the local population proved true. Woodward's difficulties came not only from the local population; it came also from Army prejudice and the persecution of his soldiers simply because of their skin color.

In another instance, Woodward outlined his overall opinion of the South. Following a dispute in which a police officer from Huntsville made a claim against a man of the Tenth. Woodward issued a statement to the Adjutant General. Woodward knew of dealings with this "class" of people in Alabama and Tennessee, "I suspect that this man may be a victim of the prejudice which prevails among the class of people who fill the petty officers in these cities. The sight of a colored man in uniform, or in any way dictating responsibility seems to make the bristle rise upon their back and a desire to do something to him."<sup>31</sup> Woodward went on to ask the

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<sup>29</sup> Captain S. L. Woodward to Adjutant General. Huntsville, Alabama, November 14, 18, 1898, Record Group 391, NARA. Entry 924.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, November 8, 1898.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, November 5, 1898.



Army to provide representation for the man accused of the crime. Shortly after this incident, Captain Woodward moved on from the position of commanding the Tenth. The officer who replaced Woodward continued complaining about the conditions his men lived in. The complaints included inadequate housing, sinks “in a filthy condition,” and horses for training in very poor condition.<sup>32</sup> Unlike Woodward, this new commanding officer left the idea of race out of his reports.

The Army chose to make the notion of race a constant issue, despite the protection officers sometimes tried to provide their men. The Tenth lacked necessities while in camp in Huntsville and relied upon its officers and their own opinions on race for protection from the civilian population. By January 1899, the Tenth moved again, as one officer stated, “The border was calling again and it was back to Texas.”<sup>33</sup> Upon leaving, the citizens of Huntsville presented to the Tenth Cavalry a silk flag commemorating their stay.<sup>34</sup> While things in Huntsville proved difficult, the trip to Texas proved much more complicated.

One prevalent theory in the South centered on the idea African American soldiers drank to excess and caused problems. As the Tenth moved through the South, claims of drunkenness and violence abounded. The first major report came from Texarkana, Arkansas. Headed to San Antonio, Texas, the Tenth passed through the railway station in Texarkana. As the *Alexandria Gazette* explained, “When they arrived they were a drunken mob, and an effort was made to tear up the town.” *The Gazette* made no effort to explain where so many soldiers obtained so much alcohol as to become a “drunken mob.” The report continued stating when a local constable tried to arrest the leader of the drunken mob his fellow soldiers freed him and together retreated to the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, November 28, December 3, 1898.

<sup>33</sup> Edward L. N. Glass, *The History of the Tenth Cavalry, 1866 – 1921*, (Tucson: Edward L. N. Glass, 1921), 38.

<sup>34</sup> Editorial, *Evening Bulletin*, (Honolulu, Hawaii), January 20, 1899.

railroad cars from whence they came. Local citizens hearing of the dispute came to the aid of the constable. As the crowd reached the railroad cars they, “Flocked around the Negroes, who were spoiling for trouble. It became known that the irate Texarkana had their pockets filled with dynamite, ready to send the entire horde to destruction.”<sup>35</sup> The paper concluded, once the soldiers realized their situation they agreed to give up anyone who caused trouble as long as the townspeople identified them. The townspeople admitted an inability to identify individual culprits, the Tenth left Texarkana.

The story received heavy publication throughout the following week. Papers repeated the story word for word from the *Alexandria Gazette*'s account. The only changes made included new headlines designed to catch the reader's eye. *The Evening Herald* titled the story, “Negro troops almost precipitate a bloodied race riot.”<sup>36</sup> While the story of Texarkana spread across the South, no evidence existed to support its truth. The police arrested no one for the alleged crimes. The Army issued no Court-Martials or reprimands within the records of the Tenth Cavalry during this time. When pressed for information from reporters, officers of the Tenth outright denied the allegations of drunkenness and disorderly conduct. Captain Greg Carrollton issued a statement to one paper declaring, “The report from Texarkana that his regiment was drunk and disorderly is absolutely false.”<sup>37</sup> The *Houston Daily Post* attempted to interview Colonel Baldwin of the Tenth, the commanding officer. Baldwin's only reply on the events of Texarkana, “I have nothing whatsoever to say.”<sup>38</sup> The *Post* continued on, explaining the Tenth arrived in superb order and caused no disturbances while passing through Houston. These events likely did not occur. Newspapers either exaggerated a smaller incident or completely made up the story. The

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<sup>35</sup> “Negro Troops Almost Precipitate a Bloodied Race Riot,” *Alexandria Gazette*, February 1, 1899.

<sup>36</sup> “Negro Troops Almost Precipitate a Bloodied Race Riot,” *Evening Herald*, February 2, 1899.

<sup>37</sup> Editorial, *Topeka State Journal*, February 2, 1899.

<sup>38</sup> Editorial, *Houston Daily Post*, February 2, 1899.

widespread publication of the story combined with a lack of evidence shows the general view of African American soldiers in Arkansas.

Elsewhere similar stories appeared. Passing through Mississippi an ammunition car for the Tenth caught fire at a railway stop, seemingly through an act of arson. After separating the car from the train, the Tenth allowed it and its contents to burn. No soldiers received injury during the event, although three women following the soldiers died in the fire. Papers titled the story, “The Tenth Cavalry having trouble wherever they travel.”<sup>39</sup>

In New Orleans, reports again arose of the drunkenness of the Tenth Cavalry. Stopping by overnight, “They were turned loose in Algiers, opposite the city, and for a time owned every saloon in the business part of the town. The police had to be called up to suppress them.”<sup>40</sup> As with Texarkana, no arrest took place and the records of the Tenth show no Court-Martials for misbehavior.

Once the Tenth reached its post in Texas, primarily in the region around San Antonio, reports changed. Stories such as the riot in Texarkana, the burning railway car, and issues in New Orleans slowly worked their way out of the American newspapers. Traveling through the South any time the Tenth made the newspapers the Tenth’s designation followed with the qualifier of “Colored,” “Negro,” or “black.” Once in Texas these qualifiers failed to appear behind the title of the Tenth. As in the times of the Indian Wars, the Tenth proved a necessary force of protection for the people of Texas.

The largest incident the Tenth became involved with in Texas happened in Laredo. The town underwent what the *St. Paul Globe* described as a “smallpox riot.” Stories titled, “Mob was vicious. Reign of terror in Laredo, Texas,” appeared in papers. As the *St. Paul Globe* tells it, the

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<sup>39</sup> “The Tenth Cavalry having Trouble Wherever They Travel,” *The Houston Daily Post*, February 1, 1899.

<sup>40</sup> “New Orleans,” *The Evening Bulletin*, February 1, 1899.

small town of Laredo suffered a massive outbreak of smallpox. The paper blamed the large Mexican population of the town, stating they failed to immunize themselves and misinterpreted doctors' orders. Local officials alerted to the source of the problem, moved into the Mexican parts of town. Doctors and officials began immunizing the young and quarantining those already sick. One leader of the Mexican community began hurling insults at the officials and a short time later a riot broke out within the town. The paper credits a nameless doctor for having the foresight to warn the Tenth Cavalry, at Fort McIntosh, of the potential for a riot requiring their services. At the height of the rioting, the Tenth came to the town and dispersed the rioters. During the action the leader of the riots died.<sup>41</sup> Papers in Texas hailed the Tenth for his heroic actions in saving the town of Laredo. Across the country, papers explained how soldiers broke up the riot; the usual identifies of "Colored" or "Negro" failed to appear in the reports.

Several troops of the Tenth went to Arizona, a part of the country that benefited from the Tenth's service throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. Arizona seemingly welcomed the Tenth; one paper implored several towns around the Tenth's station to provide funds, to finance the Tenth Cavalry's baseball team to play the teams of those towns. The paper stated this would give the towns good practice and allow the people to see more games. Another reason these exhibition games would draw people was that, "There is no doubt as to the ability of the soldiers to play ball, and they would be an exceptionally good drawing card for another reason. They belong to the Tenth Cavalry and probably all of them were present at the great engagement in Cuba where the colored regiment rendered such undeniable assistance to the Rough Riders."<sup>42</sup> Exhibition games provided local populations a chance to speak with genuine war heroes. At least in Arizona, the Tenth received positive attention.

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<sup>41</sup> "Smallpox Riot," *St. Paul Globe*, March 21, 1899.

<sup>42</sup> "A Drawing Card," *Arizona Republican*, (Phoenix, Arizona), April 11, 1899.

Throughout April 1899, the Tenth took up positions around the Rio Grande, primarily based out of El Paso, Texas. Texas papers announced these posts as temporary, “It is understood that all the colored soldiers in the Army are to be sent to Cuba and Manila for garrison duty.”<sup>43</sup> On April 20, 1899, the War Department issued a statement declaring all volunteers returned from Cuba.<sup>44</sup> The only exception, the Immune Regiments, left behind due to the belief that growing up in the South created an immunity to tropical diseases. In reality, these “immunes” suffered as much as the regular army regiments. The War Department stated the men would remain in Cuba until replaced by the Tenth cavalry.<sup>45</sup> In early May, papers began issuing calls for recruits. The calls included where the soldiers would go, Galveston and then to Cuba, often ending with the statement, “Some good Negro recruits are wanted at once to fill out the regiment.”<sup>46</sup>

In Cuba, the Tenth Cavalry acted as a peacekeeping force. Stationed in Santiago, the Tenth protected Spanish prisoners of war, property owned by the former Spanish government, and acted in general as a policing force for the Cuban people. All of these activities supported America’s general policy towards Cuba. The Army would rebuild Cuban infrastructure, return the people to work, and ensure close ties between the United States and Cuba.<sup>47</sup> The result of these policies falls outside the scope of this work. The Tenth’s behavior while in Cuba dispels myths concerning the behavior of African American soldiers. In spite of this the Army maintained its position regarding African American soldiers.

The records of the Tenth in Cuba primarily concern themselves with promotion, requisitions for materials, and orders to return home.<sup>48</sup> The Tenth’s time in Cuba proved

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<sup>43</sup> “Negro Soldiers for Border,” *Houston Daily Post*, April 30, 1899.

<sup>44</sup> “Ordered to Santiago,” *Potosi Journal*, (Potosi, Montana), April 12, 1899.

<sup>45</sup> Troop Movement, *Houston Daily Post*, April 20, 1899.

<sup>46</sup> “More Recruits Needed,” *Kansas City Journal*, May 2, 1899.

<sup>47</sup> David F. Healy, *The United States in Cuba: 1898 – 1902. Generals, Politicians, and the Search for Policy* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 90-91.

<sup>48</sup> Regimental Records, Regimental Letters Sent, 1899 – 1904, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 924.

peaceful. Court-Martial records from Cuba show the Tenth as well ordered and disciplined. The majority of cases tried dealt with absent or late for roll call.<sup>49</sup> The usual penalty for these infractions of military code were a fine of one to ten dollars. More serious crimes, though few, involved alcohol. One private charged with, “Did drink intoxicating liquor to such an excess and after having twice committed same offense and having been warned not to do so again,” received a small fine and fifteen days hard labor.<sup>50</sup> Another soldier, drunk on duty, failed to salute an officer and used vulgar language; he received a fine and five days hard labor.<sup>51</sup> Lastly, a private received fifteen days hard labor for the crime of doing tricks on a horse, with the potential to cause injury to property of the U. S. Army.<sup>52</sup>

The Tenth<sup>s</sup> record in Cuba shows that the men had few infractions. Late or absent from roll call existed as an issue for enlisted men throughout the U. S. Army, second only to drunk on duty.<sup>53</sup> One of the more notable aspects of the Tenth’s conduct in Cuba is the lack of desertion. During its brief stay on the island, no man from the Tenth deserted. In Cuba, a large portion of the population consisted of former African slaves. These citizens of Cuba, even under Spanish rule, enjoyed the same legal and civilian status as their non-black counterparts. The Cuban revolution contained several black leaders. Cuba therefore offered a tempting new start to any members of the Tenth looking for one. The men of the Tenth remained loyal to the United States and the U. S. Army. Although Cuba never underwent a massive revolution against the United States, like the Philippines, the Army controlled the population and rebuilt the government as in

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<sup>49</sup> Register of Cases tried by Summary Court, 1898 – 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 937.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, May 1901.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, May 1901.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, June 1901.

<sup>53</sup> S. E. Whitman, *The Troopers: An Informal History of the Plains Cavalry, 1865 – 1890* (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1962), 92-95.

the Philippines. This conduct partially dispels the myth of black soldiers deserting the Army when used to control another non-white population.

After only seven months in Cuba, the Army started sending the Tenth back to America.<sup>54</sup> Cuba appeared peaceful enough that keeping the Tenth there proved fruitless. By July 1900, all of the Tenth returned to the United States. The rest of the Army in Cuba, with the exception of coastal artillery, returned home as well.<sup>55</sup> The Army's initial plan included sending the Tenth to China to aid in the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion. By mid-December, the Tenth began preparations to head to the Philippines.<sup>56</sup>

Throughout March and April 1901, the various companies of the Tenth Cavalry, scattered across the American Southwest, received orders to head to California and from there on to the Philippines.<sup>57</sup> On April 1, 1901, the transport ship *Arab* left San Francisco with 670 horses to supply the cavalry in the Philippines. On April 15, the transport *Logan* left San Francisco with the entire second squadron of the Tenth Cavalry.<sup>58</sup> One historical sketch of the Tenth detailed the years following Cuba as such, "After a year's stay in the States the regiment moved to San Francisco, California, thence to Manila, PI. and a week later to station at Samar. In 1902 the headquarters of the regiment was stationed at Fort Robinson, Nebraska."<sup>59</sup> One other report from the Tenth also listed time in the Philippines simply as a year in the Philippines with no other detail.<sup>60</sup> This lack of discussion concerning the Tenth's service in the Philippines indicates a lack of records on the subject as well as an unwillingness to discuss the issue.

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<sup>54</sup> "Orders Decreasing Force in Cuba," *San Francisco Call*, December 6, 1899.

<sup>55</sup> Editorial, *The Times*, July 17, 1900.

<sup>56</sup> "Philippine Forces being Strengthened," *Daily Journal*, (Salem, Oregon), December 22, 1900.

<sup>57</sup> "Troops to be Moved," *Brownsville Daily Herald*, March 18, 1901.

<sup>58</sup> "To Relieve Volunteers," *Omaha Daily Bee*, April 1, 1901.

<sup>59</sup> Historical Sketch of the Tenth Cavalry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 938.

<sup>60</sup> Register of Letters Received, Regimental History, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 926.

The trip to the Philippines for the Tenth appears less than pleasant. One captain wrote repeatedly to the quartermaster on board the transport ship *Logan*, imploring the officer to improve ventilation for his men. The captain commented in one letter, “The air in number two berth is very warm, foul, and injurious to the health of the men; owing to the condition of the weather reports on this deck cannot be open for the necessary ventilation; the steam fan system does not supply sufficient fresh air to make the deck comfortable or helpful for the men quartered there.”<sup>61</sup> The captain went on to explain how to open a door on the upper decks and, using canvas he knew the ship possessed, create a sail to conduct fresh air down to his men. If the captain received a reply, it never made its way into the records of the Tenth. No matter the outcome of the captain’s letter, the Tenth steamed on to the Philippines through rough weather and warm housing.

By mid-May, the public learned the Tenth Cavalry would take position on Samar Island.<sup>62</sup> General MacArthur wrote to the Adjutant General expressing a desire to subdue Samar Island. MacArthur ordered the Ninth Cavalry as well as the incoming Tenth to the island, ordering them to report to General Robert P. Hughes. MacArthur concluded the letter “Will continue concentrating troops on Samar until Lucban, who is very obstinate, is forced to submit.”<sup>63</sup> With this in mind, the Tenth went straight to work with little training.

In terms of demographics, the men of the Tenth possessed similarities to the Ninth Cavalry Regiment. The majority of the men hailed from Virginia, the remainder coming from the South and Midwest.<sup>64</sup> The Army labeled them with colors such as “mulatto, dark, light chocolate,

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<sup>61</sup> Captain of Tenth Cavalry to Quartermaster Transport Ship *Logan*, May 1, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 939.

<sup>62</sup> Troop Movements, *Evening Times Republican*, (Marshalltown, Indiana), May 17, 1901.

<sup>63</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1278.

<sup>64</sup> Descriptive Book of Officers and Noncoms, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 935.



brown, chocolate, and light brown.”<sup>65</sup> Interestingly for NCOs, rather than listing the color of their skin, the Army listed them only as white or colored.<sup>66</sup> For the NCOs possessing families proved the norm. Of the forty-eight NCOs arriving in the Philippines, only eight were single. The remaining forty NCOs were married, the majority with children.<sup>67</sup>

Incredibly unfamiliar with the Philippines, the Tenth rushed to Samar Island where some of the most brutal fighting of the war took place. The U. S. Army ignored the island of Samar until May of 1901. Because of this neglect, the island existed in a state of open rebellion. After the island of Leyte transferred over to the civilian government its neighbor, Samar, became the focus of the Army. Rebel forces used Samar as a base to launch attacks against Leyte and the military took direct action.<sup>68</sup>

The Army’s first course of action focused on isolating the island. General Robert P. Hughes closed all ports on the island and instructed naval forces to confiscate all boats. Following this, Hughes instructed the Army to confiscate and destroy any property belonging to the insurrection. These actions not only starved rebel forces they affected the public in general. Hughes attempted to fix this problem by importing food from Leyte and feeding only loyal citizens.<sup>69</sup>

These harsh policies led directly to an event known as the “Balangiga Massacre,” where forty-eight officers and soldiers died during a surprise attack from both insurrectionists and local villagers. Following the massacre General Jacob H. Smith, an old Indian fighter, received orders

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Military History of Officers, 1901 – 1907, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 930.

<sup>67</sup> Descriptive Book of Officers and Noncoms, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 935.

<sup>68</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 307.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, Page 309.

to go to the island and pacify it.<sup>70</sup> Smith's primary goal on Samar focused on vengeance for the massacre as well as the attacks the U. S. Army constantly endured.<sup>71</sup>

The war the Tenth entered into in the Philippines proved brutal. They faced attacks from civilian as well as insurgent forces. The Army on Samar remained on constant guard, fearful of attacks at any time from any direction. One officer, years after the war ended, commented, "Samar was full of Samaritans, but not any good ones."<sup>72</sup> The officer went on, "Field service in Samar was very difficult, and to our men, unused to the best method of warfare against insurrectos, had many interesting experiences."<sup>73</sup>

The primary role of the Tenth on Samar focused on scouting missions. The scouting missions focused on the active hunting of insurrection forces. Small bands of soldiers went into the interior of Samar attempting to identify and destroy insurrection bases of operation. One such scouting mission, led by a Sergeant Bivins operating out of Moa, received orders to, "Patrol the roads, open up some communication through the jungles, breakup any concentration of hostile natives and obtain the surrender and bring into headquarters any 'insurrection news' found in the territory."<sup>74</sup> Sergeant Bivins later commented that much of the scouting done on Samar took place in small squads of around nine men each. These squads received specific orders, although the carrying out of the orders remained vague. Before leaving on one scouting mission Sergeant Bivins received his general orders. "If you find natives concentrated as reported, strike them as heavy a blow as you can. Take trustworthy guides with you and cleanup in a vicinity of Lavezares, destroying everything that belongs to parties in sympathy with the enemy. Take all

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, 310-311.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 312.

<sup>72</sup> Glass, *History of the Tenth*, 39.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>74</sup> Newspaper Article from Miscellaneous records of the Tenth Cavalry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 938.

proper precautions against surprise and deal as severe a blow to the enemy as possible.”<sup>75</sup>

Sergeant Bivins knew his ultimate goal focused on destroying the enemy. Orders remained necessarily vague. This meant much of the initiative went to Sergeant Bivins.

Insurrection forces on Samar focused their effort on surprising the U. S. Army. Ambushing patrols and early-morning attacks proved the preferred method of the insurrection. One such instance, recounted by John H. Allen, describes the frustration felt by soldiers. “Early in the morning of May 28 insurgents opened fire on our camp about 150 yards from where I was sleeping. Rear guard immediately returned the fire and the insurgents left. I immediately sent out scouting parties to find them but they got out of the country and we saw no more of them. There were no casualties on our side.”<sup>76</sup>

Lack of training proved one of the greatest challenges faced by the insurgents. Once guerrilla warfare became the norm, Filipino fighters received next to no training. Lieutenant Colonel C. A. Romeyn of the Tenth Cavalry commented following an ambush, “Had their aim been as good as their intentions F Troop would have had some heavy losses, but their bullets flew high and none of our men were hit.”<sup>77</sup> The same officer commented on the quality of the weapons used by the insurrection. “We found and destroyed a lot of bamboo cannon loaded with homemade powder and iron slugs. A very good weapon, by the way, at fifty yards, but usually fired at about 500 yards.”<sup>78</sup> Another officer, H. G. McElroy, commented on the training of the enemy referring to it as “fair.” The officer went on to state the enemy appeared armed with bamboo muskets of similar design to the bamboo cannon described by Colonel Romeyn.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> John H. Allen to Marvin Fletcher, January 24, 1967, Fletcher Collection. U.S. AHEC.

<sup>77</sup> Glass, *History of the Tenth*, 39.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid, 40.

<sup>79</sup> Tenth Cavalry Questionnaires, H. G. McElroy March, 1968, Troop E Tenth Cavalry, Box 43, Spanish American War Veterans Survey Collections 1861 – 1998, Coll. 302362264, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pa.

This lack of training put the insurrection at a serious disadvantage against the U. S. Army. Troops arriving in the Philippines received rudimentary training on the type of fighting they would encounter. Further training took place in the field. One letter to the Adjutant General outlined the desire of the Tenth Cavalry to further improve and instruct new recruits. An unnamed officer requested the concentration of the Tenth, or as many men as practicable, near the town of Santa Barbara. The letter described the town as a good central location, possessing usable roads, from which the Tenth might train and rapidly deployed in case of trouble. The officer identified the need for this extra training, “Many of the officers of the squadron are young second lieutenants just appointed good soldiers and ambitious.”<sup>80</sup> The continued emphasis on training gave the U. S. Army an advantage over its Filipino enemies.

Although few records of the Tenth’s activities in the Philippines exist, those records show the Tenth as hard working and successful in their endeavors. Sergeant Bivins in one account stated he and the other men of the Tenth managed to clear 560 miles of trails breaking into the interior of Samar. Sergeant Bivins stated this took only one month for the Tenth to do. The efforts of the Tenth to clear trails proves more impressive with the statement of one officer from the Tenth. “Thirty miles in Samar was some hike, no roads, and you could not go a mile without using your hands to help you along.”<sup>81</sup> At the same time, Sergeant Bivins claimed roughly, 500 previously hostile natives surrendered to the Tenth.<sup>82</sup>

For some the Philippines did possess a lighter side. Anecdotes from officers proved a favorite to those back in the States. One such anecdote told the story of a new recruit, unfamiliar with the Army’s system for the washing of clothing. Upon approaching a veteran of the Tenth,

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<sup>80</sup> Tenth Cavalry to Adjutant General, Leon Panay, Philippine Islands, January 17, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 939.

<sup>81</sup> Glass, *History of the Tenth*, 40.

<sup>82</sup> Newspaper Article from Miscellaneous Records of the Tenth Cavalry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 938.

the fresh recruit received instructions, “Do you see those tents over there by that clump of trees? Well, go there and inquire for Mr. Funston. He’s a grouchy little chap, but if you talk pleasant to him he’ll fix you up.”<sup>83</sup> The “grouchy little chap” turned out to be Brigadier General Frederick Funston, one of the most famous and popular generals of the war. Funston, unamused by the soldier’s joke, punished the soldier by having him wash the laundry of everyone in the camp. This lighthearted tale was meant to amuse American readers.

Other tales took on a more stereotypical view of the men of the Tenth. While the above story shows them as fun-loving soldiers, others made note to show them as a simple people. Lieutenant Colonel C. A. Romeyn stated, “I only remember one good anecdote, but in those days of the ‘New Army’ I believe it well worth repeating.” Lt. Col. Romeyn’s statement follows.

One evening Bobby Reid was sitting in front of his tent and not the most pleasant frame of mind when a private came up. Here is the dialogue as I remember.

Private: Sah, I’d like permission to speak to the Captain

Bobby: Well what is it? (Grouchily)

Private: Well, Sah, I has a complaing to make agains de fust segeant

Bobby: (More grouchily) – Well, what is it?

Private: Well, Sah, de fust segeant done called me -----, and I don like dat sort of thing.

Bobby: (More grouchily) – Well, ain’t you?

Private: (Cheerfully) – Yas, Sah! Yass Sah! If de captain says so.<sup>84</sup>

The story recounted by Romeyn makes an effort to show the soldiers of the Tenth as he saw them. The private, barely mastering the English language, comes across as infantile. Captain Bobby Reid appears frustrated with having to deal with someone so childish. In the end, put in his place, the private returns to work forgetting the previous offense and happy to follow orders.

While some officers, like those above, portrayed the men of the Tenth as childish in their anecdotes, other officers provided positive examples. These officers understood the performance

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<sup>83</sup> “Joke Was on Funston,” *Arizona Sentinel*, (Phoenix, Arizona), June 18, 1902.

<sup>84</sup> Glass, *History of the Tenth*, 40.

of their men reflected upon their leadership abilities, and praised their soldiers often. One officer, recounting his time in the Philippines, stated, “The Tenth had a real esprit d’ corps, respect between officer and man.” Continuing the officer stated, “Properly officered there were no better soldiers than the Negro soldiers. The Negro soldiers would not follow the Negro officers unless the later proved himself.”<sup>85</sup> This style of statement is the standard among officers who served during the Philippine War. Offering a statement declaring the superb discipline and fighting of the African American regiments; but quickly confirming their status as lesser, usually by declaring them unfit to lead themselves.

One American paper recounted another story by an unnamed Army officer simply labeled as “experienced.” The officer declared, “No longer do officers consider humiliating the service with Negro regiments. On the contrary, they are a favorite command today.” The officer followed the pattern, complimenting the regiment while still giving a lesser status through declaring the men unfit to lead themselves. “They love their uniform and take great pride in their bearing. They love to have everything in first-class shape. Chest out, every button shining. And every strap correct, and they follow you everywhere you take them. You know they are always right behind you, they don’t care what the danger is, so long as they have a white man for their leader, they will not follow one of their own color across the street to pick apples, you can’t make them.”<sup>86</sup> This notion echoes racial theories from the period before the Civil War. White slave owners often defended their position by claiming blacks could not function as “civilized” people without white guidance and leadership.

Even Colonel C. A. Romeyn said positive things about his soldiers, despite his childish depiction of them. Romeyn recounted the story of having General Chaffee come to inspect his

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<sup>85</sup> Notes on a taped interview with William W. Hay, 1967, Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>86</sup> Editorial, *The Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, February 17, 1899.

regiment. He stated, “We received him with the salute of shrapnel fired in the direction of the last reported insurrectos (we got a good echo), and his Inspector General (Johnston, I believe) criticized the uniforms. After he’d gone General Hughes remarked, ‘well, if they do their work they can be in their shirttails for all I care.’ And we did the work.”<sup>87</sup> Therefore, it appears the white officers of the Tenth Cavalry favored their men and found them hard-working good soldiers. As shown in the formulaic way of complementing black soldiers, officers also doubted the leadership ability of their men.

As with the Ninth Cavalry, the Tenth Cavalry received one African American officer. Benjamin O. Davis started working on his military career at a young age. Growing up in Washington D.C., Davis reached the rank of major in his high school’s Cadet Corps. When war with Spain broke out in 1898, Davis joined a volunteer Immune Regiment. While in service with the Eighth Regiment of Immunes, Davis received the temporary rank of lieutenant. When the Immune Regiments received orders to disband, Davis decided to enlist in the regular army and went to the Ninth Cavalry.

Once he joined the Ninth Cavalry, Davis began immediate work seeking a commission. With the urging of his commanding officers, Major Hughes and Lieutenant Charles Young, Davis took the Army’s examination for promotion from enlisted man to officer. Both Major Hughes and Lieutenant Young pressured the Army to offer Davis a commission, the Army refused to comply and Davis moved forward to take the exam for promotion.<sup>88</sup> Davis passed the test, scoring an 86%. While Davis knew he achieved the rank of officer, the Army took its time offering him a commission, not uncommon at the time. Waiting with the Ninth Cavalry in San Francisco Davis faced two choices. First, Davis could stay in San Francisco, while the Ninth

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<sup>87</sup> Glass, *History of the Tenth*, 40.

<sup>88</sup> Marvin E. Fletcher, *America's First Black General; Benjamin O. Davis, Sr., 1880 – 1970* (Lawrence: University press of Kansas, 1989), 25.

Cavalry went on to the Philippines. In San Francisco, he could await his commission and eventual transfer. Davis' second option involved going with the Ninth to the Philippines and continuing to serve as an enlisted man while waiting for the Army to offer him his commission.<sup>89</sup> Rather than wait, Davis chose to go to the Philippines with the Ninth Cavalry. Upon arriving, Davis learned his new commission attached him to the second squadron of the Tenth Cavalry, stationed on the island of Samar.<sup>90</sup>

Davis, forced to learn the skills of both combat and officering, needed to learn quickly in the Philippines. The majority of the duties taken up by Davis included leading patrols on scouting missions. According to the biography of Davis, written by Marvin E. Fletcher, Davis' time in the Philippines proved uneventful. One example of this comes from May 1901. Davis led a patrol searching for a group of insurgents. Over the course of several days Davis and his men cleared six jungle trails, used native scouts and guides, and rowed boats along the shoreline of Samar. At the end of this trek, Lieutenant Davis and his men came to the village of Bonobon, a place of suspected insurgent hideouts. Davis recounted, "At this place I found white flags of all descriptions hanging from windows of the houses."<sup>91</sup> Upon questioning the locals, Davis and his men learned the insurgents left the town over a year prior. Davis and his men retraced their steps and went back to their base.

The rest of Davis' time in the Philippines mirrored this type of patrol. The young lieutenant saw little action, his only harm coming from contracting dengue fever. In Davis's biography Marvin E. Fletcher comments Davis showed genuine interest in learning about the people he lived near. Unlike white officers, Davis used his inactive time to learn Spanish and

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid, Page 27.

<sup>90</sup> Biography of Benjamin O. Davis, Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>91</sup> Fletcher, *Benjamin O. Davis*, 10, 29.



Visayan, both of which proved useful in dealing with the indigenous population.<sup>92</sup> Following his uneventful service in the Philippines, Davis returned to the United States with orders to begin training new soldiers. Much of Davis' career following the Philippine War focused on offering military training to African Americans. Over the next several decades, Davis rose to the rank of brigadier general, the rank he held when he served during the Second World War until his retirement.<sup>93</sup>

Following service on Samar, the Tenth Cavalry spent several months on the island of Panay. Panay, unlike Samar, existed in a state of relative peace. The main problem faced by the Tenth focused on disease among their mounts. While on Panay, many of the horses of the Tenth died from surra.<sup>94</sup> Surra, a parasite transmitted by blood sucking insects, causes among other things fever, anemia, progressive weakness, and eventually death.<sup>95</sup> Outside of the medical condition of the horses, the Tenth lived in relative peace on Panay. After the declaration ending the war in the Philippines, the Tenth set sail on July 6, 1902, to return to the United States. Once returned to the States the headquarters of the Tenth moved to Fort Robinson, Nebraska, situated close to Omaha, Nebraska.<sup>96</sup>

When the Tenth Cavalry returned to the United States, the legacy of the Philippines followed. In late April 1902, papers carried sensational stories discussing the actions and Court-Martial of General Smith. One such story came from a private of the Tenth Cavalry; Private Nanjot explained the treatment of the Filipinos under General Smith. "Americanists (native's friendly to the Americans) were butchered there in cold blood."<sup>97</sup> Because of Smith's actions,

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>93</sup> Biography of Benjamin Oliver Davis, Fletcher Collection, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>94</sup> Glass, *History of the Tenth*, 40.

<sup>95</sup> United States Animal Health Association, <http://www.usaha.org/Portals/6/Committees/horses/presentations/2014-Timoney-Surra.pdf>, July 15, 2016.

<sup>96</sup> Register of Letters Received, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 926.

<sup>97</sup> Report on Court-Martial, *Topeka State Journal*, April 28, 1902.

Americans, particularly anti-imperialists, started focusing on the behaviors of the U. S. Army in the Philippines. Torture, in particular the “water cure,” turned into a major issue for the American public.<sup>98</sup>

The first accusation of torture against the Tenth Cavalry dealt with a Lieutenant Hickman. In early July 1902, Hickman faced Court-Martial in Manila for the crime of “ducking” Filipino citizens. Ducking consisted of taking locals to a nearby stream and holding their heads under water until they approached drowning. Reports failed to indicate exactly what information Hickman looked for. Of the three natives ducked one died because of the procedure.<sup>99</sup> Although Hickman’s story received wide publication, the Tenth itself escaped scrutiny for nearly a year.

The next claims of torture came in April 1903. One Lieutenant Gaujot faced charges of torturing the local population in the Philippines. According to American papers, Gaujot and the men serving under him captured three Filipino citizens. The first, Mr. Rosales the presidente of the town of Calbayog, Samar, demonstrated to a reporter, “Long, deep scars on his arms which he said were caused by the cords with which he was bound, cutting into his flesh.”<sup>100</sup> The other two Filipinos, one a priest, reported similar injuries. The priest further explained nine of the Tenth Cavalry, at the lieutenant’s request, knocked out his front teeth and robbed him of his money. The priest also stated he and other men of the cloth faced execution, until saved by a Major Carrington of the First Infantry.<sup>101</sup>

Lieutenant Gaujot pled guilty to all the charges leveled against him. *The Deseret Evening News* lamented the fact that by pleading guilty the specifics of the trial would not reach the American public. For his crimes against the Filipino people, Gaujot, “Was given the trivial

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<sup>98</sup> The “Water Cure” is closely related to waterboarding. The victim is restrained and forced into a near drowning state and then revived. The process is repeated until information is provided.

<sup>99</sup> “Lieutenant Hickman to be Court-Martialed,” *The San Francisco Call*. July 10, 1902.

<sup>100</sup> “Saw Water Cure Victims,” *Deseret Evening News*, (Salt Lake City, Utah), April 27, 1903.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*.

sentence of three months suspension from command, forfeiting \$50 per month for the same period.”<sup>102</sup> For several days reports of Gaujot’s trial circulated through the American press. Papers maintained the disappointment of the *Deseret Evening News* in the lack of information and the weak punishment.<sup>103</sup> The Tenth’s reputation avoided further scrutiny, due in large part to the success of the U. S. Army and its attempts to put down a small revolution by the Moro tribe in the Philippines.<sup>104</sup> Captain John Pershing, a former first lieutenant of the Tenth Cavalry and future leader of the American Expeditionary Force during World War I, won a series of victories in which he and the U. S. Army, “Made mincemeat of the Moro’s ten forts. 150 natives killed. American losses were small in comparison.”<sup>105</sup> Although Pershing’s methods for conquering the Moros later came under scrutiny, the initial stories of victory replaced stories discussing torture.

The treatment of African Americans back in America during the Philippine War received much attention from the press. Even half a world away the insurrectionists understood the conditions endured by black Americans. Historian Herbert Schapiro, in *White Violence and Black Response*, points out the Filipino insurgents made signs and left them in areas where they knew black soldiers circulated. These signs reminded the African American soldiers; while they fought for their country, back in the States other African Americans suffered lynching and mistreatment.<sup>106</sup>

This concept of racial identity caused the belief black soldiers would prove unable to perform their duties in the Philippines. Robert W. Mullen, in *Blacks in America’s Wars*, points out questions from the War Department in 1899 over sending black soldiers at all.<sup>107</sup> Such as,

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> “Glenn Possibly Convicted,” *Indianapolis Journal*, July 19, 1902.

<sup>104</sup> James Arnold, *The Moro War: How American Battled A Muslim Insurgency in the Philippine Jungle, 1902 – 1913* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2011), 63-75.

<sup>105</sup> “Made Mincemeat of Moros,” *Salt Lake Harold*, May 8, 1903.

<sup>106</sup> Schapiro, *White Violence*, 88.

<sup>107</sup> Mullen, *Blacks in America’s Wars*, 40.

would they remain loyal, would they fight Filipinos, and would the locals favor black soldiers? Furthermore, the black community in America questioned the benefit of African American soldiers serving in the Philippines. Mullen explains, “The black troops themselves were placed in an extremely pointed dilemma by the United States’ action in the Philippines. Black soldiers displayed identification with non-white Filipinos, identification heightened by the fact white soldiers generally referred to both black troops and Filipinos as ‘Niggers.’ But most also felt a good military showing by black troops in the Philippines would enhance the calls of all blacks in the United States and tried to reconcile these conflicting sentiments.”<sup>108</sup>

African American soldiers repeatedly placed their country above perceived racial issues. In the two instances stated above black soldiers carried out their orders. Other soldiers may have seen the army simply as a job, one in which following orders was necessary. Few accounts from the soldiers themselves retell acts of torture or the effects on victims. One soldier managed to recount torture in the Philippines to a newspaper near his hometown. The paper began, “There is a colored man in Petersburg who has been retired from the United States Army, after having served thirty years. He was for fifteen years a member of the Tenth Cavalry.” The paper gave a brief history of the man; his service in the American West, his service in Cuba, and finally his service in the Philippines before retirement. Of his time in the Philippines the paper reported, “He says he is seeing many Filipinos shot for refusing to give information to American officers. Has seen many hung up by their thumbs and still refused to talk. After being taken down a loaded gun was pointed in their face and they were told they would be killed if they did not talk. They still refused and would be killed in their tracks.”<sup>109</sup> After the recounting of Filipino treatment at the hands of the U. S. Army, the paper closed with a statement showing the feelings

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid, 38.

<sup>109</sup> “Torture in the Philippines,” *Times Dispatch*, (Richmond, Virginia), June 4, 1903.

of the soldier. “The old man approved of the killings for the reason that they (the Insurrectionists) were treacherous and would have killed any American with a bolo if they had a chance.”<sup>110</sup> The story illustrates where the loyalty of the soldier lay. For the soldier his status as an American proved more important than the downtrodden image of the Filipinos or their supposed kinship to similarly abused African Americans. The torture and death of the enemy proved justifiable because of the actions of the enemy.

For the Tenth, the issue of torture failed to turn into a long-lasting stain on the regiment’s reputation. Once back in the United States, after the prosecution of those officers accused of torture, life settled back into a routine. For a short time following return to the United States, things seemed peaceful for the Tenth. They faced racism similar to what they faced prior to the war. As Garna L. Christian points out in *Black Soldiers in Jim Crow Texas*, soldiers of the Tenth received harassment from locals, suffered segregation in towns, and the denial of service in public establishments such as bars.<sup>111</sup>

Soldiers of the Tenth received relatively positive treatment in some areas. In one instance, the arrival of the Tenth Regiment received the news headline of “a great attraction.” The city of Alliance, Nebraska, prepared for the arrival of the Tenth with much excitement. The Tenth planned to pass through the town over the July 4 weekend, while practicing maneuver and drills. The paper explained, for the local population the Tenth would put on quite a show including “hurdle, hippodrome, and other races will be given which will interest everyone.”<sup>112</sup> The paper went on to explain the regiment’s band would also accompany the Tenth, another great attraction. The paper failed to include the racial identifiers of the Tenth, because the Tenth

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Garna L. Christian, *Black Soldiers in Jim Crow Texas, 1899 – 1917* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), 4.

<sup>112</sup> Fourth of July Announcement, *Alliance Harold*, (Alliance, Nebraska), May 8, 1903.

earned the respect of the city of Alliance when passing through before the Spanish American War.

In another instance, the Army showed its gratitude to a retiring soldier. First Sergeant Shelvin Shropshire retired from service in late 1902. Shropshire served the United States Army starting in the Civil War and ended his career spending the majority with the Tenth Cavalry. The paper lauded Shropshire for over, “Thirty years of arduous, zealous, and faithful service from the Civil War to the present time. In three wars and in three countries.”<sup>113</sup> The paper continued, stating Shropshire carried himself, “The greatest credit to himself, cavalry service, and to the Army. Faithful to every trust obligation imposed upon him, of un-approachable (sic) character, brave, capable, proud and true to his country, he is a man preeminently of an example of the men who’ve always carried American arms to victory.”<sup>114</sup> Finally, the paper printed a comment from General Fredrick Funston, by now a hero in America for his exploits in the Philippines, “Congratulation on the happy termination of his honorable career and his wishes for continued health and prosperity.” Funston went on to suggest other papers should carry stories concerning Sergeant Shropshire, “As an encouragement to meritorious soldiers.”<sup>115</sup> With a combination of civilian and military praise, the Tenth ended its journey in the Philippines.

The Tenth offers an insight into how the American public viewed African American soldiers. Following the Spanish American War the Tenth found itself ignored, its merits and accomplishments skipped over by the country at large. Waiting to go to the Philippines the Tenth struggled with persecution as it moved throughout the South. Through poor camp conditions and public accusations of violence, the Tenth continued in its service. The Tenth then went to the

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<sup>113</sup> “An Unusual Case,” *Virginia Enterprise*, (Richmond, Virginia), December 19, 1902.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

Philippines, straight to the hardest fighting of the war. Returning home the men of the regiment faced accusations of torture and finally settled into a routine in the West.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE TWENTY-FOURTH INFANTRY

At its conception in 1866, the Twenty-Fourth Infantry existed as the Thirty-Eighth and Forty-First Regiments of Infantry. White officers commanded the regiments, with the exception of African American chaplains.<sup>1</sup> The author of the Twenty-Fourth's historical sketch points out all officers "Had seen service during the War of the Rebellion . . . and all but one had been breveted for services performed under perilous or other entitling conditions."<sup>2</sup> The regiment started with capable experienced officers.

The Thirty-Eighth and Forty-First regiments saw active service before combining into the Twenty-Fourth Infantry. The Thirty-Eighth offered protection to workers on the transcontinental railroads. The Forty-First served in Louisiana and later Texas. On March 3, 1869, the two regiments received orders to combine their ranks and change their designation to Twenty-Fourth Infantry.<sup>3</sup> Colonel Ronald S. Mackenzie commanded the newly created regiment; Lieutenant Colonel William R. Shafter took the role of second in command.<sup>4</sup>

The regiment primarily operated in the state of Texas in the decades following its creation. From 1869 until 1880, the Twenty-Fourth Regiment held different post throughout Texas. Duties performed included, "Expeditions against Indians over the staked plains and other sections, guarding strategic points, building roads, hunting horse thieves, and in other ways performing arduous service which brought no fame, and required of its officers and men constant vigilance, discerning and care in performance of service; and it thus aided in clearing western

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<sup>1</sup> Rodenbough, *Army of the United States*, 696.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 696.

<sup>3</sup> Fowler, *Black Infantry*, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Rodenbough, *Army of the United States*, 696.



Texas of Indians, opening the country to settlers.”<sup>5</sup> One report offers an example of the type of fighting done by the Twenty-Fourth in Texas. Sergeant William Barry, regiment unknown, described how he and seventeen others came under attack from natives, “We certainly killed off some Indians; but they hung right in there and peppered away at us until Captain Doges and forty Negro soldiers cut their way in and relived us. Even when the darkies fell on their rear those red devils clung to the bluffs and fought savagely, they wanted our scalps.”<sup>6</sup> Sergeant Barry explained even with tough fighting the black soldiers served well. Barry further offered his thoughts on the Philippines given his experience, “If fifty-nine Americans were to get jumped by any sort of crowd of Filipinos – I don’t care how many – they’d take bamboo clubs and run the whole tribe into Laguna de Bay.”<sup>7</sup> In 1880, the regiment served on the border with Mexico, guarding wells and food stores used by an invading Mexican Indian named Victorio. By denying him and his fellow raiders these resources the Twenty-Fourth helped stop raiding along the Mexican-Texas border.<sup>8</sup> Following 1880 the regiment performed similar duties first in Indian Territory (Oklahoma), and then in Arizona.<sup>9</sup>

Leading up to the Spanish American War the author of the regiment’s historical sketch offered an abysmal account of the regiment’s history. The author lamented the lack of care taken by the American government and people in regards to maintaining regimental histories. The regiment shrunk throughout peacetime, a condition the author explained,

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 697.

<sup>6</sup> “Comments From Sergeant William Barry,” *Perrysburg Journal*, (Perrysburg, Ohio), August 5, 1899.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Fowler, *Black Infantry*, 33.

<sup>9</sup> Rodenbough, *Army of the United States*, 697.

The present Twenty-Fourth Infantry is an example of the injustice done to regiments of a standing army by the statutes of a republic not forced by its surrounding to maintain a large military organization. The laws governing the consolidation of regiments at the conclusion of our wars, during which the number of organizations has been increased, have resulted in stamping out regimental traditions in many organizations.

In short, the author implied the shrinking of the United States' Army following the Civil War meant the records of the Twenty-Fourth started new, rather than combining the histories of the Thirty-Eighth and Forty-First. Despite this disservice, the author continued, "It can present but a short history of duties performed, often under adverse circumstances but always cheerfully and uncomplainingly."<sup>10</sup>

When the Spanish American War started, the Twenty-Fourth headed east towards Florida to await transport to Cuba. The Twenty-Fourth camped with the Twenty-Fifth Infantry at Tampa Heights.<sup>11</sup> Men of all the African American regiments faced discrimination while in Florida. While discrimination led to a certain level of conflict in camp, the Twenty-Fourth remained largely silent. The only exception for the Twenty-Fourth Regiment came with its involvement in the Tampa Riots, which took place in early June of 1898. This incident, discussed in chapter 1, led to the Twenty-Fourth actively lashing out against the prejudice it faced while in Florida.<sup>12</sup> The riot, joined by other African American soldiers, received little press as the Army worked to suppress the story on the eve of war. Stories attacking black regiments referred to them as drunk, disorderly, and too simple minded to control themselves, without discussing the initial context of the riots.<sup>13</sup>

Once ordered onto transports the Twenty-Fourth suffered in silence as the American Navy prevented the shipment of soldiers for over a week, fearing an attack from the Spanish

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid. 696.

<sup>11</sup> Gatewood, *Black Americans*, 47.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 52.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 54.

fleet.<sup>14</sup> While other regiments wrote reports claiming segregation and mistreatment, the Twenty-Fourth filed no such complaints. Records make it appear they missed the discrimination other regiments received. Possibly their officers failed to complain on behalf of their men. Stuck waiting on transport the Twenty-Fourth found little to do until reaching Cuba.

In Cuba, the Twenty-Fourth distinguished itself at the battle of San Juan Heights. The Twenty-Fourth served on the extreme left of American forces assaulting the Spanish. The officers of the Twenty-Fourth suffered a high death toll. Leadership of the Twenty-Fourth fell to its NCOs who pressed the regiment on to attack. Following the engagement both Theodore Roosevelt and members of the press commented on the bravery and service of the African American soldiers.<sup>15</sup> When fighting finally subsided the men of the Twenty-Fourth received orders to tend to the sick who contracted yellow fever during the siege of Santiago.<sup>16</sup> Here again the supposed immunity of black soldiers played a large role. Despite both white and black soldiers suffering equally, the Army expected the Twenty-Fourth to care for deathly ill soldiers. The Army relied upon the pseudo-scientific theory of the ability of the Twenty-Fourth to avoid the illness themselves due to notions of racial immunity.

Upon returning to the United States, the Twenty-Fourth headed straight to the West Coast expecting a call for shipment to the Philippines. Orders received by the regiment expressed a need to fill the regiment's rolls and prepare for service. "Sir: In compliance with instruction from the Secretary of War, the Major-General Commanding the Army directs that you take immediate steps to fill your regiment to its maximum strength with selected recruits and apply for the return

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<sup>14</sup> Fletcher, *Black Soldier and Officer*, Page 34.

<sup>15</sup> Gatewood, *Black Americans*, Page 59.

<sup>16</sup> T.G. Steward, *The Colored Regulars in the United States Army* (Philadelphia: A.M.E. Book Concern, 1904), 132-133.

to it of all officers now absent.”<sup>17</sup> As early as February 1899 papers started reporting on the availability of the Twenty-Fourth for service, “Should marchers be needed by General Otis, there are eight other regular infantry regiments in the United States available for Service.”<sup>18</sup> Unknown by the press, the Twenty-Fourth received orders in December 1898, “Preparations should be made with the view to at least two or three years’ service before returning to the United States.”<sup>19</sup>

The Twenty-Fourth received praise from American papers for its service and expected the regiment to travel to the Philippines, “The Twenty-Fourth Infantry (Colored), which rendered such brilliant service in Cuba, is scattered along the Pacific Coast and is being held in reserve for possible service in the Philippines.”<sup>20</sup> In April, the Regiment received orders to move to San Francisco, for the purpose of transporting to the Philippines.<sup>21</sup> While stationed along the West Coast the Twenty-Fourth worked on maintaining its fighting ability. One report, from the end of August, outlined the work done by the men, “Drills – Company, Skirmish, Signal, Bayonet. Instructions – Manual of Guard Duty, Saluting with and without Arms, Litter Bearing. Gymnastics – Exercises with Rifles, Sitting Up.”<sup>22</sup> Despite readiness for service, only four companies of the Twenty-Fourth received orders to go to the Philippines, the remainder shipped to Honolulu, Hawaii for garrison duty in March 1899.<sup>23</sup>

Unknown to the American press, General Otis wanted to keep the Twenty-Fourth out of the Philippines. As previously mentioned General Otis feared a comradery between black

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<sup>17</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 837.

<sup>18</sup> “Should Marchers be Needed,” *Anaconda Standard*. February 1, 1899.

<sup>19</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 854 .

<sup>20</sup> “In Case of Emergency,” *Evening Star*, (Washington, D.C.), May 27, 1899.

<sup>21</sup> General Orders, April 27, 1899, Records of the U.S. Regular Army Mobile Units, 1815 – 1970, Records of Infantry Regiments Organized in the Army Expansion of 1866, Record Group 391.5.5, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C, Entry 1776. (hereafter cited as Record Group 391, NARA, Entry #.)

<sup>22</sup> Commander Twenty-Fourth Infantry to Adjutant General, Vancouver, Washington, August 31, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1776.

<sup>23</sup> “Regular Troops in the Colonies,” *Santa Fe New Mexican*, March 17, 1899.

regiments and the Filipino population.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, General Otis feared calling more troops to the fight exposed the war for taking longer than he initially predicted. In private correspondence, General Otis retracted previous orders calling for the Twenty-Fourth to prepare for several years of service in the Philippines. When asked in February if, “In filling your requisition for regular troops could you make use of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry; it is available and in good condition,” General Otis replied, “Not considered wise to send Twenty-Fourth Infantry here at present.”<sup>25</sup> As the war dragged on General Otis slowly lost control of keeping the African American regiments out of the Philippines. In May, several papers broke the news the Twenty-Fourth prepared to head to the Philippines.<sup>26</sup> By June of 1899, the Adjutant General started issuing orders to General Shafter, in command of shipping troops to the Philippines from California, to send companies of the Twenty-Fourth to the Philippines.<sup>27</sup> By mid-June papers reported on the shipment of the regiment; “Excepting one major and four companies each regiment, (Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth) will be assembled in San Francisco, California. And there, put to readiness for duty in the Philippines.”<sup>28</sup>

Throughout late June and early July, the Twenty-Fourth boarded various ships and headed towards the Philippines. The *Zealandia*, The *Pennsylvania*, The *Valencia*, The *Tartar*, And the *City of Para* all sailed from San Francisco with elements of the Twenty-Fourth. By mid-August, the soldiers of the Twenty-Fourth assembled in the Philippines for active service.<sup>29</sup> General Shafter expressed concern about the quick shipment of soldiers to the Philippines, particularly splitting up the regiment to expedite shipment. For the Twenty-Fourth in particular

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<sup>24</sup> Miller, “*Benevolent Assimilation*,” 80.

<sup>25</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 918.

<sup>26</sup> “Slated for Philippines,” *Daily Public Leisure*, (Maysville, Kentucky), May 29, 1899.

<sup>27</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1012.

<sup>28</sup> “More Troops to Manila,” *Marietta Daily Ledger*. June 14, 1899.

<sup>29</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1018, 1020, 1021, 1024, 1039, and 1052.

he stressed, “I do not think that the troops sent this way will be as efficient on arrival as if sent in battalion organizations, but the early departure of transports appearing to be the important considering, I will send them as I have stated.”<sup>30</sup> Shipment to the Philippines lacked excitement for the Twenty-Fourth. The regiment lost one Private Cosley Reed at sea, no description given of his death other than “died at sea.”<sup>31</sup> One report detailed the loss of this soldier, and claimed another also died, “We had between Honolulu and the Philippines on the *City of Para* we lost two men overboard in the storm and the mass hole of the ship was broken off. . . the chaplain who called us in prayer was Chaplin (sic) Allenworth the Regimental Chaplin. We looked to be drowned any second in that ship. It took us four weeks to get there.”<sup>32</sup> Aside from this one incident, the Twenty-Fourth reached the Philippines in relative peace.

Once in the Philippines the Twenty-Fourth moved to work with the Army in attempts to capture Emilio Aguinaldo as well as destroy his Revolutionary Army. Unfortunately, many of the records of the Twenty-Fourth survive only as flimsy carbon copies, most of which became wet at one point between the end of the war and their storage in the National Archives.<sup>33</sup> As such, many of the records of the soldiers in the Philippines are unintelligible. Newspapers, personal accounts, and the few records which survived the war intact, provide an account of the soldiers’ lives in the Philippines.

Throughout the Philippine War, the Twenty-Fourth operated primarily in the Fourth District, Department of northern Luzon. The Army in northern Luzon focused primarily on the capture of Aguinaldo and his Revolutionary Army. Unlike other black regiments, the Twenty-

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<sup>30</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1021.

<sup>31</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1052.

<sup>32</sup> James Twiman. Box 43, Spanish American War Veterans Survey collections 1861 – 199,. Coll. 302362264. U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pa. (hereafter cited as NAME. Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.)

<sup>33</sup> Copies of Letters Sent Twenty-Fourth Infantry, July – December 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1753.

Fourth went straight into combat. General Otis, later replaced by General MacArthur, informed the government and the American people resistance in the Philippines would end quickly. As one paper commented, “Negro and white soldiers will sweep them (the Filipino resistance) with the weapons of destruction as soon as the rainy season shall be over.”<sup>34</sup> The promises of General Otis fell short, the Twenty-Fourth and the rest of the U. S. Army faced a difficult time in hunting their foe.

Following the initial defeat of his army, Aguinaldo and the remainder of his forces headed into the mountainous region of northern Luzon attempting to escape the U. S. Army. Major General Henry W. Lawton led America’s forces on a chase to destroy Aguinaldo’s Army of Liberation and his government in exile, before the rainy season started. The fall of 1899 brought with it unseasonably early rains which caused swollen rivers and muddy paths.<sup>35</sup> General Lawton, unable to catch the Filipino Army with his considerably slower American forces, sent Brigadier General Samuel B. M. Young ahead of the Army. General Young’s advance force worked to scout out and engage Aguinaldo’s forces wherever possible.<sup>36</sup>

Once in the Philippines the Twenty-Fourth immediately took its place supporting the Army’s attempt to destroy Aguinaldo’s rebellion. Serving in the expeditions hunting Aguinaldo, the Twenty-Fourth participated in more regular fighting than the cavalry units would. General Otis quickly ordered the Twenty-Fourth to put its experience to work supporting the all-out offensive against Aguinaldo’s forces in northern Luzon.

General Young took with him members of the Fourth Cavalry as well as members of the Twenty-First, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Fifth infantry.<sup>37</sup> By mid-August, despite battling mud

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<sup>34</sup> “Comments on Population of the Philippines,” *Alexandria Gazette*, September 15, 1900.

<sup>35</sup> Linn, *Counterinsurgency*, 69.

<sup>36</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 143.

<sup>37</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1054.

and roads turned to rivers, General Young and the men managed to catch up to the Revolutionary Army.<sup>38</sup> Official army reports stated General Young's forces spotted several columns of insurgents, five hundred strong and commented the enemy "force in full retreat northward, carrying number of their wounded."<sup>39</sup>

As General Young and the soldiers under his command approached the Filipino resistance, men of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry faced combat in the Philippines for the first time. One soldier, Corporal S. T. from Company H of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry, wrote home to a friend who sent the letter for publication in a newspaper. The corporal expressed fear stating, "I've been in nine battles and escaped injury in all of them, but it is no telling how long it will be before one of those Remington bullets finds its way into me." Describing one battle which took place in early December the corporal commented on his first time fighting the Filipinos, "First fight I was in I was not on to the way the Filipinos did their shooting, but it did not take me long to catch on to them. They just stick their heads up and fire away, without taking any aim at all; whenever they hit anyone of us it is haphazard."<sup>40</sup> Other soldiers commented on the performance of the Filipino soldiers. Private James Twiman, of Company A, commented the Filipino soldiers possessed poor weapons with, "some rifles some bolo."<sup>41</sup> Twiman went on to explain; while his fellow soldiers received wounds in battle, they suffered greater losses in dealing with the Army's pontoon bridges. Overall, the Army found Filipinos unprepared for fighting. Other soldiers describe the insurgents as waiting in ambush, and due to improper training, firing too early or waiting too long with little aiming before retreating.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 144.

<sup>39</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1054.

<sup>40</sup> Letter from Corporal S. T., *Recorder*, (Greenville, Massachusetts), May 19, 1900.

<sup>41</sup> James Twiman, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>42</sup> Astor, *Right to Fight*, 78.



To counter this style of fighting the men of the Twenty-Fourth quickly learned to outflank entrenched Filipino troops. The corporal writing home informed his friend he and other members of the Twenty-Fourth, when fired upon “deployed and fired at them making them keep their heads down while some of us crawled up close to the river bank, where the most were entrenched and poured volley after volley onto them.”<sup>43</sup> This style, engaging the insurgents as a distraction while other soldiers flanked their entrenchment, proved effective for dealing with the retreating insurgents.

Sergeant Preston Moore of the Twenty-Fourth further described the fighting carried out by he and his men, “The enemy is strongly entrenched we had a hard fight, we planted Stars & Stripes. The town is ours. There’s been fighting ever since the bushwacker holders.”<sup>44</sup> One report from the commanding officer of the Twenty-Fourth, Lieutenant Colonel Markley, detailed a particularly brave assault consisting of two lieutenants and seven soldiers of the Twenty-Fourth. The men, under fire from the Filipinos, swam across the Bagayan River, which Markley commented, “is infested with crocodiles.” Upon reaching the other bank, “In shirt and drawers, attacked and captured the entrenchment held by about fifty insurrectos; without question and without disarrangement.”<sup>45</sup> In this way, the men of the Twenty-Fourth supported General Young and his advanced forces chasing after the Revolutionary Army.

While General Young chased Aguinaldo, General Lawton struggled to combine his forces for a crushing blow against the Filipino resistance.<sup>46</sup> By mid-November, General Lawton believed the Army properly equipped and, with the addition of more men from the Twenty-

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<sup>43</sup> Letter from Corporal S. T., *Recorder*, (Greenville, Massachusetts), May 19, 1900.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Sergeant Preston Moore, *Freeman*, (Freemont, Ohio), January 5, 1901.

<sup>45</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Markley to Adjutant General, March 6, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

<sup>46</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 144.

Fourth Infantry, planned to take the fight to the Filipino resistance.<sup>47</sup> In America, General Lawton received praise as a capable military leader. Papers focused on his jovial nature and the retelling of his favorite stories, in particular recounting his interaction with one soldier from the Tenth Cavalry while in Cuba.<sup>48</sup> The story, recounted in chapter 1, focused on a soldier carrying a tired dog after a hard day's fight.<sup>49</sup> Despite his public reputation, General Lawton received a great deal of criticism from other military leaders and later historians. The largest complaints focus on General Lawton's inability to manage logistics properly during a terrible rainy season.<sup>50</sup> Whatever his military qualities, General Lawton moved the Army north in an attempt to destroy Filipino resistance.

One captain of the Twenty-Fourth, Charles Judson Crane, later commented on the fight he and his men faced. Captain Crane rearranged the way his men went into battle stating, "We heard a great deal about the damage done to the point of our advanced guard by the insurgents with the first volley, after which they would probably disappear." Captain Crane stated his solution to this problem as, "So I prepare in my mind a formation that would make a pot shot in my advanced guard an impossibility, by giving space between men, and having them walk in Indian file, main body following a short distance and same formation."<sup>51</sup> Historian Perry D. Jamieson accounts much American success to battle tactics such as the one described by Captain Crane. By moving in loose formation against enemy entrenchments, firing while advancing, the U. S. Army achieved success against the Filipino Army.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1106.

<sup>48</sup> "Dog Was Tired," *Evening Star*. (Washington, D.C.), December 30, 1899.

<sup>49</sup> Abbot, *Blue Jackets*, 241.

<sup>50</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 144.

<sup>51</sup> Charles Judson Crane, *The Experiences of a Colonel of the Infantry* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1923.), 311.

<sup>52</sup> Jamieson, *Crossing the Deadly Ground*, 147.

Captain Crane commented on the slow movement of the Army under General Lawton. Crane stated constant harassment from Filipino snipers essentially halted General Lawton's advance to the north. Captain Crane described General Lawton's advance as, "I can't say that I saw any weapons, though some of them were at times visible in the high grass several hundred yards away. Whenever the fire got hotter than usual the column would be halted, and we'd do our best to locate and punish the snipers. Our progress became slow."<sup>53</sup> By the end of November, General Lawton and his advance stalled out due to inclement weather and logistical difficulties.<sup>54</sup>

Unwilling to give up the chase for Aguinaldo, General Lawton sent Captain Joseph Batchelor with three companies of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry north towards Bayombong.<sup>55</sup> For unknown reasons, Batchelor interpreted his commands as orders to capture an insurrection force waiting for Aguinaldo near the small town of Aparri on the coast.<sup>56</sup> Shortly after Captain Batchelor left, General Lawton changed his mind on the overall mission. Stating in his report, "Believed that Captain Batchelor, with three companies Twenty-Fourth Infantry, has descended Magat River from Bayombong in direction of Aparri, contrary to instruction of General Lawton."<sup>57</sup> Once on the trail, Batchelor and the men of the Twenty-Fourth continued hunting for one of Aguinaldo's generals, Daniel Tirona, rumored in the area. Reports from those with Batchelor stated their 200-mile march through uncharted jungle took a heavy toll on the men involved.<sup>58</sup>

General Lawton lacked the ability to find or stop Captain Batchelor. A report from December 9 stated simply, "Batchelor's battalion out of reach, north of Bayombong, evidently

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<sup>53</sup> Crane, *Experience of a Colonel*, 319.

<sup>54</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 153.

<sup>55</sup> "Major Batchelor," *Salt Lake Herald*, December 14, 1899.

<sup>56</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 154.

<sup>57</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1115.

<sup>58</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 154.

descending river; natives report fighting occurred twenty miles north.”<sup>59</sup> Believing he knew the general direction Captain Batchelor took, General Lawton asked the Navy to wait at Appari to relieve the group when it arrived. Before the Navy made contact with Captain Batchelor he and his men managed to capture General Tirona, who believed resistance against America would not succeed and willfully gave himself up.<sup>60</sup> On December 15, General Lawton finally made contact with Captain Batchelor and his men. Batchelor reported on an engagement with insurgents and demanded “clothing, provisions, and money.” General Lawton further commented he suspected Captain Batchelor made contact with the Navy prior to these demands.<sup>61</sup>

No records from the men of the Twenty-Fourth with Captain Batchelor exist. Details of their march through the wilderness come from the officers involved. Brian McAllister Linn describes the men of the Twenty-Fourth as going through a march that “Had been a march of epic hardship, though to little purpose. The battalion was all but destroyed by the march, and Batchelor was invalided out of the Army and would die in 1902.”<sup>62</sup> Whatever Captain Batchelor’s contribution to the war, American papers ran this story of his march through the jungle, failing to mention the men under his command.

The average size of the Twenty-Fourth while serving in the Philippines stayed between 1,000 and 1,500.<sup>63</sup> Three examples of why men enlisted in the Twenty-Fourth remain. These reports offer a look at why enlisted men joined, and offer a rare glimpse into the private motivations of soldiers. Private George Rhodes of Company G stated he “was a youngster and wanted to be a man.”<sup>64</sup> Commenting on his first impressions of the Army, Private Rhodes stated

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<sup>59</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1115.

<sup>60</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 154.

<sup>61</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1121 – 1122.

<sup>62</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 154.

<sup>63</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1052-1354.

<sup>64</sup> George Rhodes, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

he received the “very best clothing, very best equipment, food was fine.”<sup>65</sup> Another Private, Jasper Johnson, commented he chose to join the Army because, “My father was a Civil War veteran and I wanted to be a soldier looking for profession in service.”<sup>66</sup> Private Johnson commented he found his clothing and equipment, “wonderful,” further commenting he found his officers, “wonderful” as well.<sup>67</sup> Finally Private James Twiman listed his reasons for joining as, “I liked to be a soldier. President McKinley called for 40,000 volunteers and I was one who answered the call.” Twiman further characterized his experience by stating, “I liked camp life. The open outdoors.”<sup>68</sup> While these three accounts fall short of statistical evidence of why men joined, they offer a look at the motivation of three new recruits. All of these recruits felt service would be beneficial to themselves and usher them into a respectable place in American society. They also felt the Army, at least initially, treated them well and provided them with what they needed to become soldiers.

On average, the soldiers joining the Twenty-Fourth signed up for one to three year terms of service. Kentucky provided the majority of recruits for Company B of the Twenty-Fourth, with Tennessee coming in at a close second.<sup>69</sup> The Twenty-Fourth took in soldiers from across the United States, leaving few states unrepresented in their ranks. The majority of these men entered the Army unmarried. The jobs held previously by these soldiers offers an insight into the jobs available to African Americans at the time. Previous vocations include; butcher, cook, laborer, farmer, and miner.<sup>70</sup> The Army provided men stuck in lower-class stations an opportunity. Although Army life came with great hardships, for many service proved a step up

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Jasper Johnson. Spanish American War Veterans Survey. U.S. AHEC.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> James Twiman, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>69</sup> Descriptive Books of Company B, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1779.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

from civilian jobs. The Twenty-Fourth, previously ordered to prepare for a possible three-year stay in the Philippines, looked to fill its ranks for the duration of the war. The average soldier joining the Twenty-Fourth before heading to the Philippines served only one year prior to reenlisting.<sup>71</sup> This implies many of these men initially signed up to serve with the Twenty-Fourth in the Spanish American War. In fact, both Privates Rhodes and Johnson received their pensions from the Spanish American War.<sup>72</sup> These soldiers joined with similar fervor to other soldiers from this time, wanting to prove themselves and serve their country. Finally, after the war they stayed on with the Army and went on to serve in the Philippines. This suggests the average soldier heading to the Philippines possessed at least a modicum of knowledge about warfare and Army life.

Even though many of the soldiers in the Twenty-Fourth lacked long running experience, they received support from tenured NCOs. Two accounts demonstrate this length of service. One, requesting a transfer to the cavalry, explained a length of service of fifteen and a half years.<sup>73</sup> Another report outlined service life for long-term soldiers. An unnamed soldier requested six months furlough time to visit relatives in Tennessee. This soldier explained why he felt this appropriate, "I had a furlough in September 1890 for four months and one for twenty days in March this year at Fort Douglas, Utah. I have twenty-nine years continuous service to my credit in September of this year and during my service I have only been on furlough about ten months in all."<sup>74</sup> The Twenty-Fourth possessed NCOs with long running careers capable of instructing younger men in fighting and army life.

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<sup>71</sup> Muster Roles for Company H, Twenty-Fourth Infantry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1781.

<sup>72</sup> Jasper Johnson & George Rhodes, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>73</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, Vancouver, Washington, February 15, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1773.

<sup>74</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, Vancouver, Washington, July 12, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1773.

For officers the Twenty-Fourth remained a white led regiment. The infantry failed to promote black officers. Whether this was intentionally a policy of the infantry or a coincidence is unknown. This failed to stop three NCOs from taking the Army's test for advancement to become officers. In April of 1901 one Sergeant Greene "took the examination in the Philippines and having passed with a high percentage," went on to achieve the rank of second lieutenant.<sup>75</sup> Second Lieutenant Greene went on to serve with the new Volunteer Regiments, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth. The Army used these regiments to test the ability of African Americans to lead. Despite past evidence, the Army and American people required an overwhelming amount of proof African Americans were equal to whites. The ever present hurdle of racist notions required these soldiers to constantly perform at their best, with the tiniest setbacks used to justify generations of stereotypes.

One paper reported on two other NCOs promoted into the officer corps of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth, stating, "Two Negroes from the rank and file of the Twenty-Fourth Regiment have been given commission in the new volunteer regiment of colored troops, one as Captain and the other as Second Lieutenant." The paper showered the men with praise continuing, "There seems to be no doubt that the promoted men are brave and trustworthy." The paper expressed the usual concerns over the ability of black soldiers to lead, "It remains to be seen whether Negro officers can maintain discipline among Negro troops." The paper concluded stating the experiment of African American officers would offer an insight into the character of black Americans, "Of course, the Negro soldier is as brave as the next one. In fact, there is hardly any difference in the courage of the rank and file all over the world. They are all about the same. The discipline and morale make the difference between one army and another. The

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<sup>75</sup> "Sergeant Greene," *Appeal*, (Saint Paul, Minnesota), April 27, 1901.

difference lies in the organization – in the officers.”<sup>76</sup> Outside of these officers, promoted to the Volunteer Regiments, no evidence exist of African American officers within the Twenty-Fourth Infantry other than chaplains.

Getting to northern Luzon proved problematic for the Twenty-Fourth. In fact, throughout the regiment’s stay in the Philippines all travel proved difficult. One of the primary difficulties of the Army involved movement over rough or non-existent roads. One soldier later reported what his time traveling in the Philippines turned into, “We mostly walked from place to place. On occasions, we used carts drawn by water buffalos. At the time I was in charge of trains of as many as two and three hundred carts at various times. . . We traveled mostly at night because the animals could not stand the heat of the day.”<sup>77</sup> This emphasis on maintaining the comfort and usefulness of pack animals would become a theme within the Army. The issue proved so important to the Army, later officers of the Twenty-Fourth used the care of pack animals to gain better treatment for their own men. As the war in the Philippines continued, the Army adopted better methods of travel. One industrious quartermaster for the Twenty-Fourth “took it upon himself to purchase some horses,” which he then used to mount men of the Twenty-Fourth for transportation.<sup>78</sup> The commanding officer of the Twenty-Fourth commented on the use of horses for the infantry “the consequence is, that this detachment looks like a fair troop of cavalry.”<sup>79</sup> The commanding officer continued, stating this allowed for easier movement and more rapid deployment to troubled areas for his men.

The commander of the Twenty-Fourth, Colonel Markley, busied himself with routine duties for much of his time leading the regiment. Throughout 1899 and 1900, Colonel Markley

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<sup>76</sup> “Negro Officers,” *Record-Union*, (Sacramento, California), September 23, 1899.

<sup>77</sup> John Hill, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>78</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Markley to Adjutant General, Tayug, Philippine Islands, February 18, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*



filled out reports describing the actions of his men. In one instance, the commanding officer chastised a Private Charles Reed for directly writing to the Adjutant General requesting a furlough.<sup>80</sup> Other routine business focused on the reenlistment and resupply of the regiment, calling for new recruits as well as new equipment.<sup>81</sup> Colonel Markley even worked on helping the Army estimate the cost of the Philippine War by offering shell counts to his quartermaster in an attempt to make future cost predictions.<sup>82</sup>

For the enlisted men routine took on a dull pace. One circular outlined the duties of those in charge of barracks for the Twenty-Fourth. Among the general duties came orders to, “Have charge of sterilized water, and the casting away of all refuse and sink deposits,” making sure bathing pools received a daily cleaning, and ensuring the daily cleaning of areas troops occupied.<sup>83</sup> Other general details involved making camps more habitable. One report outlined in detail why the lunch stand for Company B of the Twenty-Fourth needed to relocate ultimately stating, “It is very close to the door leading into B Company’s quarters, there is continually a crowd of soldiers around it, strewing dirt from the door to the street; this necessitating the room orderlies constant attention.”<sup>84</sup>

One incident from June of 1901 details the general role of the leadership of the Twenty-Fourth in maintaining camps. A fire occurred in a troop barracks, only discovered when a soldier woke up to find the floor ablaze. The ensuing investigation found Corporal Hadoe left a cigar burning by his bed when he went to sleep. The statements of another soldier proclaimed this cigar did not start the fire. The report concluded, “Upon personal investigation I could find no

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<sup>80</sup> Colonel Markley to Adjutant General, Nov. 14, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1775.

<sup>81</sup> Colonel Markley to Adjutant General, June 12, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1775.

<sup>82</sup> Colonel Markley to Adjutant General, April 7, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1775.

<sup>83</sup> Circular no. 15, February 8, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1776.

<sup>84</sup> Commander Company B, Twenty-Fourth Infantry to Adjutant General, September 17, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1776.

evidence to show that a candle or cigar stump had been on the floor, or that the fire had started from below.<sup>85</sup> The case of the fire ended with this report. One must question if the persecution of Corporal Hadoe would produce more paperwork than the commanding officer felt necessary.

One area of interest provided by the Twenty-Fourth comes from the use of prisoners as a workforce. Circular no. 15, issued in February of 1901, detailed the role of prisoners in the maintenance of daily camp life. Under the supervision of the camp provost, prisoners took care of the camp's dirty work. Prisoners repaired broken fences and bridges and generally removed large waste such as bricks and logs from within the confines of the camps. Prisoners received orders to clean up camps when it came to trash. Running a scavenger cart, prisoners also went around the camp picking up trash and cleaning latrines, even working close with kitchen staff to clean up any food waste produced by the regiment.<sup>86</sup> The use of prisoners for labor proves interesting for the Twenty-Fourth because in previous campaigns, notably the work done in the American West, the men of the Twenty-Fourth carried out these duties on their own. Here, for the first time, the Twenty-Fourth faced the opportunity to use prisoners to take care of menial labor. Other black regiments did not receive similar orders, although white regiments often did. The men failed to complain about the assistance. If the men possessed concerns for this practice, they failed to voice them through official channels.

The Twenty-Fourth suffered from a lack of quality food. Two accounts from soldiers demonstrate the issue. Private James Twiman, of Company A, commented in later life how the only crime he ever witnessed in the Philippines consisted of looting. This looting focused on the local chicken population and provided a much-desired influx of fresh food. Private Twiman

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<sup>85</sup> Commander Troop B Twenty-Fourth Infantry to Adjutant General, June 7, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1773.

<sup>86</sup> Circular no. 15, February 8, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1776.

commented the action proved justified “because the government could not get food to us.”<sup>87</sup>

Another report, this one from a letter home to a local paper, outlined the attempts of the Twenty-Fourth to supplement its food source through legal means. The letter home described how the men of the Twenty-Fourth hunted local caribou as a means of supplementing their food. No evidence exists ordering the Twenty-Fourth to undertake hunting, so the order came from a local commander. The letter further lamented the condition of army food stating the countryside contained many wild ponies but “we haven’t come to eating horse, yet.”<sup>88</sup> This inconvenience mirrors that of white soldiers, poor food was a norm for the U. S. Army at this time.

When it came time to leave the Philippines officers and men focused their effort on following Army regulations in daily life. The men received orders to bring home only Army supplies. One order, in April of 1902, informed the men only possessions fitting into provided storage cases would make the journey home. The orders detailed prohibited items such as bolos, firearms, and other souvenirs.<sup>89</sup> In short, the Army refused to bring home the personal collections of its soldiers, preferring to ship products owned by the Army. In terms of the day-to-day activities of the Twenty-Fourth, there are no distinguishable differences between their treatment and the treatment of other regiments. The orders sent to the Twenty-Fourth also went to other regiments detailing the general duties of the men.

The Twenty-Fourth suffered more casualties from disease rather than deaths from combat. Dysentery, typhoid, malaria, and smallpox all claimed the soldiers from the Twenty-Fourth; a trend repeated throughout the other regiments employed in the Philippines regardless of skin color. Outside of disease, drowning proved a dangerous killer of men from the Twenty-

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<sup>87</sup> James Twiman, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>88</sup> Letter from Soldiers of the Twenty-Fourth, *Record*, (Greenville, Kentucky), June 9, 1900.

<sup>89</sup> Jason A. Moss to Commander Twenty-Fourth Infantry, April 25, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

Fourth. The Philippines, and particularly the island of Luzon, riddled with rivers and streams, claimed more men than the Filipino resistance.<sup>90</sup> Papers in America carried stories regarding the effects of drowning on soldiers. One story from August 1899 details how nine soldiers died while attempting to cross an overflowing river in a raft. When the raft broke in two, all nine soldiers were pulled down stream by the current and drowned.<sup>91</sup> The Army's account of the story detailed the bravery of several of the men of the Twenty-Fourth. The newspaper article left out the efforts of Private John E. Poole of the Twenty-Fourth, who drowned trying to save the nine men swept away by the river.<sup>92</sup> The exact reason for the high rate of drowning among the Twenty-Fourth is unknown. Preliminary research shows drowning affected other black regiments equally; leading to the probability many in the Army lacked the ability to swim. Then as now, American blacks generally lacked broad access to swimming pools and lessons due to segregation, Jim Crow, and their legacy.<sup>93</sup>

One story, recounting the bravery of a Corporal White, explains not all the men of the Twenty-Fourth lacked the ability to swim. In a letter to the Adjutant General, an officer of the Twenty-Fourth urged recognition for the bravery of Corporal White. Men of the Twenty-Fourth went to a local river to bathe and wash their clothing. While bathing a Private Fisher dove into the river and promptly started drowning as the river pulled him away from the banks. Corporal White, who stood on the bank of the river about fifteen feet away, "Dived from the banks, grabbed Fisher, and brought him ashore. Fisher struggled and shook, and the latter seems to have expended considerable difficulty in rescuing Fisher."<sup>94</sup> Although no officers witnessed the feat of

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<sup>90</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1052-1354.

<sup>91</sup> "Nine Negro Soldiers Drowned," *Nebraska Advertiser*, August 25, 1899.

<sup>92</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1057.

<sup>93</sup> Jeffery Wiltse, *Contested Waters: A Social History of Swimming Pools in America* (Lexington: University of North Carolina Press, 2010)

<sup>94</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, March 18, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1773.

bravery and the officer writing did not think it appropriate to issue a certificate of merit, the story went to the Adjutant General because the Twenty-Fourth wanted an “official recounting in some way.”<sup>95</sup>

Leading up to Aguinaldo’s capture, the Twenty-Fourth settled in to the work of rebuilding the Philippines. Almost immediately, the leadership of the Twenty-Fourth offered complaints over the fatigues issued to the men. Lieutenant Colonel Markley, in a letter to the Adjutant-General in early April 1901, decried the use of his men as laborers. Colonel Markley informed the Army, “The lamentable mistake apparent in the history of our own military past in the United States these past thirty-five years should be a warning and a guide. The writer believes that the proposition to use soldiers as laborers is ill advised in the extreme; it is unnecessarily and highly injurious to the effect, efficiency, and well-being of the Army, time is now needed to get some military instruction.”<sup>96</sup> In areas lacking black regiments, local Filipinos provided the grunt work. Two Circular Orders offer insight into this practice. The first circular ordered Filipinos to build their own housing and contribute to the housing of soldiers. The second circular ordered Filipinos to carry goods for the Army, “Commanding officers are authorized to impress every possible means of transportation, including able bodied males, as burden bearers.”<sup>97</sup>

Colonel Markley offered his complaints over ordering the Twenty-Fourth to build its own barracks. Colonel Markley explained his position, “Renovations involved by the soldiers in the past two years, are liberally provided for. Now compelled soldiers to toil in the hot sun to provide their own shelter, as if their presence was unwelcome and only tolerated seems

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Markley to Adjutant General, April 1, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

<sup>97</sup> Robert D. Ramsey, III, *A Master of Counterinsurgency Warfare: BG J. Franklin Bell in the Philippines, 1901 – 1902* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office. 2007) Circular no. 2. 46 & Circular no. 10. 58

monstrous, if convictions are allowed to be expressed in words.”<sup>98</sup> Colonel Markley offered a solution to the problematic use of his men, use Filipino labor instead. “The natives do the work deftly, quickly, and without fatigue (the opposite being the case with soldiers) and it is a good policy commit to permit them to earn this money so badly needed by them and their impoverished condition.”<sup>99</sup> Even with the use of POWs for labor, the regiment lacked help from the local population. Areas under white regiments avoided this type of work. In one instance, a Circular Order demanded locals provide firewood and housing for soldiers, authorizing arrest for any who refused to work.<sup>100</sup> Forcing black regiments to perform manual labor, but not whites, revealed the Army’s true view of black soldiers. Black soldiers and Filipinos “deserved” fatigue details while white soldiers usually proved exempt.

Also in April, Colonel Markley worked with the Army and the civilian government to affect the transition from military to civilian rule. The headquarters of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry issued orders to all companies regarding the collecting of taxes, the responsibilities of the citizens, and the opening of new schools. The “headman” of each barrio “will be required to maintain roads, especially all bridges within their jurisdiction in good repair.”<sup>101</sup> This effort, paired with the collection of taxes, removed some of the working strain from the men of the Twenty-Fourth. Some of the fatigue duty went to locals as the civilian governments took control.

The leader of the civilian government, Governor William Howard Taft, disagreed with the military’s tactics and urged the Army to take a more conciliatory approach with the natives.<sup>102</sup> Taft wanted the Army to focus less on managing the people and more on creating civilian run governments. The civilian government hoped this would entice the Filipinos into peace better

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ramsey, *J. Franklin Bell*, Circular no. 20, 67.

<sup>101</sup> From Headquarters of Twenty-Fourth, April 13, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1757.

<sup>102</sup> Karnow, *In Our Image*, 172.

than the use of violence employed by the Army. Taft in his own words stated his goal of treating the Filipinos as “little brown brothers.”<sup>103</sup> To achieve this treatment, Taft continued the Army’s policies of building schools in jurisdictions where the local population favored American rule. To this effect, the Twenty-Fourth worked to ensure, “A sufficient number of schools will be opened in each municipality to meet the necessities of the case, and where possible instructions in English language will be given daily for at least one hour.”<sup>104</sup> By opening schools, the Twenty-Fourth did three things. First, they continued the Army’s policies of rewarding local populations. Second, they met the requirements of the civilian government by treating the Filipinos fairly. Third, the Twenty-Fourth worked to strengthen its own ties with the local population, ensuring peaceful transition.

By May of 1902, Colonel Markley moved on to another command and was replaced by Colonel Horace. Colonel Horace complained of the treatment his men received in regards to duties ladled out by the Army. The new colonel argued the Twenty-Fourth received an unfair amount of guard duty. This unfair workload meant, “The men are now getting only two nights in bed.”<sup>105</sup> Colonel Horace’s solution to the problem lay in moving several companies of the Twenty-Fourth to a new barracks with “sufficient quarters to accommodate the officers and men.”<sup>106</sup> No response from the Army survives in the records. Given the fact other regiments prepared to leave the Philippines as early as April, it is doubtful the Army made any changes to the details of the Twenty-Fourth’s orders.

The Twenty-Fourth interacted with many native people, offering a look at interactions between Filipinos and Buffalo Soldiers. The historical consensus finds African American

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<sup>103</sup> Lester D. Langley, *The Banana Wars; United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898 – 1934* (Wilmington: A Scholarly Resources Inc., 1983), 13.

<sup>104</sup> From Headquarters of Twenty-Fourth, April 13, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1757.

<sup>105</sup> Colonel Horace to Adjutant General, May 2, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

soldiers favored the Filipino natives, identifying with their plight in dealing with white American soldiers. Robert Edgerton, in his work *Hidden Heroism; Black Soldiers in America's Wars*, makes reference to the fact white soldiers referred to Filipinos, regardless of their affiliation, as "Niggers."<sup>107</sup> White soldiers writing home continued this trend, referring to Filipinos with American racial terms.<sup>108</sup> While African American soldiers felt sympathy for the Filipinos, evidence suggest they failed to become their vocal champions. Even had black soldiers taken up the cause of the Filipinos, American society would not have changed and would likely have used such support to justify notions of racial affinity.

As formerly stated General Otis disliked the idea of using the Buffalo Soldiers in the Philippines. General Otis' fear stemmed from the debate over black soldiers fighting against another downtrodden dark-skinned people. The other way of looking at this issue came from the African American press. The black press insisted the transition from Spanish to American to Filipino home-rule would hasten with African American soldiers. In mid-July of 1900, *The Colored American* opened an article with the statement, "The Philippine problem can be hastened to a solution by the employment of Negroes as a soldier and as diplomatic representatives."<sup>109</sup> The African American press hoped the understanding of black soldiers would lessen tensions and lead to a more peaceful transition. While the black press called for black representatives, the American government did not consider the option.

Other works emphasized the disparity between black soldiers and Filipino citizens.<sup>110</sup> Even white owned papers praised black soldiers and their potential use in the Philippines,

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<sup>107</sup> Robert B. Edgerton, *Hidden Heroism: Black Soldiers in America's Wars* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1002), 56.

<sup>108</sup> Russell Roth, *Muddy Glory: America's 'Indian Wars' in the Philippines; 1899 – 1935* (Hanover: The Christopher Publishing House, 1981), 42-56.

<sup>109</sup> Editorial, *Colored American*, (Washington, D.C.), July 19 1900.

<sup>110</sup> Welch, *Response to Imperialism*, 109.



“President McKinley has the matter of sending Negro regiments to the Philippines under advisement. The Negroes made a good showing in Cuba, and there is no reason why they would not do equally as good service in the Philippines, provided they can lend their endorsement to the unrighteous war America is waging against the Filipinos.”<sup>111</sup> These papers emphasized the loyalty of black soldiers to the American flag, and the willingness of these soldiers to ignore racial attitudes in regards to Filipinos.

In terms of the Filipinos’ view of the men of the Twenty-Fourth, little information survives. One letter, sent to the *Richmond Planet*, outlines the basic thoughts of Filipinos towards African American soldiers. Answering a question on the differences between white and black soldiers, one Filipino citizen replied he never knew of different races in America, only receiving education in basic American history. The citizen went on to report he learned of differences from white soldiers who “began to tell us of the inferiority of American blacks, of your brutal natures, your cannibal tendencies, how you would rape, arson, steal.”<sup>112</sup> Despite this initial reaction, the interviewee finally stated the general opinion of the Filipinos towards black soldiers improved as they demonstrated their true character and left a positive impression.

When the Twenty-Fourth first arrived in the Philippines, they received a great deal of attention from the Filipino people. As Willard Gatewood, Jr., points out, “When Negro troops first arrived in the Philippines the natives viewed them with awe and fear.”<sup>113</sup> This initial fear, reminiscent of the fear of the Plains Indians, soon gave way to respect. In reference to interactions between black soldiers and Filipino insurgents one paper stated, “One of the reasons why the War Department decided to send Negro soldier to the Philippines is that the reports from Manila say that the insurgents become terrified when the colored American troops attack them

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<sup>111</sup> “Desertion,” *Chariton Courier*, September 2, 1899.

<sup>112</sup> Editorial, *Richmond Planet*, December 30, 1899.

<sup>113</sup> Gatewood, *Smoked Yankees*, 241.

and they all seem to have an especial terror of the colored soldiers and will not make a stand against them if there is any way of escape.”<sup>114</sup> Within a year of the Twenty-Fourth’s arrival, papers in America printed stories addressing interactions between natives and the black infantry, “The Negro soldiers in the Philippines say that they are treated much better by the natives than the white soldiers are treated.”<sup>115</sup> This same publication went on to urge the American government to place a black citizen on the civilian government. The paper insisted this appointment would strengthen ties with the Filipinos and earn their trust.

The Twenty-Fourth lacked an immunity from mistreatment at the hands of Filipino citizens. According to Lieutenant Colonel Markley, much of the regiment’s baggage came up missing after a trip. Markley surmised this missing luggage came from deliberate action, “The attitude of the company as expressed by the demeanor of its agents seems to be one of general resentment towards the United States, sinister in insolence and contempt towards officers and soldiers.”<sup>116</sup> Colonel Markley’s emphasis on the treatment of both officers and soldiers implies the color of the Twenty-Fourth affected the attitude of the shipping company little. The trouble came from the nationality and occupation of the men of the Twenty-Fourth.

Captain Charles Crane expressed a harsher view of the natives than his commanding officer did. Captain Crane stated he and his soldiers “did no property damage.”<sup>117</sup> Captain Crane expressed dismay at not burning a suspected insurgent hide out as well as, “All the adjacent buildings should have gone too. But we did not dare to do it, for we were close to Manila and besides, I had only recently investigated the Fourteenth for such conduct.” Soldiers of the

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<sup>114</sup> Editorial, *Republican News*, June 22 1899.

<sup>115</sup> “A Negro Judge,” *Colored American*, (Washington, D.C.), April 13 1901.

<sup>116</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Markley to Adjutant General, March 10, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

<sup>117</sup> Crane, *Experiences of a Colonel*, 321.

Twenty-Fourth obediently followed orders when told to act against the Filipinos. If Captain Crane gave an order, his men obeyed, especially in the face of a possible insurgent headquarters.

The complaints from the officers of the Twenty-Fourth apparently never reached the African American press. Up to the point the Twenty-Fourth left the Philippines, papers ran stories praising the love shared between Filipino and Buffalo Soldier. “What do they think of the Negro Soldiers? They seem to love him as a brother and the Negro Soldier, fighting them as he did, taught the natives that all American white men were not unfair to colored people and that their great hope rested in the American government.”<sup>118</sup> People in America felt the Filipinos lived in the shadow of racism. Filipino citizens received direct comparisons to slaves in America and feared this racial linking would lead to a new system of slavery in the archipelago.<sup>119</sup>

As for the soldiers themselves, they left few records detailing their interactions with the Filipino populations. Those records that do remain offer an insight into both how Filipinos received treatment and how the soldiers felt about the Filipinos. Jasper Johnson of Company G stated in a later interview he “liked the people and land.” Johnson continued on to state he wished to stay if presented the opportunity. He also felt compelled to state he and the other members of Company G committed “very little looting.”<sup>120</sup> Johnson’s answers show a man who enjoyed his service, and felt the people of the Philippines worthy of basic respect.

Another member of Company G, George Rhodes made similar statements to those of Johnson. When asked about the Army’s treatment of the Filipino people he stated “as nice as could expect.” He further explained his personal feelings on the natives, “Sensible educated natives fast gave up – could depend on them.” Finally, Rhodes stated in regards to looting “in

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<sup>118</sup> “How do the Filipinos Think of Americans?” *Colored American*, (Washington, D.C.), November 23, 1901.

<sup>119</sup> Michael Patrick Cullinane, *Liberty and American Anti-Imperialism; 1898 – 1909* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 2012), 54.

<sup>120</sup> Jasper Johnson, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

most cases there was no looting.”<sup>121</sup> Rhodes expressed a sentiment shared by others. The Philippines possessed two groups of Filipinos; those in resistance and a threat, and those soldiers “could depend on.” This theme brings into question the blanket statement of the black press concerning the friendship of black soldiers and Filipinos. While the average citizen appears worthy of respect, the enemy is not portrayed as a freedom fighter or downtrodden man. Instead, the insurrection contained enemies of the United States and therefore enemies of the Twenty-Fourth.

The interview of James Twiman, of Company A, strengthens this argument. Twiman addressed issues with both loyal natives and insurgents. When discussing a local scouting group, the Maccabees, Twiman praised them for their loyalty and usefulness to the Army. “They were very trustworthy one of the best tribes to work with.” Twiman also commented the Maccabees received a great deal of police duty to take the duties off the Twenty-Fourth. This policy fit with both the Army and the civilian government’s plans to slowly phase out the Army and replace it with local police forces and a constabulary.<sup>122</sup> In contrast, the members of the insurrection received no pity from Twiman. When asked if the enemy proved good fighters Twiman replied, “No they were very treacherous, they would shoot into camp and then run, they were a lot of trouble.” When pressed further and asked if he thought of the enemy as people Twiman made a distinction, “Some of them were nice people by tribe – several tribes were good.”<sup>123</sup> It appears for soldiers the treatment of Filipinos depended heavily on their loyalty to the United States. As mentioned with the torture claims against the Tenth Cavalry, African American soldiers viewed their enemy with contempt. Twiman expresses this contempt in describing the actions of the insurgents and their tactics.

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<sup>121</sup> George Rhodes, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>122</sup> Birtle, *Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency*, 153, 156.

<sup>123</sup> James Twiman, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

One of the best examples of the opinion of the Twenty-Fourth towards the native Filipinos comes from Sergeant Preston Moore. In a letter home, later published in *The Freeman*, Moore described his own experiences with the natives. First, he addressed the idea of American oppression in the Philippines, stating, “The American has never oppressed the Filipino to my knowledge; everything is free to the native, yet he fights.” Sergeant Moore failed to identify with the cause of the Filipino insurrectionaries. Sergeant Moore continued on stating the average Filipino, “With few exceptions the Filipinos are half civilized; their education is very limited in some of the large coast cities the Filipinos go half naked; having a cloth tied about their body to hide their shame, and all the rest exposed.”<sup>124</sup> This view of the Filipino as half-civilized proved true throughout the Army and American society.<sup>125</sup> Special care came in pro-imperial newspapers to show the Filipinos as children in need of care from their new parent the United States.<sup>126</sup>

Sergeant Moore continued with his examination of the Filipinos stating their condition came primarily from former Spanish rule. After describing the housing of the Filipinos, “Filipinos don’t have any houses, build shacks made of bamboo and covered with grass,” Sergeant Moore described the buildings of the Catholic Church, “Catholic religion prevails over the island. The church houses tell Spanish teaching and training, and are excellent buildings in some towns.”<sup>127</sup> Moore’s opinion of the Catholic Church in the Philippines proved the norm for those in the United States. The Catholic Church operated as a tool of oppression to maintain Spanish control and prevent the Filipinos from achieving a civilized society.<sup>128</sup> While the Filipinos possessed poor or no housing, the Catholic Church, supported by Spain, built “excellent buildings,” in towns.

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<sup>124</sup> Letter from Sergeant Moore, *Freeman*, (Freemont, Ohio), January 5, 1901.

<sup>125</sup> Elizabeth Cobbs Hoffman, *American Umpire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 174.

<sup>126</sup> Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 186-187.

<sup>127</sup> Letter from Sergeant Moore, *Freeman*, (Freemont, Ohio), January 5, 1901.

<sup>128</sup> Editorial, *Seattle Republican*, April 27, 1900.

In his final summation, Sergeant Moore warned any visitors to the Philippines to see the whole country. “Cities on the seacoast, where all nationalities are represented are fine, and have all kinds of modern geniuses and science. On going to Manila one would say it is a fine country; so it is, but the people are not fine.” Praising the predominately-foreign run cities Sergeant Moore explains how the achievements of Filipino society only came from outsiders; as for the Filipinos themselves? “Go into the interior and you will see just what there is in the Filipino stronghold.” Moore continued on describing the land and the people as natural and difficult, finally concluding the United States “need not be ashamed.”<sup>129</sup> While Sergeant Moore cannot act as an indication of how every soldier felt, his testimony combined with others offers a glimpse into the overall opinion of black soldiers in the Philippines. Those tribes and people who cooperated with America deserved respect and fair treatment. Those tribes and people who fought with America and American soldiers deserved punishment and contempt.

Filipino citizens suffered from racism from white soldiers, and indifference or familiarity from black soldiers. What kind of treatment did African American soldiers receive from the Army? As seen with other regiments, how the Army treated black soldiers depended largely on the officers interacting with them. Issues concerning racial ideas ranged over a wide spectrum and showed a hesitance on the part of those outside the Buffalo Soldier regiments to treat black men with respect.

One complaint coming from the Twenty-Fourth focused on the Army’s failure to recognize the proper names of black soldiers. One captain complained to the Adjutant General stating, “The soldier’s name is not Charlie Banks, nor Charley Banks, but Charles Banks and he has been known by that later name, on the number rolls of this company for the past two years.” The captain further lamented the Army’s failures in regards to his men by declaring, “I would

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<sup>129</sup> Letter from Sergeant Moore, *Freeman*, (Freemont, Ohio), January 5, 1901.

respectfully invite attention to the fact that many colored men who enlisted in the Army give their names as ‘Charlie,’ ‘Willie,’ etc., when their full names are Charlese, Williams, etc.”<sup>130</sup>

While this complaint appears trivial, it demonstrates the day-to-day struggle of black soldiers in the Army. Every action received deeper scrutiny than the actions of white counterparts. In addition, something as simple as how a soldier used their name could be used as a sign of their backward or uncivilized nature.

In terms of officers’ support, the men of the Twenty-Fourth received a certain level of respect. In particular, the commanding officers tended to defend the Twenty-Fourth. As previously mentioned, Colonel Markley offered a level of protection for his men. Colonel Markley came to the aid of his men primarily in demanding equal treatment. Throughout the first half of 1901, Colonel Markley complained on how his men were treated by other regiments. When stopping at guardhouses controlled by white regiments, black soldiers received orders to forage for food and shelter. Markley’s reply to these slights focused on the rights of American soldiers, “These men are by law soldiers of the United States Army and on these occasions were acting under official orders. The difficulty of getting proper food at these places and openly shown dislike has caused them often to sleep in corrals or native shacks and to go to restaurants to buy their meals.”<sup>131</sup> Markley further complained this treatment meant the horses of the Twenty-Fourth went malnourished and received equal mistreatment. Foreseeing excuses, the commander offered up examples of how much food guardhouses kept on store, stating lack of food proved an inadequate excuse for the failure to feed and house black soldiers. Markley

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<sup>130</sup> Captain of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry to Adjutant General, March 10, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1773.

<sup>131</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Markley to Adjutant General, April 13, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

concluded stating the real reason for maltreatment came from, “The color of our men which was objected to.”

To solve the matter Markley started provisioning his men for longer marches, stating this caused an unnecessary burden. He then urged the Army to insure the horses used by the Twenty-Fourth received proper care because, “It is necessary to preserve available government property from injury.”<sup>132</sup> The efforts of Colonel Markley to identify racism and rectify it shows an unwillingness in the Army to deal with racial issues. As with other instances addressed by Markley, his letter shows a complete understanding of where black soldiers ranked in the Army. The commander issued a formal complaint against the known mistreatment of his soldiers based on race notions and expected little change to come of it. Markley’s only call for change came in insisting the government property, horses, receive better treatment. Markley himself, rather than waiting for the Army to take action, rectified the problem with extra rations.

The men of the Twenty-Fourth endured little things such as denied housing and food from white soldiers. One example of racism against men of the Twenty-Fourth happened on the night of June 19, 1902 in Manila. Two musicians, Private Beck (trombone) and Private Ewing (drums), played in a minstrel show at the Gorilla Theater, a local venue. The commanding officer of the Twenty-Fourth recounted the interaction these two soldiers went through with a local white police officer.

A member of the metropolitan police department approached the two privates and pulled his gun threatening, “I want you damn niggers to go with me.” One of the privates asked the police officer why he wanted to arrest them and he replied, “I don’t want any talk out of you damn niggers – I’ve already killed about twenty of you tonight.” Confused the two members of the Twenty-Fourth obediently went with the police officer, reporting later his frequent

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.



lamentations such as, “You black sons of bitches, if I was sure you son-of-bitches had a hand in that riot, I’d hang you both.”<sup>133</sup> No riot occurred on this night, if it did the Army or any newspapers did not record it.

Upon reaching the local police station, the two privates received an explanation for why they suffered imprisonment. After imprisonment Private Beck demanded to know why, he and Private Eweing received such harsh treatment. The jailer of the privates answered, “About eleven o’clock tonight some of you fellows started a riot in this district, and I have orders to confine all Twenty-Fourth Infantry men found on the streets of Manila.” The problem with the reasons given for the arrest come from a lack of evidence. Privates Beck and Eweing were the only men from the Twenty-Fourth arrested, although twelve other black soldiers waited in similar cells, no mention of their particular regiments. In addition, no other records exist proving a riot happened in Manila on the night of the nineteenth. The record submitted by the commanding officer of the Twenty-Fourth complained the reason for the arrest of his men must come from racially motivated places.<sup>134</sup>

Private Beck professed innocence of any crime, or participation in a riot, based on the fact he and Private Eweing performed at the Gorilla Theater during the supposed duration of the riot. In spite of Beck’s alibi the jailer simply replied, “We now have the upper hand of you damn niggers and we intend to keep it.” Beck and his fellow musician then attempted to quietly wait out the night, hoping the Army would free them. Even though the two privates offered no complaints or trouble, several times throughout the night various police officers approached their cell, “Calling the men ‘you black son-of-bitches.’ One policeman walked up to the door of the cell, pointed his revolver through the bars and remarked, ‘if I hear a murmur in there, I’ll shoot

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<sup>133</sup> Commanding Officer Twenty-Fourth Infantry to Adjutant General, June 21, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

you black son-of-bitches full of holes.”<sup>135</sup> The following day Beck and Eweing returned to the Twenty-Fourth and recounted their story of unjust imprisonment.

The commanding officer of the Twenty-Fourth issued a formal complaint against the Manila police force. The commander claimed the police unjustly arrested his men based on racial ideas and not any factual indication of criminal acts. This arrest echoes of the treatment of black citizens in the United States. In America, black citizens suffered arrest with no evidence provided, threats of physical violence, and the possibility of capital punishment without a fair trial. The incident proved shocking for the two privates unaware of the situation in Manila. The only remaining account of this arrest comes from the commander of the Twenty-Fourth and his second hand account of the story. This fact highlights the difficulty in showing the true feelings of the soldiers themselves when faced with racism in the Philippines. Few records remain to paint an accurate picture of how soldiers dealt day by day with treatment from their fellow soldiers.

Few accounts explain the opinion of black soldiers towards racism in the Philippines better than the comments of Sergeant Patrick Mason of Company I. Writing home Sergeant Mason explained his own views on how natives and black soldiers received treatment. Mason started by stating he felt sorry for the Filipinos and, “I don’t believe they will be justly dealt by.” This feeling came from Mason’s close association with white soldiers. Mason explained in his letter he possessed a paler skin than the average black soldier did and white soldiers freely spoke around him, “I love to hear them, white Americans, talk that I may know how they are.” Mason’s most critical statement about white soldiers came from their constant obsession with the idea of race, “First thing in the morning is the ‘nigger’ and the last thing at night is the ‘nigger.’”<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Letter from Sergeant Mason, *Gazette*, (Lancaster, Ohio), September 29, 1900.

Mason's letter shows white soldiers focused on race, both Filipino and African American, and using ideas surrounding race to justify negative actions. This treatment failed to stop the Twenty-Fourth from achieving its goals in the Philippines; it does however show a clear divide in the Army over racial notions. While those officers serving with black soldiers came to favor their men, the larger part of the Army held them in a position of contempt.

While Sergeant Mason appeared to pity the Filipinos, other soldiers lacked such compassion or racial sensitivity. One anti-imperial newspaper reported on an incident early in the war where black soldiers mistreated Filipinos, claiming the Filipinos were less than racially. "The second day after the first Negro regiment landed in Manila I saw a Negro soldier take the money belt off a Chinaman . . . amid the laughter of our own people, civilians and soldiers." In the same article, the author lamented watching another black soldier assault a Filipino bystander and upon suffering criticism the soldier stated, "He is only a damned nigger."<sup>137</sup> The use of racial terms to describe Filipinos by black soldiers offers a rare look into how black soldiers viewed notions of race when not applied to themselves.

One of the more interesting aspects of racial views and the Twenty-Fourth comes from the issue of immigration or colonization. Throughout the United States, factions existed calling for the use of black soldiers as both conquerors and colonizers of the Philippines. While this issue applied to all of the black regiments, the Twenty-Fourth offered its own take on the issue first. The general feeling of the immigration or colonization movement focused on the position of African Americans in American society.

Those in favor of immigration or colonization offered reasons focusing on one of two causes. The first cause focused on the continued racist treatment of blacks in America, stating this mistreatment would continue indefinitely and calling for the majority of the black population

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<sup>137</sup> Editorial, *San Francisco Call*, October 13, 1900.

to separate from white culture by colonizing the Philippines. Under this first option, African Americans would separate themselves from mistreatment and still find themselves offered the protection of American citizenship by staying in the Philippines.

One such call for immigration came from a Sergeant Major of the Twenty-Fourth, T. Clay Smith. Smith argued, in a letter to the *Savannah Tribune*, conditions in the Philippines offered African Americans a greater chance at success. Smith stated he knew of several black entrepreneurs who “are in business in the Philippines are doing nicely.” According to Smith, the Philippines offered a place without racism where black businessmen would succeed without racial issues. Smith urged quick action stating, “prejudice is close in the wake of the flag.” While Smith feared the coming of American racial values, he concluded with a plea for those looking for opportunity, “would advise immigration.”<sup>138</sup> Smith’s statements regarding opportunity for economic advancement while allowing loyal citizens to remain under the protection of the American flag. Economic opportunity paired with the ability to avoid the discrimination in America.

A. R. Abbott, M.D. argued America would do a great service to offer up black colonizers to the Philippines, “There is nothing dishonorable about voluntary emigration; it is a conspicuous trait in the character of races that have conquered the earth and amid its resources contribute to the happiness and welfare of mankind.” Abbott further argued a historical precedent for colonizing the Philippines, “It has been resorted to in times past as a short-cut to the solution of many social, racial, and religious problems.”<sup>139</sup> Abbott’s article continued, stating examples such as the Huguenots, the Irish, and the Puritans.

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<sup>138</sup> Editorial, *Savannah Tribune*, 1902.

<sup>139</sup> Abbot, “Employment of Negroes,” 196.

Abbott stated African Americans held a special place in history due to their background. Abbott continued describing those who escaped to Canada during slavery, “Their history is a record of which their descendants have just reason to be proud. Under British laws, with protection to life and property, they have enjoyed freedom and prosperity.”<sup>140</sup> Abbott concluded America’s black and white populations would benefit from a type of dual-colonization. Black citizens, racially believed to possess immunity to tropical disease and weather, would easily colonize the Philippines. White leaders would effectively administer the islands, with a large source of loyal citizens provided by black immigrants. While Abbott’s article leaves little opportunity for true upward mobility to black citizens, it does paint them in a positive light calling for them to improve the Philippines through their own hard work and dedication to success.

The second cause focused on racial issues, with proponents stating black citizens would survive in the Philippines due to their skin color. This second cause focuses on the desirability of removing black citizens from the American population as well as their racial affinity towards tropical climates.

One author discussing the possibility of a black colony in America’s own western territories stated colonization would fail anywhere. “The difficulty lays in getting the average Negro to work at all. Those who have good positions don’t want to be colonized and those who have none, as a rule, wouldn’t work if they were. So, there you are.”<sup>141</sup> This author felt African American racial inferiority would hinder colonization. Often American authors felt African Americans capable of the difficult task of colonization and placed a high regard on their work ethics and racial immunity to the problems offered by the tropical regions of the world.

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid, 197.

<sup>141</sup> “Obstacles to Colonization,” *The Times*, (Richmond, Virginia), August 18, 1899.

One such author stated African Americans provided an excellent source of colonizers as well as soldiers, “By character more submissive to discipline, by nature more good humored and happy, from social position more subordinate, from previous habit of life more accustomed to yield respect to superior, from poverty more use to plain food, fewer clothes and comforts.”<sup>142</sup> Continuing on the author stated black soldiers and colonizers would fit in perfectly in the tropical climates because “in that climate the Negro is at home.”<sup>143</sup> Likewise, others stated the experience of black citizens made them perfect for the difficulties of the Philippines. Long accustomed to hardships in America the black population colonizing the Philippines would, “Be the most suitable of all troops to grapple with the difficulty in the Philippine Islands.”<sup>144</sup> Those with racially driven motives also noted this movement would considerably “whiten” America as well. Still another stated the Philippines would offer a great place for young educated black citizens, “There is certainly a fine field for young negroes, both as teachers and preachers.”<sup>145</sup> This insistence on racial affinity toward tropical temperatures appears repeatedly with black regiments. Both white and black papers felt this affinity made them perfect soldiers. When it came time to discuss colonization of the Philippines, affinity provided an excuse to use black citizens and soldiers.

The debate over immigration and colonization continued throughout the war. After the war concluded, at least one senator pushed the Army to use African American soldiers to colonize the Philippines. Brigadier General George W. Davis found himself compelled to answer a letter from one Senator John Tyler Morgan of Alabama. The senator asked General Davis if colonization would prove possible. The senator provided his own plan “to cover the lands with

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<sup>142</sup> “The Negro as Soldier,” *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, (Honolulu, Hawaii), November 2, 1901.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> Editorial, *Broad Ax*, (Salt Lake City, Utah), March 24, 1899.

<sup>145</sup> Letter from J. A. Tucker. *Seattle Republican*, April 27, 1900.

liberty loving Negro settlers, whose religious independence would ever resist the efforts of any priesthood to control their conscience,” and “to relieve the existing congestion of negro population in the Southern states by transferring large numbers of this race to the congenial soil of the Philippines, where they may aid in the development of the country.”<sup>146</sup> The senator went into detail on how this program might come about, ending by asking General Davis if he would recommend the plan. General Davis replied breaking down the senator’s plan piece by piece. Finally concluding, while African Americans made for good soldiers, the prospect of using them to colonize the Philippines would not only fail, it would prove detrimental to American efforts in the Philippines. Those who felt this way pointed to the discipline record of the Twenty-Fourth. They claimed black soldiers committed a disproportionate amount of infractions in the military. This notion falls apart in the face of the Twenty-Fourth’s military record.

The Twenty-Fourth held its share of disciplinary problems. In terms of regular army discipline, fights and missing from roll call provided frequent infractions. The common punishment for these crimes proved a small fine of five to ten dollars with a varying degree of hard labor ranging from a few days to a month.<sup>147</sup> These issues predominately came coupled with charges of drunkenness, stemming from a local drink known as “Vino.”<sup>148</sup> Vino consisted of a strong wine made from palm fronds.<sup>149</sup> Many in the Army claimed the exotic drink produced insanity in those who drank too much. Vino and other drinks, easily obtainable at local stores and homes, presented the Army a problem. Throughout the Army, Vino received a black mark as

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<sup>146</sup> General George W. Davis to Senator Morgan, April 17, 1902, George W. Davis Papers 1896 – 1902, Coll. 47002978, U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle, Pa.

<sup>147</sup> Letters, Orders, and Reports Received from or Relating to Members of the Twenty-Fourth Infantry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1764.

<sup>148</sup> Court-Martial, July 19, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1764.

<sup>149</sup> Miller, *Benevolent Assimilation*, 191-192.

destroying the quality of soldiers. Subsequently the Army labeled the drink forbidden to its men.<sup>150</sup>

Gambling also paired itself with the drinking of alcohol. Soldiers returning home stated they openly engaged in gambling throughout their stay in the Philippines.<sup>151</sup> Games such as California jack and poker proved favorites among soldiers, although, “People from different parts of the world had different kinds.”<sup>152</sup> Craps proved a popular game among black soldiers.<sup>153</sup> One Hawaiian paper attributed the rise in popularity for the game of craps to passing black soldiers, “The game from the Sunny South, which was introduced here some two years ago by a transport full of Negro soldiers, is the most popular of all games of chance now played by the Hawaiians.”<sup>154</sup>

Two separate instances show the Twenty-Fourth suffered trouble when it came to local women. The first incident involving a fight, the second dealt with the practice of enticing women to live with soldiers. Private Walter Johnson, of Company K, received a penalty of five dollars for fighting with a local woman, whom he struck in the face.<sup>155</sup> Johnson’s punishment seems slight given reports from American newspapers at the time. The American public received stories of two black soldiers attacking a Filipino woman. The punishment for this crime ended with death for both soldiers.<sup>156</sup> American papers praised this swift action, “Give both the soldiers and the Filipinos an object lesson in speedy American justice in affairs of this sort.”<sup>157</sup> Although this incident with its “speedy American justice,” received widespread publication, the Army recorded

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<sup>150</sup> Editorial, *Recorder*, (Greenville, Massachusetts), June 9, 1900.

<sup>151</sup> Jasper Johnson, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>152</sup> George Rhodes, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>153</sup> Waller Samuels, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>154</sup> Gambling Story, *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, (Honolulu, Hawaii), June 17, 1900.

<sup>155</sup> Court-Martial of Private Walter Johnson, Company K, May 1, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1764.

<sup>156</sup> “Negros to be Shot,” *Hawaiian Star*, (Honolulu, Hawaii), November 1, 1899.

<sup>157</sup> “Death for Assailants of Women,” *San Francisco Call*, October. 23, 1899.



no executions for this incident. The papers, early in the war, wanted to ensure the American public black soldiers received strict control from the Army.

Colonel Markley dealt directly with the Twenty-Fourth when it came to the practice of having women live with the men. Markley's reaction once again showed the Army's obsession with black men and women. Markley referred to this act as "a most pernicious custom." Men of the Twenty-Fourth took up the practice of paying women to live with them, acting as consorts and housekeepers. The regiment claimed an issue with the age of these women. In one instance, a soldier received a verdict of guilty for enticing a, "Young girl (thirteen years old) to live with him for immoral purposes." For the crime, the soldier forfeited a month's pay and received twenty days hard labor.<sup>158</sup> Another instance, this one with a fourteen-year-old girl, provoked Colonel Markley to call for strict rules separating the regiment from the local population. Initially Markley called on his men to stop the practice on their own, declaring, "In the name of civilization, morality, and ordinary decency and injuries of the service, the regiment's commander enjoins all officials, self-respecting enlisted men of the regiment to use their efforts in checking this custom."<sup>159</sup> Along with this call for decency, Markley issued orders for strict punishments for any caught living with local women. Markley further stated his intent, "The same behavior expected in an American town, is required here. The commanding officer wishes all around him to be contented and happy, to have all the pleasure possible in life, but evil ways and indecency destroy these. Therefore it behooves all self-respecting men for their own protection, to assist in preserving decency, by stern suppression of indecency on part of the degraded."<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Court-Martial, July 21, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA. Entry 1764.

<sup>159</sup> General Order from Lieutenant Colonel Markley, February 23, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1757.

<sup>160</sup> General Order, Circular 13, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1776.

Markley's call for decency ended in success, Court-Martial records going forward lacked descriptions of similar crimes to those above. As with other regiments, not all interactions with local women proved disreputable for the Twenty-Fourth. As the regiment prepared to leave the Philippines, the Army allowed four men of the Twenty-Fourth to marry local women, and worked on maintaining the marriages after the war by allowing those soldiers to remain in the Philippines.<sup>161</sup>

In terms of numbers, desertion played a small role in troubles for the Twenty-Fourth. Few men deserted their service, one who did stated his reason as, "Drunk and I deserted on a 'Dare' by fellow recruits."<sup>162</sup> Though the Twenty-Fourth possessed few deserters, the regiment suffered criticism for providing the most infamous of deserters during the Philippine War. David Fagen (alternately referred to as Fagin and Fagan by the American press) a private from Company I of the Twenty-Fourth received national attention for his treachery of leaving the U. S. Army and achieving the rank of general in the Insurrection Army.

Fagen's career up to the point of desertion carries little evidence he disliked service. Fagen received few disciplinary actions, although a fellow soldier claimed Fagen received undue attention from officers and received more difficult fatigues than other soldiers.<sup>163</sup> After serving in the campaign of General Young, Fagen chose to leave the Twenty-Fourth, on the night of November 17, 1899. The Army went to great lengths to hide Fagen's service in the Insurrection Army. For an entire year, the American press failed to report on the actions of the deserter.<sup>164</sup> Fagen first appeared in American papers in October of 1900.<sup>165</sup> As recorded in "*David Fagen: An*

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<sup>161</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1350.

<sup>162</sup> Jasper Johnson, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>163</sup> Michael Robinson & Frank N. Schubert, "David Fagen: An Afro-American Rebel in the Philippines, 1899 – 1901," *Pacific Historical Review* 44, no. 1 (February 1975): 72.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*, 74.

<sup>165</sup> "Deserter from Twenty-Fourth a Filipino General," *Salt Lake Herald*, October 29, 1900

*Afro-American Rebel in the Philippines, 1899 – 1901*,” Fagen served with distinction in the Insurgent Army receiving praise from other insurrection leaders and achieving the rank of general quickly.<sup>166</sup> American papers claimed Fagen’s success directly helped the insurgents hurt the U. S. Army. His success also led to a great deal of recruitment among the Filipino population.<sup>167</sup>

Fagen’s exact reason for desertion appears murky in the records. The American press initially stated only his former residence in Pennsylvania, where his brother currently served a prison sentence for robbery.<sup>168</sup> American papers soon attributed Fagen’s desertion to a native woman, whom he took as a wife once he left.<sup>169</sup> This claim plays into the fear of Americans over the friendliness between black soldiers and Filipino women. Later historians attribute Fagen’s leaving to racial issues and his resistance to racism within the U. S. Army.<sup>170</sup> Fagen’s career quickly drew the focus of the Army, to hunt Fagen the Army chose one of its celebrated generals, Fredrick Funston.

General Funston received a great deal of praise as a master of counter-insurgency. Prior to the Spanish American War Funston operated as an observer with the Cuban insurrection. This knowledge gave Funston a greater understanding of how insurrection armies operated. In the Philippines, Funston again showed the values of Americans and the Army. Funston made his job to find and punish Fagen.<sup>171</sup> Funston possessed no love of African American soldiers and his time hunting Fagen proved a frustrating period in his career.

Stuck in a war with no real named opponents, the American press portrayed Funston vs.

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<sup>166</sup> Robinson, “David Fagen,” 75.

<sup>167</sup> “Now a General in Filipino Army,” *Caucasian*, (Alexandria, Louisiana), November 1, 1900.

<sup>168</sup> “Now a General in Filipino Army,” *Star*, (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania), November 7, 1900.

<sup>169</sup> “Negro Deserter Beheaded,” *Evening Star*, (Washington, D.C.), April 24, 1902.

<sup>170</sup> Robinson, “David Fagen,” 68-69.

<sup>171</sup> Funston, *Memoirs*, 376.

Fagen as a battle between titans. Fagen received titles such as “The gigantic Negro,”<sup>172</sup> “A rowdy soldier of the purest type,”<sup>173</sup> and “The most daring and bloodthirsty of the Filipino Generals.”<sup>174</sup> For his part, Funston simply received praise as a frustrated genius eventually driven to offer a bounty for Fagen after the deserter proved difficult to capture.<sup>175</sup> Whenever Fagen encountered the U. S. Army he came away victorious. On one occasion, Fagen and his men fought from trenches until American soldiers retreated, in the process Fagen captured an American officer and took his West Point ring as a trophy.<sup>176</sup> At one point Fagen, aware of his hunter’s identity, challenged Funston to a duel to decide the deserter’s fate.<sup>177</sup> Unable to capture Fagen, Funston focused his efforts on pacifying the area in which Fagen hid. Funston hoped by subduing the local population and the insurrection he would leave Fagen no place to hide.<sup>178</sup>

After several months, Funston managed to corner Fagen and the insurrection forces he lead. Funston agreed to the surrender of the insurrectionists, as long as they gave up Fagen. Fagen managed to escape capture, fleeing into the jungles. Funston described Fagen, “Whatever he had been before, he was now a bandit, pure and simple, and entitled to just the same treatment as a mad dog; which is what he got. A proclamation . . . offering a reward of six hundred dollars for the head of David Fagen (sic), American Negro, deserter from the United States Army, was posted in every town.”<sup>179</sup> The Army typically offered bounties for deserters, living or dead. Funston differed in his willingness to ask specifically for Fagen’s head. The proclamation did not ask for Fagen dead or alive, it asked specifically for his head. Funston felt justified in his call for the murder of a former soldier instead of attempting to bring him to justice due to the crimes

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<sup>172</sup> “Funston’s Enemy,” *Topeka State Journal*, April 19, 1902.

<sup>173</sup> “Fate of a Deserter,” *Evening Star*, (Washington, D.C.), April 24, 1902.

<sup>174</sup> “Negro Deserter,” *Cook County Herald*, (Grand Marais, Minnesota), November 10, 1902.

<sup>175</sup> “Funston’s Enemy,” *Topeka State Journal*, April 19, 1902.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> Funston, *Memoirs*, 434.

committed by Fagen.

Eventually Filipino hunters did away with Fagen. A local hunter named, Anastacio Bartollome, came upon Fagen, his followers, and his wife. After eating with the insurrectionists, Bartollome and his companions attacked the rebels, killing Fagen and his men, letting his wife flee into a nearby river where she drowned.<sup>180</sup> In the end, Fagen's head came to Funston in an old sugar sack, accompanied by the stolen West Point ring for positive identification.<sup>181</sup> Funston described the man who brought in Fagen's head. After a brief explanation of the man's darker skin, Funston hoped, "He did not bet all his winning on the wrong bird."<sup>182</sup> This statement highlighted Funston's belief all dark skinned people loved gambling and made poor decisions with their money.

The American press initially changed this story. Fagen received military justice after a Court-Martial.<sup>183</sup> This story quickly fell away in favor of the real one, no doubt favored for its ability to sell papers. Papers carried earlier false stories of Fagen's death, and it took time for Fagen's beheading to receive proper attention from the American press.<sup>184</sup> The Army's final report concerning Fagen came in the form of an officer's board called to deal with Fagen's personal effects, simply listing him as, "A deserter from Company I, Twenty-Fourth."<sup>185</sup>

The Twenty-Fourth received little blame for the desertion of Fagen. Although Fagen was a former member of the Twenty-Fourth, his association with the regiment ends there for both the Army and newspaper reports. Fagen also lacked association to any particular African American cause, nor are his actions laid at the feet of the African American community. Fagen operated of

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<sup>180</sup> "Fate of a Deserter," *Evening Star*, (Washington, D.C.), April 24, 1902.

<sup>181</sup> "Funston's Enemy," *Topeka State Journal*, April 19, 1902.

<sup>182</sup> Funston, *Memoirs*, 435.

<sup>183</sup> "Negro Beheaded," *Washington Bee*, December 14, 1902.

<sup>184</sup> "Fate of a Deserter," *Evening Star*, (Washington, D.C.), December 9, 1901.

<sup>185</sup> Special Orders Received, Special Orders 13, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1760.

his own free will and accord, no blame needed to go to the Twenty-Fourth or the African American community. The Army portrayed Fagen in black and white terms; he deserted and needed to come to justice.

Early in the war, the American press missed few chances to question the loyalty of African Americans when faced with the Filipino insurrection. Fagen offered a chance to provide solid evidence of racial affinity with Filipinos, yet the American press passed on that story. The Army, managing to keep Fagen's betrayal a secret for a whole year, played a part in this. By 1902, the war reached the height of its unpopularity in America. The Army needed victories to go along with the possibility of ending the war. The unconventional war in the Philippines provided the Army with few clear victories. The defeat of Fagen offered a rare chance to show the American public a clear cut win for the U. S. Army.<sup>186</sup> With Aguinaldo captured and Fagen dead, the Army and American press could declare victory in the Philippines. American papers preferred to show Fagen as a Filipino general, rather than a black deserter.

Funston's other major victory came in the capturing of Aguinaldo. Funston recognized the contributions of the Twenty-Fourth in assisting with Aguinaldo's capture. The famous general stated the capture only came about due to the apprehension of one of Aguinaldo's top messengers by men of the Twenty-Fourth.<sup>187</sup> Although Aguinaldo's capture failed to end the war, things calmed down. The war ended with President Theodore Roosevelt's July 4, 1902, proclamation. Roosevelt wanted the war "over," to quiet anti-imperialists in America. The date of July 4 made the end of the war a more patriotic affair. In reality, fighting in the Philippines continued for another decade.

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<sup>186</sup> Miller, "*Benevolent Assimilation*," 205-206.

<sup>187</sup> Fredrick Funston to Twenty-Fourth Infantry Regiment, May 16, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

Even before the official end of the war, the Twenty-Fourth received orders to start preparing for travel.<sup>188</sup> As early as May 1902, the regimental quartermaster started issuing orders on what needed shipment, calling on officers to make inventories of their supplies.<sup>189</sup> The regiment returned to the Great Plains and Fort Snelling in Minnesota.<sup>190</sup>

Although the Twenty-Fourth struggled with issues such as women and the desertion of David Fagen, its reputation largely remained intact. One officer fondly recalled the regiment's flag. With no available cloth, Robert E. Frith commissioned a Filipino artisan to make the regiment an American flag. The resulting silk work "had yellow silk for white stripes, too few stars and stripes."<sup>191</sup> Fighting in the initial months of the war enhanced the reputation of the Twenty-Fourth. The regiment recorded victories under General Young and counted its brutal fighting under Captain Batchelor among its greatest achievements in the war.

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<sup>188</sup> Copies of Letters Sent, June 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1753.

<sup>189</sup> Letter from Regimental Quartermaster, May 21 – June 18, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1752.

<sup>190</sup> Editorial, *Minneapolis Journal*. April 21, 1902.

<sup>191</sup> Robert E. Firth, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE TWENTY-FIFTH INFANTRY

The Twenty-Fifth United States Infantry started its career with ten companies on July 28, 1866. The regiment received only white officers. The regiment also received a black chaplain due to a part of the Army Increase Act, which created the regiment that stated, “The president may, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, appoint a chaplain for each of the regiments of colored troops.”<sup>1</sup> The Twenty-Fifth initially operated in the American South until 1869.

As the Army condensed in 1869 two other black regiments, the Thirty-Ninth and Fortieth, combined and took on members of the Twenty-Fifth. Although the “new” regiment bore the name Twenty-Fifth the initial history, records, and colors of the Twenty-Fifth created in 1866 went to the War Department. The official record for the “new” Twenty-Fifth starts on March 3, 1869.<sup>2</sup>

Although the three initial regiments to make up the Twenty-Fifth started in North Carolina and Louisiana, the Army chose to station the Twenty-Fifth primarily in Texas. For ten years, the regiment served in Texas. The history of the Twenty-Fifth Regiment of Infantry describes those ten years as such, “The history of the ten years’ service in Texas is a record of a continuous series of building and repairing of military post, (sic) roads and telegraph lines; of escort and guard duty of all descriptions; of marching’s (sic) and countermarching’s (sic) from post to post, and of scouting for Indians which resulted in a few unimportant skirmishes.”<sup>3</sup> The officer tasked with writing the history of the Twenty-Fifth lacked enthusiasm for the work done by the regiment in the West.

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<sup>1</sup> Rodenbough, *Army of the United States*, 697.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, 697.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 698.



From Texas, the Twenty-Fifth went north, serving primarily in North and South Dakota. According to the history of the regiment, during the time spent in the Dakotas the men remained in camp even during issues in 1890 with the Sioux, described as, “That short but eventful campaign against the hostile Sioux.”<sup>4</sup> When war started with Spain, the Twenty-Fifth played a pivotal role in the battle of El Caney. This event, detailed in chapter 1, cemented the Twenty-Fifth’s reputation as a fighting unit and made it one of the most recognized black regiments in America.

Following the fighting in Cuba the Twenty-Fifth returned to the United States. Once home the Twenty-Fifth took up station in Fort Logan, Colorado.<sup>5</sup> As with the Twenty-Fourth, General Shafter attempted to send the Twenty-Fifth as quickly as possible to the Philippines. In June of 1899, the regiment started receiving orders to go to San Francisco for transport to the Philippines.<sup>6</sup> The reputation of the Twenty-Fifth left an impression on the people surrounding Fort Logan. When it came time to leave, papers in Colorado commented on the throngs of people, white and black, who came to see the men off. The families of soldiers crowded the loading platforms. One soldier commented to his crying family, “Laws, Chile, I’ll be back all right. There now, quit your moanin’ and wave your rags when we start.”<sup>7</sup> The Men of the Twenty-Fifth prepared to leave for Manila and as one paper put it, “The yards and all the cars in sight were full of colored soldiers and their friends who had come to bid them Godspeed to

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 699.

<sup>5</sup> Letters and Endorsement’s Sent by Company I, Records of the U.S. Regular Army Mobile Units, 1815 – 1970, Records of Infantry Regiments Organized in the Army Expansion of 1866, Record Group 391.5.5, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. Entry 1828. (hereafter cited as Record Group 391, NARA, Entry#.)

<sup>6</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1009.

<sup>7</sup> Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805. (The Scrapbook of the Twenty-Fifth contains many transcribed newspaper articles. As these articles are not clippings but transcriptions I feel it most appropriate to cite them as coming from the Scrapbook and will label them as *Paper Title*, Scrapbook.)

Manila and the conquest of the Tagals.”<sup>8</sup> The Twenty-Fifth took with them several “mascots,” two dogs as well as a boy of thirteen. The boy, Will, wore a fake uniform fashioned for him by the regiment. As one paper stated, “He ran away from poor enough a home, he says, in Chattanooga, to go with the boys, and he proposes to go to Manila too.”<sup>9</sup> No official record declares Will went to the Philippines, upon returning to the United States the Twenty-Fifth asked permission to bring him with them to their returning post, so Will possibly went with the Twenty-Fifth.<sup>10</sup>

Across the United States, similar stories played out as regiments left their adopted homes. These events include great fanfare and one story circulated throughout American papers of a high school girl hoping to get a souvenir. The custom at the time for young girls to cut off buttons from uniforms included African American soldiers. This young girl went to work clipping buttons off a black man at a railway station. Much to her dismay, the girl discovered the black man not a soldier but, in fact, a porter, to which she, “Threw the button on the platform, and with crimson cheeks, darted through the depot, while the porter gassed ruefully at the wreck of his once immaculate blouse.”<sup>11</sup> This story demonstrates, although African Americans cheered black regiments, the American press and people did not hold the same high regard for the black men in uniform.

Crowds also gathered in Colorado to bid farewell to the regiment’s commanding officer, Colonel Andrew Sheridan Burt. Colonel Burt marched onto the platform where his men proceeded to enter their trains and loudly proclaimed to all present, “There’s my brave boys, not a man of them drunk. . . I’m proud of my black boys, I’ve been with them and coached them for

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> *The Daily Times*, June 28, 1899, Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

<sup>10</sup> First Lieutenant Twenty-Fifth Infantry to Presidio San Francisco, September 13, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

<sup>11</sup> Story no Title, *Evening Star*, (Washington, D.C.), January 6, 1900.

many a long day, and I'll wager my eagles that they are the likeliest of all the colored troops in the world."<sup>12</sup> It is unlikely Colonel Burt would have spoken poorly of his men. Any negative comments would have reflected poorly on Burt's command over the past years. Throughout his long service with the Twenty-Fifth, Andrew Sheridan Burt championed his men.

Colonel Burt played a large role in the treatment and actions of the Twenty-Fifth throughout the Philippine War. A brief history of Colonel Burt proves warranted. Colonel Burt started life in Cincinnati, Ohio on November 21, 1839. When the Civil War started, Burt signed on with the Union Army at the rank of sergeant. Sergeant Burt quickly turned into First Lieutenant Burt and served the majority of the war under General Rosecrans in the western theater, participating in several battles. Following the Civil War, Burt stayed on with the Army and went west, serving in several battles throughout 1876 and 1877.<sup>13</sup>

During his career in the West, Burt proved himself an able soldier and officer and reached the rank of colonel, no small feat in the U. S. Army at the time. Eventually command of the Twenty-Fifth fell to Colonel Burt. Burt made efforts to train his men and associate with them. One-story papers carried, addressing Colonel Burt's association with his men, dealt with baseball. Burt decided to join his men in the nation's pastime, removing his jacket and stating, "I am just plain Andy Burt until this game of ball is over." Andy Burt managed to hit a fly ball and upon reaching second base heard a teammate shout out, "Run Andy, you bow-legged rascal: Run on to third!" Upon reaching third base, Burt called for the return of his coat and stated, "I am Colonel Burt from now on."<sup>14</sup> Colonel Burt continued playing and did not reprimand the soldier who referred to him as a "bow-legged rascal."

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<sup>12</sup> *The Daily Times*, June 28, 1899, Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

<sup>13</sup> Military History of Colonel Andrew Sheridan Burt, Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

<sup>14</sup> "Colonel A. S. Burt," *Wheeling Daily Intelligencer*, (Wheeling, West Virginia), August 5, 1900.

Colonel Burt focused energy into making sure his regiment proved doubters wrong. The regiment continually drilled and prepared itself for combat. When it came time to ship out to Cuba, Colonel Burt addressed his men,

Boys there's been a great deal of prejudice against colored soldiers, though I don't see how it can be, when they proved themselves such heroes in the Civil War. Now boys, you can help me make a record for you and for myself. Drill, drill, drill and sweat while you drill, if you want to, but stand up and show the people that a black man's courage is just as great as a white man's when he is in the service to fight for his country.<sup>15</sup>

Although Colonel Burt's health prevented him from going with the regiment to Cuba, through his regiment's actions Burt received a great deal of praise.

As the regiment headed to San Francisco, Colonel Burt made one last comment to the American press. "All of us realize when their transport sails through the Golden Gate in San Francisco; some of us will be taking a last look at our native land." Burt continued addressing the crowd, "We are all aware of the kind of climate we are going to in the far-off Philippines some to leave their bones until they can be disinterred and returned to America and buried in the soil we love so well."<sup>16</sup> Burt's assessment, far from cheery, addressed the real issue. The Twenty-Fifth headed off to known danger.

The majority of the Twenty-Fifth, including the headquarters and Colonel Burt, set sail on the transport ship *Pennsylvania* on July 1, 1899.<sup>17</sup> Eleven days later, the *Pennsylvania* arrived in Honolulu, Hawaii and from there sailed on to Manila.<sup>18</sup> The Army recorded no issues with the shipment of the soldiers. In a letter home to his wife, Samuel Lyon commented on his experiences. "My but I feel blue. I nearly have my sea legs, I was good and sick Saturday night. The meals so far are very good, and the service fair. Even so much more than in the camps. Most

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<sup>15</sup> *The Daily Times*, June 28, 1899, Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

<sup>16</sup> *The Denver Republican*, June 28, 1899, Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

<sup>17</sup> General Orders, July 7, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1818.

<sup>18</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, July 10, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

is just ship life.”<sup>19</sup> Transport to the Philippines went so well Colonel Burt felt compelled to comment on it. “With the exception of the case of measles, there has been no sickness in the command, attainable I believe to the general care exercised in keeping the ship in hygienic condition. Special attention was paid to the subject of bathing, ventilation, and cleanliness of quarters.”<sup>20</sup> By mid-August, the majority of the Twenty-Fifth, stretched out over several transports, arrived in Manila.<sup>21</sup> By October 16, the regiment set up its headquarters at La Larma Church outside of Manila, awaiting orders to join the fighting.<sup>22</sup>

Once in the Philippines the Twenty-Fifth participated in the efforts to defeat Aguinaldo’s Army of Liberation outside of Manila. The Twenty-Fifth operated with General Young’s forces to crush the rebel army in an attempt to end the war quickly.<sup>23</sup> Insurgent forces proved unable to withstand the push made by Young and his men, in one instance a force of 500 insurgent soldiers gave way to a smaller group of men from the Twenty-Fifth.<sup>24</sup> Army records from early in the war show the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth receiving similar treatment, usually mentioned in tandem.<sup>25</sup> Sometimes referred to as “Brother Regiments,” the two groups fulfilled similar duties at the start of conflict.<sup>26</sup>

Early on, soldiers expressed concern for how Generals Otis and MacArthur conducted the war. One Soldier from the Twenty-Fifth commented in a letter home, “General MacArthur is still pushing his campaign with his usual vigor. . . The government and General Otis are very lenient on the people. Every day hundreds of people pass through our lines.”<sup>27</sup> The Army, MacArthur in

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<sup>19</sup> Samuel Lyon, Spanish American War Veterans Survey, U.S. AHEC.

<sup>20</sup> Colonel Burt to Adjutant General, July 10, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>21</sup> Letters and Endorsements Sent by Company I, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>22</sup> General, Special, Post, and Regimental Orders, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1826.

<sup>23</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 158.

<sup>24</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1054.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, 1216.

<sup>26</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Gazette*, (Lancaster, Ohio), February 3, 1900.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Richmond Planet*, November 4, 1899.

particular, wanted to work with the locals, granting clemency to would-be rebels in an attempt to end the war quickly. While this soldier commented on the leniency of the Army, allowing locals to go about their business fit with Army policy at the time.

This stage of the war played out more as a “traditional” conflict. Aguinaldo commanded an army, no matter how rag-tag, and attempted to fight in a traditional style. In the early stages of the war, no one suspected a need for greater security from a roaming population. Another soldier’s letter home demonstrates the general feeling of the Twenty-Fifth and the Army. The soldier comments on the difference between Cuban and Filipino resistance, “The coming campaign is indeed one of an experimental nature. Filipinos in my estimation are far superior to the Cubans in every degree. The Spanish rulers made them treacherous, but they are trying to carry on a civilized warfare, and for an American to fall captive to them does not mean present death as the case of Spanish prisoners in the hands of the Cubans.”<sup>28</sup> This early estimation of war in the Philippines seems optimistic when compared to the approaching changes in Filipino tactics.

Eventually the Twenty-Fifth broke away from General Young’s command and served under General Frederick D. Grant. Under Grant, the Twenty-Fifth’s mission turned to cleaning up the remnants of Aguinaldo’s army, primarily in the provinces of Zambales and Bataan.<sup>29</sup> The majority of the Twenty-Fifth served out the remainder of the war in northern Luzon.

After the disbanding of Aguinaldo’s Army, the Filipino resistance turned to guerrilla warfare in an attempt to discourage Americans. Undaunted, the U. S. Army pressed on, trying to destroy the remnants of the insurgency. For the men of the Twenty-Fifth this meant scouting, hunting rebels, and fortifying places loyal to America.

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<sup>28</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Freeman*, (Freemont, Ohio), November 18, 1899.

<sup>29</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 158.

Scouting offered the Filipino insurrectionists an opportunity to attack American soldiers in the open, on ground the insurrectionists prepared for ambush. The records of the Twenty-Fifth show repeated attempts by insurgents to ambush scouting parties. On January 30, 1900, a group of the Twenty-Fifth came under attack in the Province of Zambales. The report of the attack commented on the death of three men and the wounding of four more.<sup>30</sup> These attacks took scouting parties by surprise early on. By the end of 1900, the Army felt a need to address the issue of ambushes. The commander of Company G received orders from the Adjutant-General's Office to "call your attention to the frequent use of the 'Ambush' or 'Ambushed' in the reports of the operations through the island and to say such use is detrimental to the service and should be discontinued." The letter continued insisting, "Some other suitable word will undoubtedly express the facts in the case just as well, and thus avoid this objectionable feature."<sup>31</sup>

Changing the term ambush in reports failed to change the situation for the men fighting. On November 10, 1900, twenty men of the Twenty-Fifth came under fire; their ambush offers a clear view of what the regiment faced in dealing with the insurgents. Three hundred Filipino rebels attacked the scouting party with rifles and "water-pip" guns (large muzzle loading shotguns). This surprise attack, from prepared positions, took the life of one soldier and saw several captured. The remaining men fell back to a defensible position, which they held from 9:30 a.m. until 2 p.m.. Finally, a relief force of thirteen men chased off the remaining insurgents.<sup>32</sup>

Other reports from the Twenty-Fifth show a similar disparity between ambushing forces and American soldiers. In May of 1901, a company of soldiers from the Twenty-Fifth came under attack by a force of around fifty rifles and one hundred bolomen. After ten minutes of

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<sup>30</sup> Historical Sketch Company I, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1800.

<sup>31</sup> Adjutant General to Commander Company G, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1825.

<sup>32</sup> Historical Sketch Company L, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1800.

fighting the insurgents retreated. The retreat left behind several wounded and killed insurgents with no American casualties reported.<sup>33</sup> The Filipino rebels suffered from a lack of training and poor equipment. Because of these shortcomings, American forces found themselves successfully fending off much larger groups of opponents.

While the Insurgent Army possessed rifles, the majority of its soldiers fought only with bolos. These short swords, or alternately long knives, failed to harm the U. S. Army equipped with modern rifles and side arms. One soldier commented to his wife in a letter about the condition of the Filipino resistance. “We have had one of the long tailing of attacks by insurgents this afternoon. This don’t amount to too much.” The letter went on to state many of the attacks launched by the insurgents proved “only a demonstrations on the part of the rebels.”<sup>34</sup> Other accounts carry similar views for the quality of insurgent attacks, “A demonstration was made against the position held by the regiment. No casualties in the company.”<sup>35</sup> Historian Stanley Karnow theorizes this lack of training and equipment led to American victory, despite American forces facing at least a two to one insurgent vs. soldier ratio.<sup>36</sup> Although reports portray these attacks as mundane, papers in America carried the human stories. Following the death of Lieutenant William Turner Shank a paper in Colorado mourned the loss of the young lieutenant. “The same Filipino bullet that laid low Lieutenant William Turner Shank in the jungles on the other side of the world reach Fort Logan and prostrated with grief the young wife of the gallant officer. He left fatherless a five-month-old baby, which his father never saw and brought grief to

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<sup>33</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, May 13, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>34</sup> Samuel Lyon, Spanish American War Veterans Survey U. S. AHEC.

<sup>35</sup> Historical Sketch of Company L, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1800.

<sup>36</sup> Karnow, *In Our Image*, 185.



relatives and friends alike.”<sup>37</sup> Further attacks by the insurrection carried similar numbers of attackers and a distinct lack of American casualties.

Insurgent forces also planned attacks against fortified positions. One attack in January of 1900 shows the plans of the Twenty-Fifth for defense. Colonel Burt described the defensive efforts of one Captain J. P. O’Neil. Captain O’Neil put into motion a plan he long worked on with his men to defend the town of Iba. Upon learning of an impending attack, the men under O’Neil fell into three defensive positions within the town and waited, “Any soldier of experience knows how most trying it is to wait on the defensive.”<sup>38</sup> Despite this trying situation, Colonel Burt commended his men for waiting patiently, according to their orders.

The men under Captain O’Neil waited until the insurgents fell into the prepared ambush. According to the report, “The enemy over confident pushed into the town and this was when our troops inflicted the greatest loss on them.” Once in the ambush casualties for the insurgents, “Reached at least over one hundred in killed and wounded, sixteen were buried by our people. Bloody trails where seemingly bodies had been dragged along were found on all sides.”<sup>39</sup> Even with these casualties, which the Army officially tallied at fifty, the insurgents continued their attack throughout the remainder of the day. Eventually, Captain O’Neil led a counter charge and drove off the remaining insurgent forces.<sup>40</sup> This style of defending became common practice for the Twenty-Fifth. Colonel Burt called on all companies to train and act in such a manner when possible. Future reports show different companies of the regiment following Captain O’Neil’s lead. One such example comes from Company L, simply stating, “The town of San Padro. . . was attacked by a mixed force of rifle and bolomen on three sides. They were driven off with a loss. .

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<sup>37</sup> *Denver Daily News*, February 2, 1900, Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

<sup>38</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, January 18, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1132.

. Company L suffering no loss.”<sup>41</sup> In this way, the Twenty-Fifth discouraged attacks on towns occupied by the U. S. Army.

Not content with waiting for the enemy to attack, the Twenty-Fifth also worked on clearing out insurgent camps. When conducting these expeditions the Twenty-Fifth met with success. One report demonstrates the resistance put in place by the insurgents in defending their bases. In a letter home, a soldier described the taking of an insurgent hideout. “We continued the advance the insurgents began to falter. We began our advance in numbered rushes, this is a part kneeling and firings while the other advance under the cover of the same successively.” Advancing in this manner the men of the Twenty-Fifth quickly approached the insurgent stronghold, noticing as they went how “the firing on their (the insurgents) side is growing weaker each moment.” Upon breaking through the bamboo fence surrounding the hideout the Twenty-Fifth engaged a force estimated at seven hundred. These insurgents offered poor resistance, armed largely with bolos, muzzle loading guns, and bows and arrows. Once inside the hideout the men attacking contended with a large group of bolo wielding insurgents urged on by their leaders. Against American rifles these attacks eventually failed, “Out in the open things began to resemble a slaughter pen,” and the remainder of the insurgents fled into the jungle.<sup>42</sup>

Against such odds, the insurgents found few options. Continuing in the manners described above cost the Americans little, while the insurgents suffered heavy losses. As a result, at the urging of Aguinaldo, the insurgent forces abandoned attempts to contend with America on equal terms. In place of traditional warfare, the insurgents went over to lone wolf attacks to cause as much damage as possible before disappearing. By 1901, the U. S. Army all over the Philippines contended with lone wolf tactics of hit and run warfare. One account from the

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<sup>41</sup> Historical Sketch Company L, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1800.

<sup>42</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Colored American*, (Washington, D.C.), March 17 1900.

Philippines demonstrates how this affected the men of the Twenty-Fifth. On December 29, 1901, the Twenty-Fifth filed a report detailing the killing of a local native. The native attacked without warning with a bolo and hacked away at a lone soldier before running off. The native, fatally shot, left the soldier with deep gashes each around five inches long.<sup>43</sup> These lone wolf attacks were repeated across the Philippines. Soldiers straying away from their units faced the possibility of turning up later physically abused or cut to pieces and left by the side of the road as a warning to other Americans.<sup>44</sup> This style of fighting led to a great deal of animosity between the insurgents and the U. S. Army, often cited as the cause for later brutalities.

In February of 1900, one such brutality led to another. A company of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry, attacking an insurgent stronghold, discovered the new behavior of the enemy. A captain of the Twenty-Fifth described his reactions to taking the hideout. Upon entering the area, he saw several dead men, who he ignored taking them “for an insurrecto we had ‘civilized.’” Upon passing the men, one of them cried out declaring himself an American soldier in need of assistance. After calling for doctors to tend to the three living, of the five found, the captain received the story of what happened. When attacked, the insurgents waited, “When the insurgents knew we were coming they waited until they were pretty certain we would capture the position, then the insurgents made all five men kneel and shot them.”<sup>45</sup>

Enraged by the insurgent’s behavior the captain gave new orders to his men, “When I found out about this business I told my scouts to shoot every man they saw, whether he was armed or not.” This action sufficiently scared off the remaining insurgents. These insurgents feared reprisal and failed to engage with the Americans again until surrendering a few months

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<sup>43</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, December 29, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>44</sup> Karnow, *In Our Image*, 179.

<sup>45</sup> *The Denver Daily News*, February 1900, Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

later.<sup>46</sup> The captain ordered the town burned in demonstration of what would happen in the future should such instances repeat. “The greatest enjoyment I had on the trip was setting fire to the nip houses, and of these I’ve burned or superintend the burning of nearly all of them.” Furthermore, the captain commented, “General Grant will probably retaliate by shooting any insurgents who may fall in our hands.”<sup>47</sup> The accounting of this act of murder ended simply with this statement from General Otis, “These northern robber bands will be actively pursued.”<sup>48</sup> This style of fighting only worsened the war for soldiers on both sides. For their part, the men of the Twenty-Fifth fulfilled their orders. Newspaper reports home expressed displeasure at the work done, in spite of this they concluded black soldiers conducted the work with pride “as are other colored soldiers.”<sup>49</sup>

In this way, the Twenty-Fifth struggled with insurgents when it came to combat. On a daily bases, things took on a routine nature. The biggest problem for the Twenty-Fifth came from finding their enemy. Insurgents routinely blended into local populations offering no clear enemy. In addition, native populations proved less than helpful in identifying insurgents. Frequent reports stated difficulties “following members of Emilio’s Band,” due to a reluctance of natives to speak out.<sup>50</sup> Natives aided the Army by identifying insurgents, though they usually waited days to inform the proper officials out of fear of insurgent reprisals. As a result, the Twenty-Fifth resorted to other means of trying to identify the enemy.

One of the easiest ways to identify locations of insurgents came from monitoring food movements. As early as October of 1899 one captain complained to the Army he observed large amounts of rice and bread moving through his territory, “Quantities very largely in excess of

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<sup>46</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 270.

<sup>47</sup> *The Denver Daily News*, February 1900, Scrapbook Entry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry1805.

<sup>48</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1130.

<sup>49</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Colored American*, (Washington, D.C.), March 24, 1900.

<sup>50</sup> Report of January from Twenty-Fifth Infantry, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

what could possibly be required for the support of the inhabitants.”<sup>51</sup> The captain asked for permission to confiscate these shipments, allowing him to identify possible insurgents or cut off their food supply. Days after his initial report the captain complained again of the movement of food, giving exact counts of goods moving. The captain further lamented the fact the Army gave him no leeway to stop the shipment of food.

Areas with heavy insurgent traffic received special attention from the Twenty-Fifth. Once an area received the reputation of possessing a high amount of insurgents, officers of the Twenty-Fifth worked on fortifying the area with troops. One example comes from a captain calling upon the Army to build a blockhouse along a road frequently used by insurgents to attack supply trains. The captain commented the area “was a continual menace to my line of communication. They are dangerous to any but strong parties.”<sup>52</sup> With the increase of troops in troubled areas, the Twenty-Fifth not only discouraged insurgent activities they took away hiding places for the Filipino rebels.

Another tactic used by the Twenty-Fifth focused on eliminating the supplies of the insurgents through attacking camps. Although some camps put up fights, others fell easily when their occupants ran in the face of advancing Americans. The main goal of taking abandoned hideouts focused on capturing weapons. Reports on captured camps always came with what weapons the insurgents lost. “January 31. The following arms captured – One Remington Rifle. One Cartridge Pouch and Belt. Sixteen Round Remington Ammunition. Eight Rounds Krag Ammunition.” “January 13. Infantry destroyed an insurgent camp . . . with large quantity of rice.”<sup>53</sup> “Three rifles, many thousand rounds ammunition, transportation, four tons subsistence,

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<sup>51</sup> Captain Twenty-Fifth Infantry to Adjutant General, October 24, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>52</sup> Report from November 13, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>53</sup> Report from Twenty-Fifth Infantry Month of January, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

official records, and considerable clothing secured.”<sup>54</sup> “March 10. Captured one Remington Rifle, one Remington Carbine, one revolver and one Mauser rifle. Camp was thoroughly destroyed.”<sup>55</sup> The Filipino resistance, already suffering from a lack of weapons, continued to lose firearms as the Twenty-Fifth pushed to remove insurgent hideouts in their area. The insurgents suffered the loss of these weapons and the Twenty-Fifth Infantry understood this as they faced enemies ever increasingly poorly armed.

The Twenty-Fifth also made an effort to discourage insurgents through its treatment of prisoners. Those not killed in the field faced military tribunals to determine their guilt. After trial, if found guilty, prisoners suffered military execution by hanging.<sup>56</sup> This earnest persecution of insurgents showed local populations the penalty for resistance. Once captured insurgents still caused trouble for the Twenty-Fifth. In one instance, four prisoners escaped their holding cell, by digging a hole under the wall and fleeing into the surrounding countryside.<sup>57</sup> The Twenty-Fifth recorded few trials during its time in the Philippines. Because of the high levels of violence perpetrated during the war, few insurgents became prisoners.

The insurgents, when not launching surprise attacks, attempted to harm the Twenty-Fifth by capturing soldiers. Several reports of the Twenty-Fifth account for missing soldiers turning up on roadsides after only a day or two.<sup>58</sup> These reports offer no reason for the quick returns. The insurgents lacked materials to take care of prisoners or possibly received the information they wanted. Either way, soldiers missing returned “brought and left lying in the road,” somewhere

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<sup>54</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1104.

<sup>55</sup> Report from Twenty-Fifth Infantry March 10, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>56</sup> Letters sent by First Battalion, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>57</sup> Letters Received, October 17, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1793.

<sup>58</sup> A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

near the Twenty-Fifth.<sup>59</sup> These attacks focused on gathering information as well as attempting to intimidate the Twenty-Fifth.

Insurgents outnumbered the men of the Twenty-Fifth. However, the disparity in weapons and training made it difficult for the insurgents to stand up to the pressure of constantly loosing food and supplies. This constant pressure slowly whittled away at the numbers of insurgents in northern Luzon. In addition, the U. S. Army offered relatively easy punishment to surrendering insurgents. One soldier described a plan put in place by General MacArthur, “The latest offer to those who surrender their arms is \$20 Mexican, parole, and the release of any friend the surrendering party may pick from the prisoners, not otherwise held than prisoners of the war.”<sup>60</sup> Under the Spanish, the Philippines used Mexican silver dollars and copper coins. America replaced this currency with the Filipino dollar in 1903.<sup>61</sup> This generous offer of Mexican dollars led insurgents to question their choice in working with the rebellion. One soldier of the Twenty-Fifth described, “Many insurgents continue to come in daily under the amnesty proclamation issued by General MacArthur, if they continue to come in at the rate they have been it won’t be long before the insurrection will be a thing of the past.”<sup>62</sup> By 1901 whole bands of men started surrendering.

Colonel Burt, in April, received the surrender of his insurgent counterpart, Colonel Rupert. Rupert brought with him 246 insurgents. Once again, to demonstrate the disparity of the insurgents, Colonel Rupert’s men carried only 103 rifles and around 200 rounds of ammunition.<sup>63</sup> A few months later Colonel Burt received the surrender of another large rebel band, under the

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<sup>59</sup> Report from November 15, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1800.

<sup>60</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Richmond Planet*, April 17, 1901.

<sup>61</sup> Yoshiko Nagano, “State and Finance in the Philippines, 1898 – 1941; The Mismanagement of an American Colony,” *National University of Singapore* (2015): 23.

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Richmond Planet*, December 22, 1900.

<sup>63</sup> Colonel Burt to Adjutant General, May 8, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry1791.

command of one General Fomis.<sup>64</sup> These largescale surrenders signify the success of the Twenty-Fifth in dealing with insurgents. Constant pressure made life too difficult for the insurgents. Likewise, the Twenty-Fifth engaged in a large-scale campaign to take care of the local population, making rebellion appear unnecessary and unwise.

While the Twenty-Fifth dealt with the insurgent forces, they also dealt with local bands of robbers, referred to as ladrones. These bands of thieves and murderers proved even more elusive than the insurgents.<sup>65</sup> These groups provided a great deal of difficulty for the Army in general. Officers typically found no difference between ladrones and insurgents. This proves a false assumption on the part of those officers. Historian Brian McAllister Linn points out the insurgent forces also hunted and persecuted ladrones, viewing them as harmful competition.<sup>66</sup> For the men of the Twenty-Fifth one soldier stated, “The robber bands are our greatest trouble. Many of them yet infest the island.”<sup>67</sup> This infestation proved difficult for the Twenty-Fifth.

The primary difficulty for capturing ladrones came from the local Filipinos. One officer summed up his frustration with orders to hunt ladrones, “The operations of these bands are confined to petty depredations committed at night upon some outlying barrio. Owing to the timidity of the inhabitants, notice of these outrages never reach the military authority until two or three days after the thing has occurred when it is too late.”<sup>68</sup> Fear of reprisals kept the local inhabitants from aiding the Army with information in a timely manner. Operating with day or week old information the men of the Twenty-Fifth followed leads on ladrones long gone from the scene of the crime. Reports dealing with ladrones took on a frustrated tone ending with statements like “have scoured the surrounding country and barrios and failed to find a trace of

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<sup>64</sup> Colonel Burt to Adjutant General, June 6, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry1791.

<sup>65</sup> Birtle, *U. S. Army Counterinsurgency*, 153.

<sup>66</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 193.

<sup>67</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Richmond Planet*, December 22, 1900.

<sup>68</sup> Report of Company C, January 9, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.



the enemy.”<sup>69</sup> Given the odds against them, amazingly the Twenty-Fifth managed to capture some ladrones. Those ladrones caught faced military trial for the crimes they committed against the local peoples. The two main ladrones found in the records of the Twenty-Fifth went to trial for theft and murder.<sup>70</sup> The Twenty-Fifth gained support for fighting the ladrones from local sources. One soldier described Filipino aid as, “The better class of Filipino are sick of the insurrection and are willing to help the Americans put it down.”<sup>71</sup> This “better class” of Filipino came to form the local police force, or constabulary.

The civilian government, under the leadership of Governor William Howard Taft, first called for the creation of native police forces.<sup>72</sup> Taft hoped a civilian constabulary would deal with remaining criminals and free American soldiers from garrisoning towns. The Twenty-Fifth quickly started calling for the formation of local police. Captain O’Neil, asked the Twenty-Fifth to transfer him to the training of local police and scouts.<sup>73</sup> Captain O’Neil wished to train these men to fight like the men of the Twenty-Fifth, particularly when it came to defending towns. Local police early on interacted heavily with the U. S. Army. The police forces initially received their pay from the Army. One report indicates growing pains in this regard, the initial pay offered by the Twenty-Fifth proved too low. With pay increased “satisfactory pay induced a good class of men to accept the employment.”<sup>74</sup>

The employment of local police, urged by the civilian government, created jurisdictional issues. Caught between the Army and the civilian government, local constabularies struggled with an ill-defined place in the Philippines. One report from the Twenty-Fifth chastised a local

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<sup>69</sup> Report of Company G, January 9, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>70</sup> Letter sent by Company G, December 16, 1900/October 1, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

<sup>71</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Richmond Planet*, December 22, 1900.

<sup>72</sup> Birtle, *U. S. Army Counterinsurgency*, 153.

<sup>73</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, January 21, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1793.

<sup>74</sup> Report for January, Letters sent by First Battalion, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

group of native police for wearing uniforms too similar to the American uniform.<sup>75</sup> This chastisement of local police provoked a quick response, “Under whose immediate command do the police operate, and what supervision does the military commander exercise?”<sup>76</sup> Initial growing pains eventually ironed out the place of local police in the Philippines. The constabulary turned into an independent force under the supervision, not command, of local military authorities.

This military supervision took the form of training and equipping the local forces. The uniforms of the local police in Luzon consisted of shirts “blue cotton with red facings,” and hats “straw hats with gilt letter on band.” The police received meager weapons from the Army, consisting primarily of bolos. The Army made specific orders to the Twenty-Fifth not to issue firearms to the local police.<sup>77</sup> Arming local police potentially, directly or indirectly, armed insurgents and ladrones.

The Twenty-Fifth trusted local police forces. Colonel Burt frequently praised their efforts to aid the U. S. Army. Burt directly linked “satisfactory assistance,” with “the attitude of the natives generally is encouraging”<sup>78</sup> Trust in the Filipino police force extended down the ranks as well. One lieutenant went so far as to ask the Army to break its own rules and allow him to arm the local police force. The officer explained he felt the arming of police would allow his men to play a lesser role in the town, freeing them for service in the field.<sup>79</sup> Free from garrison duty the Twenty-Fifth focused on the active hunting of insurgents and ladrones.

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<sup>75</sup> Letters sent by Company G, June 22, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

<sup>76</sup> Letters sent by Company G, July 21, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, February 11, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

<sup>79</sup> First Lieutenant A. J. Macnab to Twenty-Fifth Infantry Headquarters, December 20 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1793.

Local police, organized by the Twenty-Fifth and the local Federal Party, also aided in capturing troublemakers. By March of 1901, Twenty-Fifth Infantry records show successful missions by police forces to capture local ladrones.<sup>80</sup> Once captured the offending parties awaited civilian trials. Trials proved a major step forward for the local population, away from military rule. The local police proved successful enough one soldier commented in a letter home that the local people abandoned the cause of war for peace. The soldier continued ironically, “This province is much quieter than a great many localities in the United States. According to newspaper reports, it took more troops to quell the riots of New Orleans, Louisiana, than it did to put down the insurrection in Zambales Province.”<sup>81</sup> Local police proved useful in the transition from military to civilian rule. Other local efforts aided the Army as well.

Along with local police, the Twenty-Fifth made use of local scouts. Across the Philippines, the use of local scouts aided the Army, providing lifetimes of knowledge in a land the Army knew little about.<sup>82</sup> As well as training local police, Captain O’Neil requested to train a group of thirty-five Tagalog Scouts. “It is my desire to form a scout company of Tagalogs composed of one first sergeant, two sergeants, four corporals and twenty-eight privates, to be paid at the same rate as the scouts now in service, they will be invaluable in the mountains of this province.”<sup>83</sup> These men aided the Twenty-Fifth by guiding them through difficult terrain and acting as translators locals trusted. These scouts made it possible for the Twenty-Fifth to quickly adapt to local conditions and better carry out the mission of destroying the insurrection and protecting the people from ladrones.

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<sup>80</sup> Twenty-Fifth Infantry to Adjutant General, March 10, 1901/April 1, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>81</sup> Letter from a Soldier, *Richmond Planet*, December 22, 1900.

<sup>82</sup> Arnold, *Moro War*, 97.

<sup>83</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Ordinance Officer, January 21, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

By the end of 1900, Colonel Burt offered praise for the existing scouts, and called upon the Army to enlist more. Colonel Burt stated, "Further if this body of natives becomes efficient, as I firmly believe they will, it will be a foundation for other bodies of natives in the various towns which will go far to solve the very difficult problems of the government and military authority."<sup>84</sup> Colonel Burt continued stating the importance of only using scouts drawn from nearby areas, stating their increased knowledge of the land. Finally Colonel Burt justified his call for scouts, "The proposed body of scouts and other local police in this area have frequently accompanied United States troops on several expeditions within the past six months and been under the observation of my officers. They have demonstrated their value and efficiency for the situation."<sup>85</sup> The emphasis placed on local police and scouts demonstrates the Army's willingness to work with the local population. Not content with only fighting the insurgents the Army needed to win over the local population to achieve success.

The Army paid special attention to the activity of the Filipino people. On the one hand, the Army hunted and persecuted insurgents and ladrones, on the other the Army supported and trained local police and scouts. A larger population of Filipinos desired only to live their lives, and not become involved in the war. This population aided both sides in an attempt to maintain peace. The Army made winning over this populations a priority in winning the war in the Philippines. The Twenty-Fifth took the role of protector in this mission. Led by Colonel Burt the Twenty-Fifth worked to defend the local populations and attempted to improve their lives. Through these acts, the Twenty-Fifth fostered a positive relationship between the Army and the locals, robbing the insurgents of dissatisfied recruits.

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<sup>84</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, November 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

The Twenty-Fifth's initial interactions with locals dealt primarily in control. The main goal of the Twenty-Fifth focused on fighting the conventional war and only preventing the locals from supporting Aguinaldo's Army of Liberation. Initially, locals appear more of a nuisance in reports. One captain issued calls to the Army to enforce a policy of passes among local men. The captain argued this measure would keep men from moving freely and lending aid to the Insurgent Army. The captain also urged the Army to strictly monitor the food carried by men, fearing they would take food to the enemy.<sup>86</sup> After Aguinaldo's army fell apart, the Army shifted views and focused on building a positive relationship with the people of the Philippines.

For the Twenty-Fifth this transition needed to overcome preconceived notions from both soldiers and locals. Soldiers carried with them the feeling of strange and different locals. One soldier explained, "They are immensely 'human.' They have peculiar traits and customs. They are ridiculed by many newspapers and globetrotters, simply for lowering them in the eyes of the world."<sup>87</sup> On the native side, an initial extreme fear of the black soldiers existed. During the taking of one village, an officer of the Twenty-Fifth described the trouble. "The women and children, believing the stories told that the Negro soldiers were cannibals shrieked frightfully."<sup>88</sup> After a time both sides dropped their preconceived notions and worked together, "As they understand the American just so rapidly do they become more friendly. I've attended several parties; I was made to feel perfectly at home."<sup>89</sup> The reason for this transition came from how the Twenty-Fifth behaved in relation to locals.

The Twenty-Fifth worked to understand local populations and made sure to accommodate them as much as possible. The commander of Company I received orders to move

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<sup>86</sup> Captain of Company I to Headquarters Twenty-Fifth Infantry, October 24, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>87</sup> Letter from a Soldier, *Gazette*, (Lancaster, Ohio), February 3, 1900.

<sup>88</sup> Letter from a Soldier, *Deseret Evening News*, (Salt Lake City, Utah), November 23, 1900.

<sup>89</sup> Letter from a Soldier, *Gazette*, (Lancaster, Ohio), February 3, 1900.

a previously established guardhouse, “The church is used as a guard house. It is little more than the remains of a church but it is used by the natives for service and all funerals are held in it. its use as a guard house is objectionable for many reasons.”<sup>90</sup> This movement of the guardhouse, eased tensions with locals who objected to their place of worship as a military station.

Colonel Burt worked hard to improve relations between the Twenty-Fifth and the local population. The colonel wrote to his subordinates informing them on how to treat locals to ease tensions. In one instance, the men of the Twenty-Fifth arrested several Filipinos and held them for trial. Colonel Burt interrupted the arrest and explained, “I believe this arrest will have a tendency to militate against my policy of dealing justly with natives of Zambales and against my efforts to insure and maintain confidence in the American rule especially among the educated intelligent people such as these are.” Colonel Burt wanted the locals to trust America and felt placing them under arrest, without any proof, crippled this effort. Finally Colonel Burt summarized his feelings towards arrest, “I believe a serious mistake has been made in placing the ignominy of arrest on these people”<sup>91</sup> By defending the suspected locals Colonel Burt showed the people of his province the Twenty-Fifth would not treat them unfairly. Moreover, Colonel Burt defended those of the upper class of the Filipinos. This class, the Army and civilian government felt, stood the greatest chance of easing pressure between the American military and Filipino people.

As the Twenty-Fifth learned more about the locals, the regiment started advising the Army on how to behave. In one instance, a captain of the Twenty-Fifth urged the Army to prevent the return of Catholic friars. The friars acted as tools of Spanish rule throughout the occupation of the Philippines by Spain. Under Spanish rule, the friars received lands to

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<sup>90</sup> Adjutant General to Commander Company I, June 9, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1829.

<sup>91</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, January 8, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

administer. This included the renting of land to Filipinos and the collection of local taxes. This system made the friars the richest and most powerful group in the Philippines. At the same time, the local priests, not affiliated with the friars, directly opposed the friar system, in favor of independence for the Filipinos.<sup>92</sup> Understanding the people better, the captain stated his mistrust in the idea of allowing the Catholic Church to send friars into the local population. “I know personally that not only in this sub-district but in nearly the entire province there is a marked and openly expressed hostility and opposition to the return of the friars, extending to all classes and conditions of native. I believe it would be exceedingly dangerous to permit their return to the stations of this sub-district.”<sup>93</sup> This personal knowledge allowed the men in the field, and the command of the Twenty-Fifth, to form a better bond with the people. Understanding the wants and needs of the locals allowed the Twenty-Fifth to address issues important to the locals.

Locals focused on returning to normal life. The Twenty-Fifth worked to return people to their homes. Starting in 1901, the regiment worked to repair villages and get people back to their routine lives. Locals affected by the war went into the nearby hill country to avoid both the insurgent and American armies. Once the Twenty-Fifth started work on repairing villages in the Province of Zambales, people started returning to their regular lives. One report from mid-1901 details the success of this program, “The natives quiet and orderly and attending to their usual vocations. Evidence of prosperity and confidence in the existing condition is manifested by a large number of houses being erected and the return to abandoned houses by natives who have been living in the hills.”<sup>94</sup> This effort to return life to normal went a long way towards ensuring

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<sup>92</sup> Harvard Divinity School, “Catholicism in the Philippines,” *Religious Literary Project* (2017).

<sup>93</sup> Captain Twenty-Fifth Infantry to First Battalion Headquarters, December 30, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>94</sup> William Ponde to Headquarters First Battalion, June 6, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

trust in the American efforts to repair the Philippines. By directly helping the people return to everyday life, the Twenty-Fifth encouraged the people to favor America over the insurgency.

The Twenty-Fifth fell into line with the Army's overall plan to improve the Philippines. The Army focused on improving both the people and the land of the Philippines. These improvements involved educating the people and making transportation in the Philippines better. The Twenty-Fifth participated in school building programs.<sup>95</sup> These programs educated the Filipino people and greatly increased literacy rates among the population training them for practical jobs they would need to improve their own country.<sup>96</sup> This also tied the local population to the new American created government, as schools only taught in the English language.

Physical improvements also abounded in the Philippines. The improvement of roads and telegraph lines benefited the locals and aided the Army in its own efforts. The insurgents tried to stop the Twenty-Fifth from building telegraph lines. The regiment persistently built and maintained its lines of communication.<sup>97</sup> This differed from the activities of white regiments. White regiments required the local populations to build telegraph lines. One circular order outlined how locals would participate in building, "Assign a native of the town or barrio to each pole, whose duty it should be to replace it immediately if destroyed."<sup>98</sup> Requiring locals to carry out the work of building and protecting telegraph lines eased the amount of fatigues done by white regiments.

Throughout 1901, the Twenty-Fifth worked on improving transportation in Zambales Province. Multiple programs of road building went into effect. Likewise new bridges crossed rivers where practical. When bridges proved impractical, the Twenty-Fifth set up ferry systems

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<sup>95</sup> Letter from Twenty-Fifth Infantry to Headquarters First Battalion, March 10, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>96</sup> Karnow, *In Our Image*, 201-205.

<sup>97</sup> Report from Company D, January 5, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1800.

<sup>98</sup> Ramsey, *J. Franklin Bell*. Circular no. 6, 55.



to aid themselves and local populations.<sup>99</sup> As with telegraphs, white regiments expected local Filipinos to take on the burden of road building. By improving the countryside, the Twenty-Fifth aided itself through ease of movement and showing the local population American rule would prove better than Spanish. These building programs continued under the civilian government and worked to make the islands self-sustaining. Once self-sustaining the Army would require little presence in the islands.<sup>100</sup>

The Twenty-Fifth also worked to improve relations with the Filipino people by aiding them with the institution of self-government. America claimed to differ from European colonial powers. America attempted to create a representative government while blending it with local titles and traditions.<sup>101</sup> The American people and government felt a need to establish a new government for the Filipinos. This image, America giving the Filipinos representative government, meets with deserved criticism. The system largely supported American interest and continues to have aftershocks into the modern day. Many in America felt the Filipinos themselves incapable of forming a proper government without American aid.<sup>102</sup>

Colonel Burt, and other officers of the Twenty-Fifth, expressed satisfaction with the Filipino home government. Colonel Burt commented in one report he held a great deal of esteem for the local governments, especially considering their lack of funding. “The municipal officers seem to be competent to perform their duties of their several officers, and in general they seem to take pride in doing their work well.”<sup>103</sup> Although Colonel Burt placed faith in the Filipino people to lead themselves, the new civil government lacked this faith.<sup>104</sup> Because of mistrust, the Army

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<sup>99</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Headquarters First Battalion, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>100</sup> Karnow, *In our Image*, 217-220.

<sup>101</sup> Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire; An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860 – 1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), 408.

<sup>102</sup> Ridpath, *Ridpath's History of the World*, 129.

<sup>103</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, January 1, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

<sup>104</sup> Karnow, *In Our Image*, 199.

held a great deal of influence in local politics. As one report from the Twenty-Fifth shows, “Presidente was reelected who is most trustworthy and reliable. Election of vice-presidente was unsatisfactory and a new one ordered resulting the in the election of a good man.”<sup>105</sup> While the locals received partial voting rights, the Army held the final say in who took command. Even so, reports from the Twenty-Fifth showed a population happy with the franchise and working to return to normal life. One soldier, commenting on the Filipino people’s prospects of home-rule, stated, “I am fairly convinced that if these people are given home-rule under American protection it will finally result in absolute independence.”<sup>106</sup>

The local population left little written proof of how they felt about the improvements made by the Army. Evidence comes from the records of the Twenty-Fifth showing a population turned friendly to American rule through improvement efforts. Company reports state the people under the company’s jurisdiction as “friendly and well behaved.”<sup>107</sup> Colonel Burt trusted the local population enough to ask the Army to allow him to enlist locals to join the regimental band.<sup>108</sup> After Aguinaldo’s capture in March of 1901, neutral Filipinos shifted loyalty to America.<sup>109</sup> As expressed by one report of the Twenty-Fifth, “There is an increasing feeling among the natives and since the capture of Aguinaldo has become known it is generally believed that all armed insurgent rebellion is practically over.”<sup>110</sup> The efforts of the Twenty-Fifth contributed to making Zambales Province a peaceful part of the Philippine Islands. By working with and for the local population, the men of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry produced a civil interaction between the people and the U. S. Army.

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<sup>105</sup> Report for January 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>106</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Freeman*, (Freemont, Ohio), November 18, 1899.

<sup>107</sup> Report of Company D, January 9, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

<sup>108</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, September 10, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>109</sup> Karnow, *In Our Image*, 187.

<sup>110</sup> Report to Headquarters First Battalion, April 1, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1810.

The men of the Twenty-Fifth worked diligently, when there was work. The majority of the Twenty-Fifth suffered from a lack of work and boredom. Throughout the campaign in the Philippines the regiment remained at an average of between 1,020 to 1,050 enlisted men, with officers ranging from twenty-one to thirty-six. The Twenty-Fifth suffered greater casualties from disease than actual combat. Dysentery took the lead in the maiming and killing of men.<sup>111</sup> Because things proved so peaceful for the men of the Twenty-Fifth complaints actually started filtering home.

Garrison duty proved the worst for men of the Twenty-Fifth, as they stuck to the day-to-day routine of army life with little to no excitement.<sup>112</sup> Those lucky enough to leave their base found little more in the way of excitement. Starting in 1901, the time spent in the field by men of the Twenty-Fifth revolved around uneventful scouting missions. The average scouting mission took place over two to three days. Scouting missions traveled around forty to fifty miles before returning home. These missions focused on finding and destroying ladrones and their hideouts. While on the march, men used a wide variety of transportation. While walking made up the majority of travel, the men of the Twenty-Fifth made use of trains, horses, small boats, steamboats, and naval ships.<sup>113</sup> The mode of transportation dictated by the circumstances and what proved available.

The Twenty-Fifth offered a place for young African American men to prove themselves. Two newspaper accounts describe the regiment as a place for family. One story printed back in the United States dealt with David Neal. Neal served in both Cuba and the Philippines with the Twenty-Fifth Regiment. Through his exploits and letters home, he convinced three of his brothers to join the Army as well. Neal also asked the Army to place him and his newly recruited

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<sup>111</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*.

<sup>112</sup> Miller, "*Benevolent Assimilation*," 194.

<sup>113</sup> Letters Received by Company D, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1817.

brothers in the same regiment. The paper explained, “This is one of many instances of the Negro’s devotion to military life.”<sup>114</sup> Other black men looked upon army life as a way to remain close to family. In one instance, a soldier wrote to the headquarters of the Twenty-Fifth asking for transfer to Company H because, “I have an uncle in that Company, I am anxious to soldier with him.”<sup>115</sup> Service with the Twenty-Fifth left a positive impression upon the men serving.

Men of the Twenty-Fifth also expressed their commitment to their country and their fellow black citizens in letters home. The men of the Twenty-Fifth who wrote understood their service affected not only themselves but also their personal communities. Letters home directly reference the good of serving America. Through service, soldiers hoped they might gain respect for the African American community among whites.

One of the most famous incidents to take place during the Philippine War involving black soldiers came from pamphlets discovered in an insurgent camp. The pamphlets called upon black men to betray their service to the United States and described the lynching of several black men in the States. One soldier from the Twenty-Fifth wrote home discussing these pamphlets stating, “Proclamations were burned except a few which were kept as souvenirs. Colored Americans are just as loyal to the old flag as white Americans and it will always be so.”<sup>116</sup>

Loyalty to America proved a tool for proving the worth of African Americans. Blended with the middle-class ideals of Uplift, loyal service proved blacks deserved every right their country offered. Although Washington, and other leaders, did not to make service a large part of their Uplift ideology, they praised soldiers nonetheless. In one speech Washington directly equated service with rights, “When you have gotten the full story of the heroic conduct of the negro in the Spanish American War, heard it from the lips of Northern soldier and Southern

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<sup>114</sup> “Southern Negro Soldier,” *St. Louis Republic*, August 12, 1901.

<sup>115</sup> Letter to Company D, August 15, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1816.

<sup>116</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Gazette*, (Lancaster, Ohio), February 1, 1900.

soldier . . . then decide within yourself whether a race that is thus willing to die for his country, should not be given the highest opportunity to live for his country.”<sup>117</sup> Some soldiers in the Twenty-Fifth understood they needed to add to the glory of the regiment for themselves and their community. Ultimately, Uplift failed as a policy. The concept that service and hard work would change racial views in America proved false. It would be up to future movements, which challenged Uplift, to bring about real change through proactive measures.

One soldier described his hard work as, “Our greatest aim is to maintain our standing among American soldiers not another star on the already brilliant crown of the Afro-American soldier.” This same soldier continued on, echoing sentiments from other letters home, “Our oath of allegiance knows neither race, color, nor nation, and if such a question should arise, it would be disposed of as one of a political nature by a soldier. There is one great desire among colored soldiers nowadays that did not exist probably a decade ago. That is to be represented in the file as well as the ranks.”<sup>118</sup> This soldier’s statement shows a clear goal of advancing the respect deserved by black soldiers. By calling for African American representation in the officer ranks, the soldier demonstrates his desire to further his own people’s place in society. Only through the opportunity of advancement through the ranks would the men of the Twenty-Fifth really show their ability to achieve. The Twenty-Fifth possessed no officers coming from the African American community. The more ambitious members of the Twenty-Fifth went on to serve in field command positions within the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteer Regiments.

Garrison duty produced its share of opportunity for the men of the Twenty-Fifth to get into trouble. Records from 1902, the Twenty-Fifth only stayed in the Philippines for around 8 months of 1902, show average rates of misconduct. The two main Court-Martial offenses for the

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<sup>117</sup> Speech by Booker T. Washington at the Thanksgiving Peace Jubilee Exercises. October 16, 1898, Washington, Booker T. Papers, ID no. MSS44669, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

<sup>118</sup> Letter from a Soldier, *Freeman*, (Freemont, Ohio), November 1, 1899.

men came from insubordination or disobeying orders. These acts of defiance took the form of sleeping on guard duty or smoking while on patrol, low-level infractions which needed prosecution to maintain military discipline. The next issue for the men of the Twenty-Fifth came from absent without leave infractions. One form of this lapse in protocol came from missing roll call in the morning. The next two common crimes come from drunk on duty and going outside of a quarantine zone while sick.<sup>119</sup>

For all of these infractions of the military code the common punishment came in the form of fines. Fines ranged from fifty cents up to twenty dollars for the year 1902, although the common fines issued went from one to five dollars. Hard labor sentences carried the term of a month, although rarely handed out.<sup>120</sup>

Although cases of insubordination included things such as dirty weapons or uniforms, the band of the Twenty-Fifth received special attention in the Court-Martial records. Three separate cases penalized band members. The charges against the men included, bringing the wrong sheet music, not rehearsing, and possessing a dirty instrument. For each of these crimes the men found guilty received a five-dollar fine.<sup>121</sup>

Garrison duty took a toll on the men of the Twenty-Fifth, as several examples of things going wrong within the regiment exist. In one instance of insubordination, a soldier openly threatened to kill his NCO. For this crime, the soldier received a dishonorable discharge.<sup>122</sup> This penalty makes sense when realizing there exist several instances of actual murder, which influenced the decision to discharge the man.

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<sup>119</sup> Register of Summary Court Cases, First Battalion, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1811.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Special Orders no. 35, February 14, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1818.

The first incident of murder in the regiment took place in September of 1900. A fight occurred between two privates over a game of cards. After a quarrel broke out between the two, one of them went and retrieved a .38 caliber Colt Revolver and shot the other soldier in the head. The offending private had recently returned from a six-month prison sentence.<sup>123</sup> The next murder took place three months later. Again, the circumstances surrounding the death came from a dispute over gambling.<sup>124</sup> The final murder took place in April of 1901; again, two privates fought over a gambling dispute and one killed the other.<sup>125</sup> In light of these murders, the Army's ban on gambling appears natural. Boredom combined with garrison duty obviously led to conflict within camps.

Another common issue for the Army came from alcohol. One officer of the Twenty-Fifth worked on a statistical analysis of his company's alcohol intake. The first lieutenant of Company G stated in a report of his one hundred and forty-seven men found 77% engaged in the drinking of "Vino, malt, and spiritus liquors in moderation." According to the lieutenant, this meant men increased their rate of drinking by 11% after getting to the Philippines, as he found only 66% of the men drank moderately upon joining the service. Beer proved the popular drink for the men of the Twenty-Fifth, although all polled stated a willingness to drink the other options. Only 18% of the company declared themselves as teetotalers, while 5% "drink to excess habitually."<sup>126</sup> The figure of 77% drinking appears high for the company, but not when paired with the rates of dysentery. Drinking beer offered a safer alternative to the waters of the Philippines. The Army expressed similar interest in alcohol abuse among white regiments.

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<sup>123</sup> Captain of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry to Adjutant General, September 10, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>124</sup> Lieutenant Company I to Adjutant General, December 12, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>125</sup> Letter to Mrs. Emma Nealy, April 14, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>126</sup> Report from First Lieutenant of Company G to Adjutant General, December 29, 190, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

With all the alcohol flowing unsurprisingly one death occurred because of alcohol abuse. One Private William Smith, after drinking to excess, attempted to attack his friend Sergeant John Turner with a rifle. Sergeant Turner in self-defense killed the drunk private.<sup>127</sup> In light of this incident, and others, the Army wanted statistics on the drinking habits of its men. By keeping close eyes on those who fell into the 5% range the Army stood a better chance of maintaining discipline and avoiding instances as the ones described.

The Army kept a close eye on the troop's involvement with native women. Several of the absent without leave charges levied against soldiers dealt with leaving camp to visit local women or eating local food. Both of these violations provided a chance for trouble if not catching a disease.<sup>128</sup> Diseases circulated among the local population as a report upon leaving the Philippines listed venereal disease as the number one issue among otherwise healthy men, gonorrhea afflicting the most men.<sup>129</sup> One case of disciplinary issues from consorting with women ended in dishonorable discharge. A private charged with "openly living in a state of concubine with a Filipino women, to the scandal of the military service and to the prejudice of good order and military discipline," received a dishonorable discharge as well as three years hard labor. The Army wanted to discourage interaction with local women for the Twenty-Fifth.<sup>130</sup>

The Twenty-Fifth offers a new insight into the nature of desertion within the ranks of black soldiers. Two separate reports deal with the issue of desertions, and how they took place. In both instances, the soldiers in question fell into the hands of the insurgent forces. Colonel Burt describes in one report of two captured soldiers, both offered rank within the insurgent army if they would desert. Colonel Burt explained he learned of this as one of the soldiers refused the

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<sup>127</sup> Mrs. Georgeana Smith from Captain Company I, April 6, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>128</sup> Register of Summary Court Cases, First Battalion, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1811.

<sup>129</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, June 10, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1793.

<sup>130</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, April 29, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.



deal and ended up wounded on the side of the road. The soldier's companion took the offer and failed to return. Rather than trying to win troops over with pamphlets and letters nailed to trees the insurgents worked directly recruiting through capture and persuasion. One other incident appears where the Twenty-Fifth simply list a captured man as deserting with no further explanation.<sup>131</sup> While these incidents offer an understanding of how the insurgents recruited, the Twenty-Fifth carried no reputation for desertion within the Army.

The Twenty-Fifth also possessed two cases of insanity; a condition seemingly absent from other black regiments. These cases offer insight into how the Army dealt with mental issues. The first case focused on a Private Thomas Petty. Declared insane by the regimental doctor, Petty apparently suffered a long running mental breakdown, although symptoms do not appear in his report. The regimental doctor declared the primary causes for insanity as, "Due partly to his use of the native drink called 'Vino,' while in these islands and partly to an unfortunate infatuation he had for a native women, over who's loss of affection he is said to have brooded constantly until he became insane."<sup>132</sup> The doctor stated, in his opinion, Petty's insanity occurred not because of his service and therefore the soldier proved ineligible for an honorable medical discharge. Army doctors claimed the cause of Petty's insanity came from two of the Army's proscribed vices, vino and Filipino Women. This decision reinforced racial stereotypes and contributed to the continuation of racial notions applied to black soldiers.

The other instance of insanity came from a private of Company I. The private suffered a sudden case of dementia. The regimental surgeon declared the cause as, "The man seemed to be poorly developed mentally and I believe that the elements and other conditions consequent upon service in the Philippines Islands sufficient to cause his mental disengagement." Unlike Petty,

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<sup>131</sup> Adjutant General to Company I, March 23, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1829.

<sup>132</sup> Regimental Doctor to Adjutant General, June 1, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

this private received a positive endorsement for receiving his disability in the line of duty and a medical discharge.

Insanity from service in the Philippines appears as an issue. War and colonial occupation produce stress, the pressures of fighting the insurgency in the Philippines cost some their sanity. One paper in Texas commented on the high rate of insanity among African American soldiers. According to the paper a trainload of, “Insane United States Negro soldiers from the Philippine Islands,” passed through El Paso in November of 1901. The soldiers, on their way to asylums in Washington D.C., suffered as, “Many soldiers in the Orient have, it is said, gone deranged from various causes and the medical corps of the Army is puzzled at the situation.”<sup>133</sup> This issue of insanity requires further research, from current research it seems unlikely trainloads of black soldiers came back from the Philippines mentally wounded. These cases of stress induced mental issues would today be properly labeled as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and not insanity.

As previously demonstrated Colonel A. S. Burt supported his men throughout his tenure with the regiment. As soon as the regiment arrived, Colonel Burt kept up this tradition of praising his men. Starting with the conduct of the men on the transport boats Burt stated, “I take pleasure in stating that with few exceptions the men’s conduct during this voyage has been highly commendable. This is the more remarkable in as much as a large proportion of the enlisted men are used to the service.”<sup>134</sup> Colonel Burt understood the advantage of soldiers who made a lifelong career of service. Familiarity with military discipline and order made the men of the Twenty-Fifth among the best-trained soldiers in the Army. Colonel Burt also understood the advantage of showing trust in his men. Colonel Burt not only urged the arming of local police, he called for his regiment’s band members to receive weapons, “The unarmed men feel like sheep

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<sup>133</sup> “Insane Negro Soldiers,” *St. Louis Republican*, November 16, 1901.

<sup>134</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, July 10, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

for slaughter, besides on occasion they would be very useful, as actually happened when warned of an expected attack.”<sup>135</sup> The band consisted of both regular soldiers from the Twenty-Fifth and native participants. Colonel Burt also defended his men. In two separate instances men of the Twenty-Fifth fought accusations of theft from other regiments. In both cases Colonel Burt applied directly to the Adjutant General’s office defending the reputation of the men and stating, “It would be a mistake to punish this man.”<sup>136</sup>

Colonel Burt’s biggest problem came from a lack of officers. As soon as the regiment took to camp outside of Manila, Burt started writing to the Adjutant General complaining of a lack of field officers. According to Colonel Burt, this absence of officers came not from army mismanagement, “Some if not all those absent made efforts to be detained in the United States.”<sup>137</sup> Although Colonel Burt does not elaborate on why these men made efforts to remain in the States, past examples from the Army explain what took place. As the Army expanded to provide manpower for the Philippines, new officers filled the ranks. Early on, the Philippine War offered a chance to prove patriotism and manhood for young men and the Army found no lack of men to choose from for the rank and file. Black regiments historically suffered when it came to appointing officers. Many men preferred not to serve with black men due to racial bias. This bias caused so much trouble prior to the Spanish American War that officers volunteering for black regiments received immediate post and usually enjoyed a more rapid advancement.<sup>138</sup> Those men signing up in the wake of the Spanish American War looked for short, not lifetime, service. Black regiments offered career officers a chance to advance rapidly, this advantage meant little to officers intending a short service. By staying in San Francisco these officers hoped to avoid

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<sup>135</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Ordnance Officer, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>136</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, September 13, 1899/October 12, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>137</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, August 15, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>138</sup> Scott, *Unwept*, 13.

service with the Twenty-Fifth, by receiving an assignment to another, white, regiment as it left for the Philippines and sought to fill vacancies. Those field officers the regiment possessed expressed satisfaction with serving in the Twenty-Fifth.

Officers proved callous in nature when writing to the families of the deceased. The deaths of soldiers appear bland, “The ball striking the left side below the throat. Your son lived about one hour and thirty minutes.”<sup>139</sup> Their list of effects, sold unless wanted by the family, “His effects consist only of a few partly worn uniforms these will be sold at auction unless you desire them.”<sup>140</sup> If the soldier proved worthy, he would receive an epitaph of, “Was a quiet well behaved sober man, and an excellent soldier.”<sup>141</sup> Even in those cases where a soldier died because of a fight, the officers withheld their opinion of the men. The only blatantly negative feelings offered came from one report of a man wishing to transfer to the Hospital Corps, “I approve this transfer in the hope that Private Lemus may prove a useful member of the Hospital Corps; he certainly has proven himself a trifling, worthless, insubordinate, infantry soldier.”<sup>142</sup> The officers, aside from Colonel Burt, do not leave a clear picture of their views on the men they commanded.

Due to the boring nature of service in northern Luzon, a great deal of time for officers fell to dealing with mundane army issues. Colonel Burt seemed to take great pleasure in correcting the Army. The colonel’s letters to the ordinance officer in particular demonstrate an almost rueful approach to dealing with the issues present for the Twenty-Fifth.

One of the Army’s focuses for the Twenty-Fifth presented as maintaining discipline. As soon as the Twenty-Fifth started arriving in the Philippines, the Army started complaining of a lack of discipline. One such incidence involved Private George Evans, who refused vaccination

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<sup>139</sup> Captain Company I to Mrs. Georgeana Smith, April 6, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>140</sup> Captain to Adjutant General, July 30, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Letters Received, August 31, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1793.

and received a Court-Martial for it.<sup>143</sup> This breached military discipline, defying an order, and endangered Private Evans and others. Colonel Burt actually challenged the notion of when vaccines needed administration. Burt urged the Army to send new recruits to the Philippines without vaccines. The colonel insisted vaccines administered on transport or in the Philippines would make it easier for the Twenty-Fifth to get desperately needed recruits faster.<sup>144</sup>

The Army fought to maintain military discipline within the Twenty-Fifth through inspections of camps. These inspections found issues with the way the Twenty-Fifth kept camps as well as uniforms. One such inspection found the men's uniforms, "Were without serviceable shoes, hats, and leggings, many men without hat cords and number. Generally the company was not well clothed and all uniforms were old and worn."<sup>145</sup> The letter addressing this issue of worn uniforms complained of a poor supply depot. The responding officer lay the blame for poor uniforms on the battalion quartermaster. As well as uniforms, the Twenty-Fifth received demerits for its camp cleanliness. As previously described the cleanliness of camps remained important to the Army for disease prevention. The kitchen and living quarters of the Twenty-Fifth received poor marks; an answering letter declared these issues fixed in short order.<sup>146</sup> Maintaining proper discipline kept the men soldierly, reminding them of their task despite the tedious nature of service in northern Luzon.

Colonel Burt continued to struggle with the Army and the assignment of officers for the regiment. Early on, the Twenty-Fifth needed at least thirty-three officers to function properly. In a letter to the Adjutant General, Colonel Burt explained he possessed only twenty-one of those officers. This meant the men of the Twenty-Fifth lacked leadership, something Colonel Burt

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<sup>143</sup> Letters Sent Company G, December 15, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

<sup>144</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, August 29, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>145</sup> Twenty-Fifth to Adjutant General, June 22, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

<sup>146</sup> Twenty-Fifth Infantry to Adjutant General, December 13, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

described as, “This is unfair to the service, unfair to the regiment, and a positive menace to the effectiveness of my command.” Colonel Burt’s missing officers mainly came from the first and second lieutenants, all of the regiment’s first lieutenants missed service, while six of the eight second lieutenants never arrived.<sup>147</sup> Colonel Burt made one last plea to the Army a month after first complaining of his lack of officers.

My astonishment and mortification can be well appreciated by all commanding officers of experience, I did not remonstrate in this particular case because of a long habit of mine to try and not bother those of authority by ‘Letter Writing’ I have done very little of this in my long service, but now I believe it to be my duty to call attention to the crippled condition of this part of my regiment here, serving in the field.<sup>148</sup>

The issue of missing officers resolved itself, as Colonel Burt stopped sending letters. Despite his avoidance of “Letter Writing,” Colonel Burt seldom missed an opportunity to write letters when he felt his regiment shortchanged.

With infrequent fighting and a mostly happy population, the officers of the Twenty-Fifth spent a good deal of their time filling out forms and receiving reprimands when those forms failed to meet Army muster. Paperwork served as a constant source of work for the Twenty-Fifth. Officers possessed little independence and relied upon the Adjutant General’s office to dictate aspects of camp life.<sup>149</sup>

The Twenty-Fifth also spent a great deal of time requisitioning things the Army today considers standard issue. In one instance, the Twenty-Fifth asked the Army for the General Orders and Circulars the regiment needed to follow, as four companies lacked any kind of

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<sup>147</sup> Colonel Burt to Adjutant General, August 15, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>148</sup> Colonel Burt to Adjutant General, September 10, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>149</sup> Captain Twenty-Fifth Infantry to the Adjutant General, July 30, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1828.

orders.<sup>150</sup> Officers received strict orders to maintain their books and letters properly. Several times the Twenty-Fifth received reprimands for failing to maintain proper books with all pertinent information such as who sent letters (a mistake which makes things difficult for future historians if not the Army). To facilitate this need for paperwork the regiment attempted to acquire a typewriter, considering the Twenty-Fifth needed to supply several towns and thirteen different stations with daily orders and circulars.<sup>151</sup> Considering the Twenty-Fifth's paperwork came in triplicate, the necessity of a typewriter seems obvious.<sup>152</sup>

The biggest issue for the Twenty-Fifth came from supply. The regiment started with trouble before it even arrived in the Philippines. Loaded quickly onto transports much of the regiment's supply and baggage ended up trapped in the lower bowels of the ship, "Some very necessary articles would not be issued because the boxes containing them were covered with heavy freight which ought (sic) properly to have been loaded first." Trouble continued for the regiment once in the Philippines, Colonel Burt complained to his superiors, "I find that the request assigned to the regiment to complete the full strength are not equipped with riffles."<sup>153</sup> The poor shipment of supplies on transport proves unsurprising in light of other regiments' experiences. Imagining why the Army failed to supply soldiers with needed rifles proves difficult to explain.

Things failed to improve once the regiment went into the field. Almost a year after arriving, Colonel Burt continued to complain of supply issues. Colonel Burt's men went without fresh beef, despite a nearby town capable of receiving supplies. Likewise the men of the Twenty-Fifth needed to go seventy miles to retrieve the regiment's mail. Colonel Burt referred to this

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<sup>150</sup> Adjutant General to Battalion Quartermaster, November 10, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1816.

<sup>151</sup> O'Neil to Chief Quartermaster, June 9, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>152</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, February 23, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1816.

<sup>153</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, July 10, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

situation as “unequal division of labor,” hinting perhaps other regiments did not require the same amount of travel for basic services.<sup>154</sup> Colonel Burt’s solution for this problem came in the form of horses. The colonel issued calls for up to one hundred horses for the Twenty-Fifth. Colonel Burt made certain his request would not transform his men into mounted infantry, only to use the horses for supply and communication.<sup>155</sup> Colonel Burt’s request fell on deaf ears, no future letters from Burt or the Adjutant General comment on horses or their upkeep.

Although the Twenty-Fifth lacked necessities, they possessed more than enough ammunition to fight. Colonel Burt paid special attention to the Army’s call for each man to carry 500 rounds apiece. The colonel wrote a relatively lengthy letter explaining the problem this requirement caused for his men. “No man, in my opinion however strong, can carry on a day’s march, in this climate, 500 rounds of ammunition and last out, nor ought to carry 300 rounds if you want him to get to a firing line after even a short march.” Colonel Burt continued on describing his own experiment with the prescribed ordinance. “A few days ago I tried on a belt of 100 rounds, and the seven pounds plus the belt, bayonet, and scabbard . . . felt very heavy even after a short tramp.” While Burt placed himself in the field, he questioned other regiments about supply and commented to the ordinance department, “Am pleased to congratulate you, for so far I have not learned of an instance where the ammunition supply fell short through neglect of the ordinance department.” This brief compliment immediately followed with the question of rations or ammunition, “What on earth am I to do with this surplus ammunition I don’t know. We certainly cannot carry with us all, we haven’t transport enough too much more carry the

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<sup>154</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, November 15, 1901, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1824.

<sup>155</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Adjutant General, October 13, 1900, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.



rations."<sup>156</sup> Therefore, while the Twenty-Fifth lacked fresh food or mail, they at least carried plenty of ammunition.

Following the capture of Aguinaldo the Army started preparing for the end of the war in the Philippines. Early on, General MacArthur started issuing pardons and calling for the surrender of remaining insurgent forces.<sup>157</sup> Although it took over a year for the president to declare the war officially over, the Twenty-Fifth continued its work defending northern Luzon from insurgents and ladrones.

The Twenty-Fifth started preparations to leave the Philippines well before the war reached an official declaration of ending. Added to this came the transfer of Colonel Burt. For his service, Colonel Burt received promotion to brigadier general. General Burt addressed his men one final time in the Philippines;

It is my painful duty to say I am no longer colonel of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry. I can't hardly tell you how great a grief this is to me. For ten years I've had the proud privilege of boasting that "I am a colonel of one of the best regiments in the United States Army, the Twenty-Fifth Infantry." Is no idle boast. It is based on your splendid record in the past. Inspector said in his official report of you, "this is the finest body of soldiers I've ever seen in the United States Army."

To the men, not the least to be proud of is your record of good behavior in these islands, proving that your race is as law-abiding as any in the world. I do not recall the many places where the Twenty-Fifth Infantry has been stationed on these islands that the inhabitants were not genuinely sorry when we have been ordered to leave their towns. For that matter, the same is true of your station in the United States. In conclusion I desire to enjoin on you to remember your fine record in the past and to so act in the future that we all will be proud of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Colonel A. S. Burt to Chief of Ordnance, September 10, 1899, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1791.

<sup>157</sup> Letter from a Soldier, *Richmond Planet*, June 8, 1901.

<sup>158</sup> Address to the men of the Twenty-Fifth Infantry by Colonel A. S. Burt, April 17, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1805.

General Burt's farewell address, reprinted in African American papers such as the *Richmond Planet*, expressed his constant pride in his men. Throughout the Philippine War General Burt defended his men and commented on their service.

By early June, the Twenty-Fifth Infantry started the return trip to America. This trip proved difficult for some. As one officer pointed out the Army made the mistake of leaving several men behind in Nagasaki, Japan. This abandonment, "In nearly all cases they become objects of charity and are entirely dependent upon a small community of Americans for their maintenance until the arrival of another transport."<sup>159</sup> This echoed earlier problems in the American West, when black soldiers paid for their own transportation back to camp after long service in the field.<sup>160</sup> For the majority of the men, transport went easily and by August of 1902, the men of the Twenty-Fifth called Fort Niobe, Nebraska, their new home.

Although the Twenty-Fifth occupied a relatively quiet part of the war, it offers an interesting view into the mechanics of an African American regiment. The regiment maintained a peaceful existence and good reputation. When fighting proved necessary, the men of the Twenty-Fifth lived up to the task. In dealing with the local population, the Twenty-Fifth aided the Army in making strides forward by attempting to prove the intentions of America as altruistic for the Filipino people.

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<sup>159</sup> Commander Twenty-Fifth Infantry to Adjutant General, June 10, 1902, Record Group 391, NARA, Entry 1793.

<sup>160</sup> Leonard, *Men of Color to Arms*, 21.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE FORTY-EIGHTH AND FORTY-NINTH VOLUNTEERS

The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteer United States Infantry hold a special place among the African American regiments serving in the Philippine War. The enlisted of these regiments came from civilian volunteers, not career military men. In addition, these regiments experimented with the use of black field officers. These two regiments occupied peaceful provinces during the war, and much of their records focus on the day-to-day mechanics of the Army. As a result, these two regiments comprise one chapter. Through this approach both regiments still receive focused attention, while the general experience of the volunteers will receive better attention than individual chapters would allow.

As the war in the Philippines escalated, the U. S. Army and government agreed the Army lacked the manpower to sustain the type of fighting needed. As with the Spanish American War, the Army called upon volunteer units to fill its ranks and expand the Army. The volunteer system used during the Spanish American War proved a disaster in both logistics and military discipline. State volunteer regiments lacked sufficient training and leadership to maintain a proper army over a long campaign. The relatively short war in Cuba paired with an overall lack of Spanish resistance prevented the state volunteer system from harming American war efforts. Even optimistic officials felt the war in the Philippines would take more time and involve an occupation effort.

The state volunteer system went by the wayside for the Philippine War. Officials in the Army opted instead to test the system preached by Emory Upton and his disciples. Under Upton's system, the federal government recruited volunteers and chose the officers who took command. This eased the issue of politically appointed officers on the state level. Officers in the

volunteer regiments came from regular army regiments, either promoted NCOs or lower ranking field officers.<sup>1</sup> This system attempted to maintain order by insuring at least the officers possessed proper military training and experience; which transferred to the enlisted men through training.

At first, the Army attempted to handle the issue of manpower in the Philippines in house. The Adjutant General's office initially asked General Otis if he preferred increasing the number of men in his regiments or if he wanted volunteer regiments.<sup>2</sup> As the war continued the American government realized the Army needed to expand. On March 2, 1899 the American government passed a new Army Act.<sup>3</sup> This act allowed the president to enlist up to 35,000 volunteers for service in the Philippines. The act organized the new recruits under federally appointed officers. As explained by Brian McAllister Linn these volunteer regiments presented something very new for the American military experience and "were an experiment from the beginning."<sup>4</sup>

Under the new system of federal volunteers, men recruited went into Army sponsored training. By early August 1899, the Army felt confident to start sending its newly trained regiments to the Philippines, "Six of the ten regiments volunteers here are organized; other four well under way. They are well officered and many of the men have had service. They are being drilled in target practice and outpost duty."<sup>5</sup> These new regiments consisted of around 1,300 enlisted and officers divided into twelve companies.<sup>6</sup> The Army planned to use these green recruits for duty in peaceful areas, freeing regular soldiers with more experience for dangerous areas. The volunteer regiments focused much of their efforts on garrison duty, "They will be at

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<sup>1</sup> Russell F. Weigley, *Towards and U. S. Army; Military Thought from Washington to Marshall* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 148.

<sup>2</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1003.

<sup>3</sup> United States Congress, House of Representatives, *Increasing the Military Establishment of the United States*, House Report 1232, 55<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, 1897-1899.

<sup>4</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 125.

<sup>5</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1047.

<sup>6</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 125.

least available at once for garrisoned duty, enabling you to hold towns taken and have regulars for active campaign work.”<sup>7</sup>

Part of the Act allowed for the creation of up to two African American volunteer infantry regiments. These, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Regiments, made up the last of the volunteer regiments.<sup>8</sup> Calls went out to the African American population addressing the possibility of service in the Philippines. Papers across the country informed their readers how to join and serve. The Forty-Eighth organized at Fort Thomas, Kentucky while the Forty-Ninth organized at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri.<sup>9</sup> All officers appointed possessed previous service and combat experience, many serving in Cuba during the war with Spain.

The regiments quickly filled their quotas for men. The commander of the Forty-Eighth, Colonel Duval, commented on several occasions addressing the rapid enlistment, “The recruits are coming in so rapidly that if your so and so friends are really desirous of joining this regiment they will have to be prompt about it; else there will be no chance.”<sup>10</sup> The zeal with which the African American community responded to the call for volunteers also allowed Colonel Duval to choose his recruits. Writing to a hopeful recruit Colonel Duval responded, “I am most anxious to recruit this regiment quickly, but from the very best materials available.”<sup>11</sup>

The African American community also hoped the volunteer regiments pulled in “the very best materials.”<sup>12</sup> The cavalry and infantry soldiers understood their conduct affected American views of black citizens. The volunteer regiments offered the African American community a much greater chance to prove itself. Along with pulling in regular citizens, the Forty-Eighth and

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<sup>7</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1047.

<sup>8</sup> War Department, September 6, 1899, Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, Spanish American War and Philippine Insurrection, 1898 – 1901, Record Group 94, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. Entry 187. (hereafter cited as Record Group 94, NARA, Entry #.)

<sup>9</sup> “Negro Soldiers for Otis,” *Freelance*, (Freeland, Pennsylvania), September 14, 1899.

<sup>10</sup> Colonel Duval to Mr. F. H. Huskine, September 29, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>11</sup> Colonel Duval to Mr. Joseph H. Dismukes, September 29, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>12</sup> Welch, *Response to Imperialism*, 108.

Forty-Ninth allowed for black field officers. These field officers provided a rare opportunity for the black community to prove wrong decades of thought surrounding African American soldiers. Issues such as the leadership of black soldiers and their ability to think independent of white leadership took the forefront with supporters of Uplift. These officers, starting from the bottom and potentially working their way up, gave the perfect example of Uplift ideology.<sup>13</sup> The nation watched and waited to see how the experiment of black officers would play out.

Even as the regiments started forming, the American press weighed in on the idea of using black officers in the Philippines. Papers described the potential of these officers with mixed reviews, when not simply stating, “Enlisted as a regiment in the regular army with colored officers.”<sup>14</sup> One speech, given by a Bishop Waters, called upon the president to use black officers, “Colored soldiers have made such a splendid record for bravery, discipline and loyalty in the Revolutionary, Civil, Spanish American and Philippine Wars. We appeal to you, Mr. President, to give to Afro-American citizens, in recognition of the Army increase in representation and regular succession in the line of promotion of commissioned officers.”<sup>15</sup> This call hoped to bring in more officers, increasing the chance for those officers to prove themselves.

As with much of the history of the black regiments, gaining support in America proved difficult. Southern papers avoided publishing stories on black officers unless those stories painted the officers in a bad light, “The Negro officers are a source of trouble . . . The president and the officials of the war department are greatly embarrassed over the situation.”<sup>16</sup>

Surprisingly, little debate formed around the idea of using black officers experimentally in the Philippines. Papers avoided the debate altogether in most cases. As one paper explained, “So far

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<sup>13</sup> Leonard, *Men of Color to Arms*, 244.

<sup>14</sup> Editorial, *Iowa State Bystander*, (Des Moines, Iowa), April 7, 1899.

<sup>15</sup> Speech by Bishop Walters, *Evening Star*, (Washington, D.C.), March 6, 1901.

<sup>16</sup> “Negros for Officers,” *Richmond Dispatch*, March 21, 1901.

as the South is concerned, her people would infinitely prefer Negro army officers to Negro postmasters, collectors, and deputy marshals in their section.”<sup>17</sup> The officers of the Forty-Eight and Forty-Ninth, half a world away, enjoyed an out of sight out of mind place in the Southern press. Northern papers, with a white readership, failed to comment on the issue.

Debate over the use of black field officers focused primarily on the ideas of anti-imperialism. Black leaders who felt the war in the Philippines unjust disliked the use of black soldiers at all in the Philippines. For these leaders the idea of gaining officers meant little to the overall goal of equality.<sup>18</sup> Although leadership dispelled racist notions, the ultimate goal of that leadership failed to fit with the overall cause of African American equality. These voices within the black community succumbed to the pressure of proving the fighting value of African American soldiers.

Although states recommended their own officers for service, the officers pulled for service in the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth came from the existing black cavalry and infantry regiments.<sup>19</sup> Under this system, promoted NCOs brought to the civilian volunteers experience and proper training for field service.<sup>20</sup> The immediate fear of the American press came in the form of whether or not these new recruits possessed the respect needed to follow black men into battle. The bravery of black soldiers never came into question. The problem came from the use of black officers. As Theodore Roosevelt and others explained, black soldiers supposedly lacked respect for other black men. This prevailing theory led critics to question the wisdom of using black officers in the Philippines, “Black soldiers have given such good service that there is now

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<sup>17</sup> Editorial, *Alexandria Gazette*, April 15, 1899.

<sup>18</sup> Kaplan, *Cultures of Untied States Imperialism*, 436-437.

<sup>19</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts to Adjutant General, August 26, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>20</sup> “Wanted,” *Times*, (Richmond, Virginia), September 10, 1899.

fear that they will prove unsatisfactory if placed under officers of the regular army.”<sup>21</sup> The question stood, would black volunteers prove as effective as black regulars when given black instead of white officers?

The service of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth, untested soldiers, challenged notions of race. These soldiers proved the obvious fact that black soldiers would follow black officers. In America, the continuing story of black officers in the volunteer regiments went unnoticed. Even when the effectiveness of the black officers came up after the war, it proved easily trumped by the main concern of the Army, “The appointment of Negro lieutenants for white regiments would mean endless trouble, which would be serious in its own nature.”<sup>22</sup> How could the Army promote black men above the rank of field officers if they would then command authority over white soldiers? White soldiers held contempt for black officers in this war. Black officers proved their value within black regiments, although their use in the Army as a whole disappeared for the next several decades.

After the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Regiments formed, they moved towards the West Coast.<sup>23</sup> The troops received little fanfare. Local papers marked the route of the volunteer regiments, stating the date and time of their expected passage.<sup>24</sup> San Francisco afforded the two regiments time to prepare for transport, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth waited on Angel Island under strict quarantine orders.<sup>25</sup> In an attempt to ensure the health of the men shipping out, the Army forced the two regiments to wait for most of November and December. Potentially sick

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<sup>21</sup> Call for Volunteers, *Sun*, (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania), August 25, 1899.

<sup>22</sup> “Negros for Officers,” *Richmond Dispatch*, March 21, 1901.

<sup>23</sup> Commander Forty-Eighth Infantry to Adjutant General, June 24, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>24</sup> “Negro Soldiers Go Through,” *Kansas City Journal*, November 16, 1899.

<sup>25</sup> Commander Forty-Eighth Infantry to Unnamed Civilian, November 22, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.



men received orders ending their service.<sup>26</sup> This time also gave the men a chance to drill and prepare for their eventual deployment in the Philippines.

Waiting on Angel Island the commander of the Forty-Eighth filled his time organizing his men for shipment. Letters to the Adjutant General asked exactly how the regiment would ship out. The Army failed in many regards on logistical aspects of shipping men to the Philippines. The Army possessed no greater understanding of trans-pacific logistics by the end of 1899. Letters asked permission to bring horses. The Commander asked when his men should receive their tropical clothing, the weather in San Francisco at the time proving too cold for tropical clothing. Would the men of the Forty-Eighth receive a ration of beer while on transport? The commander of the Forty-Eighth received few replies to these enquires, aside from the question of beer which received an emphatic no.<sup>27</sup>

After nearly two months in quarantine, the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteer Regiments celebrated the holidays by leaving quarantine and preparing to board transport for the Philippines.<sup>28</sup> The men of the Forty-Eighth sailed on board the transport *Grant*; while the men of the Forty-Ninth sailed on board the transports *Warren* and *Sherman*.<sup>29</sup> The Forty-Ninth left before the Forty-Eighth, heading out in early December. By December 13, 1899, the Forty-Ninth docked in Honolulu, Hawaii to re-coal and offer the men a respite from ship life.<sup>30</sup> The men of both regiments enjoyed the same transport troubles as other regiments, both white and black. Standing orders dealing with the volunteer regiments urged tight packing, “Use

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<sup>26</sup> Commander Forty-Eighth Infantry to Adjutant General, November 19, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>27</sup> Commander Forty-Eighth Infantry to Adjutant General, December 11, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>28</sup> Commander Forty-Eighth Infantry to Adjutant General, December 31, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>29</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1128, 1124.

<sup>30</sup> Commander Forty-Ninth Infantry to Adjutant General, December 13, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

every possible means to get volunteers away as quickly as possible, and fill the ships as full as they can be fairly comfortable.”<sup>31</sup>

The men of the Forty-Eighth Volunteers managed to distinguish themselves during transportation to the Philippines. Upon arriving in Japan to resupply, the transport *Grant* disembarked the men of the Forty-Eighth. This rare chance to exercise and escape the long voyage turned into an opportunity for the men of the Forty-Eighth to demonstrate their military skills. The leadership of Yokohama asked the commander of the Forty-Eighth if his men would put on a parade for the city. The commander diligently asked permission of the Army, stating he felt it necessary as, “My men have had practically no exercise (our passage thus long having been very rough).”<sup>32</sup>

The Japanese officials asking for a parade made it clear they wished to see black soldiers. In a letter to one Captain Rud, a Japanese paper concluded, “It is the fact of the special character and history of the men of the regiment on board, which renders this interest a peculiar one. The dark-hued face and soldierly bearing of the men who have appeared on our streets, suggest one of the most striking developments in modern history; namely, that of the Negro into the American soldier.” The condition of the African American soldiers presented an interesting topic of conversation for the world, not just the American people. The paper continued, “The United States, where until forty years ago all the condition of Negro life were eminently calculated to deprive the colored race of every element of true manhood, in other words, that out of slavery and its demoralizing influence, a race of splendid soldiers should have arisen is one of the

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<sup>31</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1026.

<sup>32</sup> Commander Forty-Eighth Infantry to Adjutant General, January 24, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

anomalies of history.”<sup>33</sup> Once granted permission from the Army, the Forty-Eighth put on a parade for the people of Yokohama, Japan.

This parade marked a special occasion for the soldiers. Sergeant W. H. Cox wrote home describing the records he felt the Forty-Eighth broke, “The Forty-Eighth has broken (And thank God that a Negro regiment under Negro officers has that honor applied to them) it was the first regiment of a foreign country that has ever paraded the streets of Yokohama, Japan under arms.”<sup>34</sup> The men marched in good order, preceded by the regiment’s band. Officers and enlisted wore their field uniforms which, “were more fitted for business than show.” The men of the Forty-Eighth demonstrated their abilities by, “Performing the various exercises with most commendable precision and alertness. The manual drill, indeed, could hardly be surpassed by the most highly trained regular troops, eliciting the hearty applause of the spectators. Colonel Duval is to be congratulated upon the command of such a fine body of men.”<sup>35</sup> Along with army drill, the Forty-Eighth demonstrated its singing prowess. The 500-man chorus of the Forty-Eighth performed several patriotic songs for the Japanese crowd, which “made for themselves a reputation that will live in the minds of the people of Japan.”<sup>36</sup>

This parade, and the attention given to it by soldiers in writing home, demonstrates the importance of service to the African American community. Parading for the Japanese offered these men an opportunity to prove their position as real soldiers. Furthermore, the singing of patriotic songs demonstrated the patriotism of the men. The Japanese press praised the men involved, commenting on the rise of African American soldiers despite the previous debilitating

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<sup>33</sup> Editorial, *Iowa State Bystander*, (Des Moines, Iowa), February 23, 1900.

<sup>34</sup> “No Credit is Given,” *Richmond Planet*, April 14, 1900.

<sup>35</sup> Editorial, *Iowa State Bystander*, (Des Moines, Iowa), February 23, 1900.

<sup>36</sup> “No Credit is Given,” *Richmond Planet*, April 14, 1900.

condition of slavery. The Forty-Eighth left Japan for the Philippines in the hopes of continuing to break records and shock the world with the skills and bravery of black enlisted men and officers.

The men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth started arriving in the Philippines by the middle of January, whereupon they took up station outside of Manila for further training.<sup>37</sup> Unlike other regiments, the two volunteer regiments possessed an outside observer. John Clifford Brown, a member of the corps of engineers sent to the Philippines to build bridges and roads. Brown, an MIT graduate from New York, served in a volunteer regiment during the Spanish American War although his unit never made it to Cuba. Following the war Brown joined the regular army as an enlisted man, failing to make officer. Brown's career in the Philippines brought him into close contact with the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteers; until he took sick with typhoid fever, returned to the States, and died from his ailments. Brown kept a detailed journal and wrote home frequently.

These letters and journal, organized by Joseph P. McCallus, offer a valuable insight into the thinking of white Americans in regards to black soldiers. Brown offers frequent editorials on the quality of black citizens and the type of soldiers he felt they made. In August of 1899, Brown arrived in the Philippines with a group from the Twenty-Fourth Infantry and commented, "Have been kept on the ship. The niggers left on the eleventh and very glad we were to have them go."<sup>38</sup> Brown states, starting with this first encounter, his dislike of black people and black soldiers. What makes Brown and his interpretations interesting comes from his former position in society. Brown came from a well to do family, attended a prestigious school, and came from a section of the country relatively friendlier to the African American cause. Brown's comments and editorials

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<sup>37</sup> Commander Forty-Eighth Infantry to Adjutant General, January 27, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>38</sup> Joseph P. McCallus, ed., *Gentlemen Soldier: John Clifford Brown & The Philippine-American War*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 75.

on black soldiers offer insight into the uphill struggle black soldiers faced when confronted with racism in the United States.

Once acquainted with the situation in the Philippines, both regiments of volunteers headed into northern Luzon. Here these men took up the role of garrison duty, relieving men for the service of hunting Aguinaldo and larger bands of insurgents. The Forty-Eighth took up positions in Union and Benguet Provinces on the western side of the island.<sup>39</sup> The Forty-Ninth took up positions along the Cagayan River, which stretched through the Provinces of Cagayan, Isabela, and Nueva Viscaya; along the eastern and central parts of northern Luzon.<sup>40</sup>

The major goal for both of these regiments rested in creating and maintaining stable civil governments. Generals Otis and Young “Believed that the reputed antipathy between Tagalogs and Ilocanos and an immediate demonstration of benevolence would quickly convert the population and thus the district would serve almost as a laboratory for civil action.”<sup>41</sup> The territories under the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth offered a difficult task. While the insurgent forces lacked the numbers to resist the Army; the Army lacked the information and infrastructure to properly combat the insurgents. As a result, the remaining insurgent forces in northern Luzon operated freely for a time. These groups took advantage of the difficulties both regiments confronted in movement.<sup>42</sup> Providing no specific instruction on the creation and maintenance of stable civil government, the Army left its commanding officers to dictate the future of northern Luzon.

The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteers relied upon scouting to fight the insurgents of northern Luzon. Through scouting, the regiments learned the landscape, gathered information

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<sup>39</sup> Commander Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, June 24, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>40</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 263.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 261.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 263-264.

on insurgents, and offered a constant show of force for the locals. Scouting missions for both regiments included orders to gather information on the insurgent presence by interviewing locals when found. Both regiments used scouting to overcome the Army's limitation in regards to infrastructure and knowledge.

The typical scouting mission took place over the course of one day; the distance traveled varying depending on terrain covered. Scouting started early in the morning, "Should start immediately after breakfast so as to make the first march before the heat of the day." Men marched in a general direction until mid-day "returning to camp in time for supper."<sup>43</sup> The typical scouting mission consisted of between twenty and thirty men. These men traveled on average fifteen to thirty miles in a day, with strict orders to search any dwelling places encountered for possible insurgent activity.<sup>44</sup>

These marches took place in terrible terrain. Both regiments struggled with mountains and rivers and the difficulty associated with crossing them. Arthur Peterson, of the Forty-Eighth, wrote home describing his impression of scouting missions, "We are right in the heart of the mountains, and we have to patrol all over them every day; day after day, climbing mountains." Peterson described the work as difficult, to say the least, "Now, mountain climbing is not what it's cracked up to be, even under favorable conditions, but when it comes to walking out here, where someone is shooting at you from behind a tree or a stone, it is a mess." The constant threat of attack paired with difficult terrain and "of course, the sun is boiling hot," presented these men with a difficult task.<sup>45</sup> One report of a scouting mission detailed the hardships endured, "We found the country almost impassable all the tracks were over the very highest peaks of the mountains of that section . . . we marched eight hours without finding any water. We found very

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<sup>43</sup> Major Clifford to Forty-Eighth Infantry, January 27, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>44</sup> Colonel Duval to Adjutant General, January 7, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>45</sup> Letter from David J. Gilmer, *Colored American*, (Richmond, Virginia), November 9, 1900.

little traces of civilization whatever . . . it was impossible to subsist on this country after leaving Duplar until we arrived at Monkyo.”<sup>46</sup> Hardships endured failed to produce successful results in combating the insurgents.

To compound the purely physical issues of scouting, the men of both regiments faced the same threat of ambush every other regiment in the Philippines faced. As Captain Frank R. Steward of the Forty-Ninth explained, “It is hard to catch the ‘Gugues’ together in sufficient bunches. We are constantly scouting.”<sup>47</sup> The inability to find or catch insurgents frustrated the Army throughout the Philippines. The men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth typically encountered one or two enemies who fired before running away. This tactic varied from the large ambushes carried out in southern Luzon or Samar. To rid northern Luzon of hiding places for ambush attackers, men of the Forty-Eighth received orders to clear roads as they scouted, up to twenty yards on each side. In other areas white regiments required all roadwork be done by Filipinos. Brigadier General James Franklin Bell described this work as beneficial to the Filipinos, “The object of this provision is to give beneficial occupation to the able bodied men concentrated in towns and to compel them to earn food for themselves and families.”<sup>48</sup> For the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth locals received orders to clear out any foliage from around and under their houses, but not to clear roads.<sup>49</sup> Colonel Duval of the Forty-Eighth hoped to rid his men of the threat of ambush. These efforts took place only on easy paths, not the mountainous areas.

The effectiveness of these scouting missions leaves room for debate. Scouting missions failed to discover large groups of insurgents, “We scouted every Barrio through which we passed

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<sup>46</sup> Captain Hawlin to Colonel Duval, November 21, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>47</sup> Letter from Frank R. Steward, *Bee*, (Washington, D.C.), April 6, 1901.

<sup>48</sup> Ramsey, *J. Franklin Bell*, Circular no. 19, 65.

<sup>49</sup> Colonel Duval to Adjutant General, January 7, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

most thoroughly and saw no signs of transit or Insurrectos whatever.”<sup>50</sup> Reports went to commanding officers detailing the route taken and villages passed through only to conclude, “Saw no signs of Insurrectos whatever.”<sup>51</sup> This frustrating lack of progress paired with grueling physical demands wore on the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth.

Colonel Duval reported, in early 1901, on the situation in his territory. The colonel commented on his initial briefing, stating an estimated seventy-five insurgents near one town. Duval continued declaring since his arrival “have seen no evidence whatever of Insurrectos.”<sup>52</sup> Possibly the mere presence of soldiers on scouting missions led to a decrease in insurgent activity.

The Army’s assumption of a local population desirous of peace receives credence from the lack of insurgent activities. The Army felt scouting missions deserved a high priority. Both regiments continued to scout until they left the Philippines. Colonel Duval placed special care on the continuation of scouting missions during his time as commander. In May of 1900, Duval issued a regiment wide order regarding scouting, “It is not considered advisable nor desirable to have target practice under present condition. All that the men can endure should be put upon them in the way of scouting, night patrols, etc., if such scouting is prosecuted with proper activity it will be found that the men will need all the intervals for rest.”<sup>53</sup> Regardless of their effectiveness, scouting missions continued. The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth stuck with the Army’s preferred method of hunting insurgents.

If scouting provided dubious results, the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth garnered greater success from actively hunting reported bands of insurgents. Operating on

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<sup>50</sup> Captain Hawlin to Colonel Duval, November 21, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>51</sup> Captain Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Colonel Duval, January 23, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>52</sup> Colonel Duval to Adjutant General, January 7, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>53</sup> Colonel Duval to Forty-Eighth Volunteers, May 1, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.



information provided from locals, both regiments actively sought out insurgent controlled towns and bases. These small communities lay in difficult terrain and presented the attackers with considerable tactical complications.

One such attack, in late 1900, details the conditions faced by the volunteers, “Our force was exposed to enemy’s fire through the entire engagement there being no natural cover in the coconut forest occupied by us.” Insurgent forces attempted to place their bases in areas which gave them the greatest advantage in case of attack, as described, “The enemy kept up a plucky rapid fire of some 150 rounds to resist, but soon found that their efforts were worthless, although from the high position they occupied having full view of our entire right flank, every geographical advantage to resist us was decidedly at their command.” Even with every geographical advantage, insurgent forces struggled to hold ground against American forces. Trained in modern tactics, American forces managed to ambush insurgent strongholds. Insurgent efforts at fortification such as stone walls and bamboo fences proved ineffective.<sup>54</sup>

Upon taking a base or small town, soldiers worked to gather anything possibly important to the insurrection. Following the above battle, Company D of the Forty-Ninth investigated the local village, “We found seventy-five or eighty habited houses, some were of the better class and all vacated, of this number four contained quantities of food supplies.” Those supplies included rice, bread, clothing, blankets, and gunpowder. To keep these supplies from aiding any future resistance the commander of Company D ordered the houses burned.<sup>55</sup>

This tactic of taking the fight directly to the insurgents proved useful in dealing with the Filipino resistance. Upon taking bases or villages, reports carried list of captured goods. Two

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<sup>54</sup> Commander Company F, Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, May 1, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>55</sup> Report from Company D, November 22, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

reports from mid-1901 describe stores of rifles complete with ammunition.<sup>56</sup> As with other regiments, the capture of rifles proved an important aspect of fighting in the Philippines. More so than food supplies, preventing the insurgents from using modern weapons aided the Army in pacifying the Filipino insurrection. As Lester Langley describes in *The Banana Wars*, a disarmed Filipino population could offer little resistance to American efforts.<sup>57</sup>

The lack of training on the part of the insurgents made for an ineffective resistance. The loss of firearms only compounded the lack of training. A clear sign of the effect of the training and loss of weapons proves evident in the reports of Colonel Duval. During the Forty-Eighth's stay in the Philippines, the regiment engaged in twenty-nine "fights." In total the Forty-Eighth lost only three wounded and one killed. Colonel Duval estimated insurgent losses, for each conflict, at between six and twenty.<sup>58</sup> The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth experienced success in fighting the insurgents, when they managed to find them.

Engagements with the insurgents often ended with the insurgents retreating to fight another day. After providing a stiff resistance insurgent forces abandoned their positions and fled into the countryside. Captain Frank Steward of the Forty-Ninth described one engagement followed by retreat. "Last month I got in one scrap with the insurgents. . . Instead of coming down, the road as they expected we took a circuitous route, flanked them, and charged. I don't believe they've stopped running yet." Captain Steward concluded his letter describing retreat with the common racially derogatory term for Filipinos "the 'Gugu' is a fleet-footed animal."<sup>59</sup> As Willard Gatewood, Jr., explains, black soldiers used the racial slang for the Filipinos as freely

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<sup>56</sup> Colonel Duval to Adjutant General, June 13, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>57</sup> Lester D. Langley, *The Banana Wars; United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898 – 1934* (Wilmington: A Scholarly Resources Inc., 1983), 13.

<sup>58</sup> Report from Colonel Duval to Adjutant General, June 24, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>59</sup> Letter from Frank R. Steward, *Bee*, (Washington, D.C.), April 6, 1901.

as white soldiers. Gatewood further explains these soldiers used the term “Gugu” in place of the common term of “Nigger” used to describe Filipinos by white soldiers.<sup>60</sup>

Other reports also announce a frustration with the inability to catch the enemy. One attack from Company B of the Forty-Eighth demonstrates confusion from the company commander. Following the protocol of splitting up his men into three groups and surrounding an enemy stronghold the commander reported shock at finding the stronghold completely empty. The company commander concluded he possessed no knowledge of how the enemy managed to escape.<sup>61</sup> Following the retreat of insurgents, attacks pressed on until capture proved impossible. The commander of Company E of the Forty-Eighth explained how a common retreat went. After attempting to follow the fleeing insurgents the commander found, “The streams . . . were rendered unpassable and further pursuit was abandoned.” On this same expedition, the commander commented on several men falling victim to, and later rescued from, swollen rivers; proving the Philippines themselves as dangerous as the insurgents.<sup>62</sup>

Through scouting and direct attacks, the volunteer regiments attempted to flush out and destroy insurgent forces. Both these techniques produced mixed results. The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth fought against a foe unable to compete with the well-trained and equipped U. S. Army. As a result, much of the actual fighting which took place for these regiments happened on the terms desired by the insurgents. Ambushes and direct attacks on the volunteer regiments offered the greatest combat threat to these soldiers.

Insurgent attacks focused on nighttime raids on outpost or on men scouting. Because of these attacks, guards on duty wasted little time firing upon any who approached during the night. One account describes how insurgents sized up outpost for possible attacks. On the night of

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<sup>60</sup> Gatewood, *Smoked Yankees*, 295.

<sup>61</sup> Company B to Colonel Duval, May 8, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>62</sup> Leon Denison Company E to Colonel Duval, February 7, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

February 23, 1900, five separate sentinels reported the approach of groups of at most three Filipino men dressed in white. In each instance, the guards called out for the men to stop. This call caused the Filipino men to run off on the first four occasions. The final sentry approached fired his rifle in warning which scared off the men. Captain James Hawlin described the incident as a probing effort by the insurgents to see if the outpost offered an easy target.<sup>63</sup> In these instances, those approaching turned up the next day wounded or dead from probing American attentiveness.<sup>64</sup>

Company level officers claimed the attentiveness of sentries saved lives. Accounts of firing on anyone approaching outpost or towns contained statements expressing the belief of intended attacks. "It was only stopped by the firing of one of the members of our guard in which he wounded three men. The agreement was to attack the town from three directions."<sup>65</sup> It may be tempting to assign the behavior of guards to jumpiness and possible over reaction. When captured those who approached American strongholds stated their plans. Over the course of their assignment in the Philippines both regiments stopped attacks through quick action.

The alertness of American soldiers prevented surprise attacks, but not all of them. The largest engagement for the Forty-Eighth took place in October 1900. An American outpost of twenty men found themselves under attack by a large insurgent force in the dark of night. The attack started with the firing of a bamboo cannon launching a six-pound rock into the quarters of the men. Following this initial attack, insurgent riflemen opened fire upon the men of the Forty-Eighth. As one report states the rifles' distraction allowed for waves of bolomen to rush into close quarters in an attempt to hack the American soldiers to death. With only the protection of the shack in which they slept, the twenty men defended themselves against several waves of

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<sup>63</sup> Captain James Hawlin to Adjutant General, February 25, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>64</sup> Letter sent Company G, Forty-Eighth Volunteers, July 20, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>65</sup> Captain Gage to Adjutant General, May 26, 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

attackers. None of the defenders fell during the battle; twenty-eight of the insurgents went on the records as dead after the conflict.<sup>66</sup> Although the volunteer regiments fared well in conflicts with insurgents it should not go overlooked these men lived under constant threat. The startling lack of wounded and dead in the face of insurgent attacks misrepresents the threat of the unknown the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth lived with every day.

Given the difficulties of scouting and hunting insurgents, the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth came up with different methods for dealing with resistance. In 1900 both regiments started taking census roles. These roles focused on identifying insurgents who previously surrendered and returned to peaceful life. Calls for census reports made certain not to harass these individuals, only to question them on knowledge they possessed.<sup>67</sup> Captured insurgent also went through vigorous interrogation.<sup>68</sup> These interrogations led to information about insurgent movements and the locations of hideouts and townspeople who proved sympathetic to the insurgent cause.

Both regiments took any tips from locals seriously and pursued even those who looked like insurgents. As one report claims, “Found a group of Filipinos who looked like insurgents according to some men. Did not want to get close enough to be attacked but could not get close enough to be really sure . . . as the sentry was positive that he saw insurgents, he ordered one volley fired with the guns elevated to develop anything.”<sup>69</sup> By “develop anything,” the report meant provoking the Filipinos into returning fire. This tactic, taking any suspicion seriously, meant the insurgents received no slack from American soldiers. Even the slightest suspicion provoked an armed response from American soldiers. As one officer explained, “You see major I

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<sup>66</sup> General Order no. 3, February 21, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>67</sup> Report to Adjutant General, August 14, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>68</sup> Report to Adjutant General, November 6, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>69</sup> Report to Adjutant General, January 17, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

did not have any confidence in the said capture but I believe in the grabbing of a 'straw' when it is required."<sup>70</sup> This constant pressure on the insurgents made American intentions clear. The message sent to the Filipino people stated the Army would accept no acts of resistance.

One instance of "grabbing of a 'straw'" came when a soldier of the Forty-Ninth found himself approached by an insurgent. The insurgent asked the man if he wanted to desert his post and join the insurgency. The insurgent, believing black soldiers more likely to desert due to racial issues, offered Corporal Richard Cook a high rank if he joined the insurgency. In a show of pretend loyalty Corporal Cook agreed to join, so long as he could retrieve his gun and necessary supplies. Upon reaching his barracks, Corporal Cook informed his commanding officer of the insurgent's offer and organized a group to capture the recruiter and any supporters. The corporal arranged a meeting place with his recruiter and the insurgents found themselves ambushed by American soldiers.<sup>71</sup>

This pressure on the insurgents provided mixed results. These efforts showed the enemy America's intentions more so than actually harming the insurgents. Interrogations turned up bases emptied of all men and goods.<sup>72</sup> At best, these efforts identified areas that needed a stronger presence of American soldiers. One such example coming from calls to place outpost and guard stations along the road from Imus to Mutilupa. Guard post allowed for more scouting mission in the areas of suspected insurgent activities.<sup>73</sup>

Given the material and martial advantages enjoyed by American soldiers, the insurgent forces placed much of their efforts on trying to control the local population. Instead of directly engaging the U. S. Army, insurgents strong-armed locals into providing supplies and support.

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<sup>70</sup> Letter to Major of Forty-Eighth Volunteers, December 5, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>71</sup> Commander Company B, Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, March 4, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>72</sup> Company B to Adjutant General, August 13, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>73</sup> Colonel Duval to Adjutant General, February 15, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

These actions attempted to force the local population into the rebellion against America. As demonstrated by reports from locals of expected attacks, “Native information is that this town will be attacked tonight, not the American forces, but the natives friendly to the Americans. I doubt if they make any attack, but will be prepared.”<sup>74</sup> This type of reprisal attack against Filipinos friendly to America tried to compel locals into supporting the insurgency. Even if a poor recruiting technique, it at least intimidated other Filipinos away from supporting American rule. For this reason, the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth prosecuted their duties with determination. Defending the local population against the insurgents ensured a peaceful transition from insurgent to American control.

Local leadership in northern Luzon suffered from constant threat because of insurgent activity. Three separate instances detail the danger faced by local leadership who supported American efforts. These events demonstrate the tactics of the insurgents across the Philippines to turn native people against the United States through fear and intimidation.

The first incident occurred in early May 1900. A local presidente went missing. The local captain of the Forty-Eighth reported the cause of kidnapping as the presidente, “Refused to supply them with food and insurgents justifying their actions on the grounds that Caleon had given food to American troops.” Supporting America, and not the insurgency, led to Presidente Caleon’s kidnapping. The Forty-Eighth made the rescue of Caleon a priority. A scouting mission went out in an effort to find the kidnapped man. The report of the scout stated the trail as difficult, “We pushed over dangerous trails where I am sure none but native feet have been before. In the pursuit, it was necessary for us to make our way up and along the surface of a smooth rock for half a mile, crawling, sliding, grasping at the smallest particles of the surface for

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<sup>74</sup> Captain Gage to Adjutant General, May 27, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

assistance. Requiring two hours to make the ascent.”<sup>75</sup> Eventually the scouting men came upon the fleeing insurgents and opened fire on them, only to again lose track of the enemy and return to camp. In the end the Forty-Eighth failed to rescue the captured presidente, no further reports mention his fate.

The second incident involved direct intimidation of a local president and his staff. Captain Gage of the Forty-Eighth reported a letter sent to local officials, “Brother Filipinos; A conference is requested with you at once without losing any time. This is for your protection for you are now carried on the ‘Dead List,’ do not be afraid to come.” The presidente took the letter to American authorities, rather than meeting the insurgents to discuss his position on the “Dead List.” Captain Gage continued his report stating he felt these threats made it difficult for the elected officials to carry out their duties. The local officials stated a fear for their families, “Neither the presidente, judge or clerk are afraid for their personal safety but for the safety of their family on whom they are afraid the insurgents will take out vengeance.” To ease the matter Captain Gage provided all those addressed in the letter with revolvers for self-defense. Captain Gage also ordered more troops to the town to act as guards for local officials.<sup>76</sup> This extra effort eased the concerns of local officials. Captain Gage followed up these efforts at protection by doubling efforts to find local insurgents. No further troubles appeared in connection with the “Dead List.”

Locals rightly feared insurgent reprisals. The final incident faced by the Forty-Eighth dealt with assassinations. In December of 1900, the town of Rosario suffered from two assassinations. The local presidente and his son died because of “suspected sympathy and

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<sup>75</sup> Report from Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, May 11, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>76</sup> Captain Gage to Adjutant General, May 22, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.



assistance rendered to American cause.”<sup>77</sup> Likewise, in the same town, four other elected officials faced assault. The insurgents attempted to send the message that working with the Americans would result in violence or death.

Because of threats against locals, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Regiments focused on protecting locals. Although both regiments attempted to hunt down insurgents these efforts provided mixed results. As stated by Brian McAllister Linn, the insurgents took full advantage of the situation in the northern Luzon.<sup>78</sup> Although the Army attempted proactive measures, much of the work of fighting the insurgents ended as reactive actions.

While the insurgent forces offered the Army a constant threat, local bandit groups also took advantage of the chaos of war. Ladrones offered trouble for the local populations on a regular basis. The commander of the Forty-Ninth commented early on, “The only real problem in the district is the ladrones,” while insurgent activity appeared non-existent.<sup>79</sup> Ladrones offered little direct resistance to the Army, instead focusing their efforts on profiting from the people. The trouble caused by bandits for the local population provided the Army with an opportunity to prove its commitment to protecting the Filipinos. Efforts to eliminate ladrones helped win over local support. The insurgents and the Spanish both failed to stop ladrones in remote northern Luzon. The U. S. Army attempted to bring law and order to the area.

Most ladrones initially served with the insurgency. After the large-scale defeat of Aguinaldo’s Army, some insurgents took to lives of crime, either from personal inclination or an inability to return to normal life.<sup>80</sup> The lives of ladrones focused on personal survival and gain

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<sup>77</sup> Report from Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, December 20, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>78</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 263-264.

<sup>79</sup> Commander Forty-Ninth Volunteers to Adjutant General, June 29, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from a Soldier, *Savana Tribune*, March 7, 1900.

not any particular cause. As a result, the Army treated these former insurgents as common criminals, not military opponents.

The Army focused on the arrest of ladrones instead of trying to kill them in combat. The volunteer regiments operated largely as a police force when it came to ladrones. Arrest reports from both regiments list the types of crimes committed by ladrones. One man arrested came up on charges of, “Cut-throat. He has been stealing clothing, and extorting money from the women in the absence of their husbands, and has terrorized the people of the community.”<sup>81</sup> Common robbery also took place. One arrest record shows a group of ladrones breaking into houses and stealing money.<sup>82</sup> Although ladrones sometimes stole money, their primary target for theft was food. Needed for survival, ladrones would pass through a town and demand food from the locals, much as insurgents would. The Army’s response to these thefts was to send soldiers to towns with frequent complaints.<sup>83</sup> Ladrones also took to highway robbery, ambushing travelers and robbing them at gunpoint.<sup>84</sup> To protect local travelers the Army provided guards for convoys of Filipino wagon trains.<sup>85</sup> Once protected, wagon trains of goods moved relatively unmolested through ladrone territories.

Because ladrones operated as individuals the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Regiments engaged in detective work to find criminals. Reports carried descriptions of criminals for all surrounding post to aid in identification. One such report called for members of Company D, Forty-Eighth Volunteers, to keep on the lookout for Senior Phillis, “He is of small stature, right about 120 lbs. had small pox, walks fast at all times and very intelligent. Signs of small pox

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<sup>81</sup> Colonel Duval to Adjutant General, April 11, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>82</sup> Company D, Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, March 18, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>83</sup> Major Johnson to Adjutant General, April 14, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>84</sup> Report from Forty-Ninth to Adjutant General, February 4, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>85</sup> Major Johnson to Adjutant General, May 22, 1900, Record Group 94, NAR, Entry 117.

on nose very distinct.”<sup>86</sup> These descriptions came from local Filipinos. While the Army struggled to gain information on local insurgents, men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth met little resistance in acquiring information on ladrones.

Once captured an offending ladrone faced civil trial for their crimes. The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth kept no records of the findings of these courts, as they fell under civilian jurisdiction. The only exception to this general rule came from murder. In cases of murder, the Army investigated the incident separately. The Army only investigated these issues if a gun aided in the perpetration of the crime.<sup>87</sup> Any Filipino with a gun possibly fostered ties to the insurgents and therefore required a closer examination. Persecution of ladrones convinced local populations of America’s good intentions in the Philippines. Prompt investigations and arrest assured the citizens the U. S. Army deserved trust. This trust made it easier for the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth to establish civil government and start the transition from war to peacetime.

The Army’s desire for peaceful transition to civil government meant the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth spent time interacting with local Filipinos. These efforts worked to improve Filipino-American relations. Initially efforts for these black soldiers to work with locals proved difficult. Major C. P. Johnson of the Forty-Ninth reported initial difficulty earning local trust when encountering native people. “I found the people, on the most part, in deadly fear of American soldiers, deserting their ranches on the approach of even one man and taking to the bushes, returning to camps in bands after the troops had left them.”<sup>88</sup> This general fear of American soldiers compounded with the addition of black soldiers.

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<sup>86</sup> Letter sent Company D, March 18, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>87</sup> Report from Forty-Ninth Volunteers, January 24, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>88</sup> Historical Sketch Forty-Ninth Volunteers, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

One newspaper story outlined initial issues between black soldiers and Filipinos. Rumors circulated in northern Luzon, black soldiers reportedly possessed cannibalistic tendencies. These stories appear to originate from white soldiers as one story confirms a willingness to let the myth continue. Virgil Pucket of the Sixth Artillery commented to papers of his interactions with locals and the Forty-Ninth Volunteers, “They believe that our Negro soldiers have a particular fondness for eating small children. . . a women came running up and got behind us at Los Pinas, and implored us to not let the big Negro eat her ‘Pickaninnie.’ I put my hand on my revolver and told her I wouldn’t.”<sup>89</sup> This initial fear gave way to acceptance of both regiments by locals. Later accounts of Filipinos following wagon trains of soldiers from the Forty-Eighth Volunteers demonstrate a warming between the two groups.<sup>90</sup> This willingness to associate with the regiments as camp followers demonstrates the change in attitude of the locals.

Once the initial shock of African American soldiers wore off, the locals returned to a peaceful way of life. Major C. P. Johnson of the Forty-Ninth reported, with the exception of a few mountain bandits, the local population wanted cooperation with the United States, “Each and every town seems desirous of peace.”<sup>91</sup> Similar reports came from the Forty-Eighth, “The entire territory was found to be quiet, harvesting their crops and willing to assist or give any information asked for.”<sup>92</sup> This desire for peace came from several generations’ worth of conflict. Spanish rule was harsh for the Filipinos. The short rule of Aguinaldo’s government was chaotic and supported through a system of intimidation on par with Spanish taxation. American rule offered the locals of northern Luzon a respite and chance for orderly peaceful life.

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<sup>89</sup> Letter from Virgil Pucket, *Pacific Advertiser*, (Honolulu, Hawaii), February 21, 1900.

<sup>90</sup> Regimental Letters Sent, June 13, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>91</sup> Historical Sketch, June 24, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>92</sup> Captain of the Forty-Eighth to Adjutant General, November 5, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry

To maintain this way of life the Army encouraged the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth to do everything to aid the local people. As Captain F. H. Crumbley of the Forty-Ninth explained in a letter home, “The natives in this district are perfectly friendly and anxious for a restoration of order. General Otis has established the courts and is giving every encouragement to the natives.” This desire for order went a long way towards making the mission of the volunteers easier. As Crumbley further explained, “His (General Otis’) efforts along this line are highly appreciated by the educated classes who have implicit confidence in the ability and purposes of our governing to give them protection of life and property and emancipation from the heavy taxes.”<sup>93</sup>

As early as January of 1900, only a few months after arriving in the Philippines, Major Johnson of the Forty-Ninth asked the Army to lessen restriction in his area. The major commented he felt locals proved their loyalty through their actions and asked the Army for permission to let locals carry bolos and tools without the need for a pass. Likewise, the major asked to lower the amount of men on duty at any given time as he found little need to fear a local uprising.<sup>94</sup> Both of these request show a population more worried with getting back to work than challenging the Army. Other reports continue this line of confidence, “I have just about gained the confidence of the natives hereabout, I respectfully request that I be allowed to remain here.”<sup>95</sup> Even with local trust on the rise, the soldiers of the volunteers remained wary of locals. Soldiers diligently searched and examined all locals. On April 19, 1900, a patrol of soldiers came across a band of locals carrying revolvers. The patrol immediately prepared for an attack, until the Filipinos produced passes from a local commander permitting them to carry the weapons.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Letter from Captain Crumbley, *Savana Tribune*, March 7, 1900.

<sup>94</sup> Major Johnson, Forty-Ninth Volunteers to Adjutant General, January 19/24, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>95</sup> Letters sent Forty-Eighth Volunteers, April 28, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>96</sup> Letters Sent Company L, Forty-Eighth Volunteers, April 19, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

While the leaders of the Army pushed for a quick return to peace, the enlisted remained on guard for any potential threat.

One clear sign of the acceptance of American rule came in how the Filipinos in northern Luzon reacted to the American flag. The historical sketch for the Forty-Ninth details how in March and April of 1900 the regiment made a point of raising the flag in towns, “The people of the various pueblos turning out en masse, many gazing for the first time upon the stars and stripes.”<sup>97</sup> This initial raising of the flag produced a novel interest from locals, use to only the Spanish flag.

However novel the initial flag raisings proved, locals started expressing a fondness for the flag. One report asked the Army for an additional twelve flags to place over local schools, “The citizens here request this which I think shows loyalty which we should respect.”<sup>98</sup> Reports describe the local populations in areas under the Forty-Eighth as carrying similar desire to see the flag. In January 1900, a flag raising ceremony saw an estimated four thousand Filipinos arrive to see a flag raised over a school. The schoolchildren reportedly sung “My Country Tis of Thee,” and recited “I pledge allegiance to my flag and the republic which it represents, one nation indivisible with liberty and justice for all.” The report concluded by describing a festive environment “as they always make such events a grand fiesta.”<sup>99</sup> Whether or not the local populations really loved the American flag, the Army and men of the volunteer regiments took these shows of enthusiasm as positive signs for the future. If nothing else these shows of respect to the American flag demonstrated a commitment to peace.

Another sign of the commitment to peace by the native peoples comes in the form of willfully aiding the U. S. Army in its fight against the insurgents. The Forty-Eighth offered a fast

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<sup>97</sup> Historical Sketch Forty-Ninth Volunteers, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>98</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, August 14, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>99</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, January 23, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

reward system for spying in the interest of the U. S. Army. Colonel Duval insisted his men offer cash rewards for working with the U. S. Army, “The same methods were pursued by Major Rice that we had used in Union and Benguet the year before, namely; utilizing, and promptly paying for the help and services of friendly natives, not only as spies and guides, but, if occasion offered, as fighting men.” Major Johnson insisted this effort to reward loyalty with money meant locals quickly saw the Army as beneficial, not as an intrusive element. To facilitate the high volume of locals hoping to profit from aiding the Army, Major Johnson instituted “the old British plan ‘crying down credit.’”<sup>100</sup> Rather than create mountains of paperwork for the Forty-Ninth, locals received orders to get cash from those they provided information to. In this way, locals got their pay, and the Forty-Ninth avoided the need to file a request for funds for each piece of information.

To aid in gaining information both regiments employed translators. Although men of both regiments worked to learn Spanish, translators proved useful for dealing with the multiple languages and dialects of northern Luzon. Translators proved so important one officer of the Forty-Eighth insisted he needed only the best and loyal translators, “Because if I should get one otherwise he would do more harm than good with the people at this place.”<sup>101</sup>

These spies identified possible sites of attack from the insurgents.<sup>102</sup> Armed with this information the men of the volunteers preemptively stationed more men where necessary to discourage attacks. Spies provided more than rumors of attack. One instance with the Forty-Eighth highlights how locals, loyal to America, worked directly to gain information. On the night of December 1, 1900, a patrol working with a native discovered a house with “at least six hombres who were in quite an animated conversation.” Fearing conspiracy the loyal local went

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<sup>100</sup> Account of Service, Forty-Ninth Volunteers, June 24, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>101</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, September 7, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>102</sup> Captain Gage to Adjutant General, May 27, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

into the house claiming to work for a local insurgent captain. The loyal local solicited funds from the men and agreed to meet with them the next day. Following this promise soldiers broke into the home and attempted to arrest the men. While the majority of the insurgents escaped, one died in the conflict. This death according to Captain Hawlin, “It has had a very salutatory effect upon the entire pueblo and they begin to realize we mean to exterminate the whole gang if they are caught assisting the insurrectos.”<sup>103</sup> This policy, using locals as scouts, also played into the ideal of Uplift. Meg Wesling argues in *Empire’s Proxy* placing Filipinos in key support roles fostered better relations between natives and the Army.<sup>104</sup>

This type of cooperation provided the volunteers a reliable source of information. Locals, incentivized by income and a desire for peace, wanted profit and the chaotic elements of society dealt with. Even so, several officers doubted the reliability of local informants. One officer, writing to the headquarters of the Forty-Eighth, flatly stated, “Personally I have very little confidence in the Solono people as they always give information that is from twenty-four hour to a week old, consequently of no use.”<sup>105</sup> This complaint repeats when in reference to local government. As with other regiments locals gave old information for fear of insurgent reprisal, not necessarily from a lack of loyalty.

Both regiments encountered the isolated ethnic group called the Igorot, referred to by the Americans as Igonotes. This ethnic group occupied the deep mountain ranges of northern Luzon. The Igorot offered each regiment a different experience. Famed as headhunters the Igorot refused to integrate into Filipino society and sought to avoid contact with outside peoples.<sup>106</sup> The Forty-

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<sup>103</sup> Captain Hawlin to Adjutant General, December 3, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>104</sup> Wesling, *Empire’s Proxy*, 114 – 117.

<sup>105</sup> Captain Cage to Regimental Command Forty-Ninth Volunteers, October 29, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>106</sup> Luisa Aguilar-Carino, “The Igorot as Other: Four Discourse from the Colonial Period,” *Philippine Studies* 42, no. 2 (1994): 195.



Ninth sought to work with the Igorot, Major Johnson explained to the Army, “Submit attention to the conduct of the Igonotes. They have evidenced a very friendly feeling as they are upon the outpost of the cultivated valley, I consider their friendship of value to us. I have seen to it that they were paid for what they furnish us and prevented any marauding while in their country.”<sup>107</sup> Major Johnson concluded some of his men stole “head axes,” used in headhunting, he made the soldiers return or pay for the axes.

While the Forty-Ninth Volunteers attempted to work with and tender favor from the Igorot; the Forty-Eighth fought with the group the same way they fought with insurgents and ladrones. In early April, the Forty-Eighth followed up on leads from the local population that the Igorot aided the local insurgents. One specific report stated, “News reached me this morning that insurrectos with guns and savage Igonotes are robbing and murdering natives.”<sup>108</sup> To remedy the situation the captain of Company L sent forty men to track the band. After a day’s tracking the scouting mission came upon the Igorot, opened fire, and failed to capture any of the offenders. Upon investigation the scouting mission discovered a great deal of blood and two guns. The Igorot proved nearly impossible for the scouting mission to capture. By late April, the captain of Company L admitted to the Army he lacked the ability to deal with the Igorot. Urged on by local information the captain admitted his shortcomings, “I was also informed that it was almost impossible to get to these headhunters without sufficient force to come upon them from all sides in view of the fact that the caves they inhabit are well-nigh inaccessible to civilized beings.”<sup>109</sup> Company L reported no other interactions with the Igorot, whether they made peace or the Igorot disappeared, Company L stopped complaining about the Igorot.

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<sup>107</sup> Major Johnson to Adjutant General, June 3, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>108</sup> Company L, Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, April 8, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>109</sup> Company L, Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, April 18, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

Elsewhere in the Philippines, the Army learned the lesson of the varying ethnic groups of the islands. While the Army focused its efforts on dealing with the Tagalog led insurrection, it took time to learn effective means for handling other groups. Notably the Army fought a large war against the Muslim Moros in the southern portion of the archipelago. The Moro possessed no connection to the original insurrection. The Igorot remained an elusive group into the mid-1900s. It appears the Army chose to follow the policy of live and let live and instead focused on establishing civil government.

Another way the two regiments worked to improve relations with locals came in the form of improving the lands the soldiers occupied. As John Perry points out in *Pershing: Commander of the Great War*; Filipinos grew use to abuse under the Spanish. American efforts at improvements proved surprising.<sup>110</sup> Both regiments looked for roads to improve and sent reports to the Army requesting work to begin.<sup>111</sup> This work showed commitment to improving the lives of Filipinos and eased the transition from war to peacetime. In other areas, white regiments avoided the burden of road building. Instead of insisting on the labor of soldiers, other regiments used locals to carry on the work. In some areas officers relied upon the old Spanish system, “Requiring either fifteen days free labor or three pesos tax in lieu thereof, may be enforced and road work begun as soon as practicable.”<sup>112</sup> The only work done by soldiers in these cases consisted of providing protection for the workers.

The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth worked to establish the foundations for civil government in northern Luzon.<sup>113</sup> The American government hoped the establishment of self-government would ease tensions between the Army and civilian populations. These governments

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<sup>110</sup> Perry, *Pershing*, 47.

<sup>111</sup> Forty-Ninth Volunteers to Adjutant General, July 26, 1900, Letter from Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, November 5, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>112</sup> Ramsey, *J. Franklin Bell*, Circular no. 19, 65.

<sup>113</sup> Linn, *Philippine War*, 261.

also freed the Army from the unfamiliar duty of governing. In early reports from the Forty-Ninth Colonel Beck handled the running of civilian affairs as well as those of his own regiment. Notably, Colonel Beck spent time organizing the system of taxes used to fund local projects. In considering who owed taxes and to which town those taxes went, Colonel Beck reported on all his decision-making. Factors such as voting places and permanent dwelling places for rural citizens played into where taxes went.<sup>114</sup> Not that this placed an unfair burden on the colonel, but managing local taxes fell outside the normal duties for the U. S. Army in 1900. The establishment of civil government allowed the Army to focus on the insurrection and eased tensions with locals.

Growing pains started as soon as civil government was established. While the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth gave up managing local affairs, they gained the responsibility of watching over the local governments. Early on Major Johnson of the Forty-Ninth complained to the Army of a lack of direction in regards to local officials.

I have acted mostly upon my own responsibility and fortunately no serious trouble has resulted there from, but in self-protection, as well as for the benefit of the community over which I am supposed to exercise jurisdiction, it will be worth and I think for the good of the service and for the establishment of good government among the people, that the extent of my jurisdiction be more clearly defined.<sup>115</sup>

Early issues included compelling local officials to show respect towards the U. S. Army. Local police in San Francisco De La Union refused to salute American officers. Captain Leon McDowison complained to the Adjutant General of this lack of respect stating, "It is believed that if such officers are allowed to hurl defiance and insult in the faces of American officers with

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<sup>114</sup> Colonel Beck Forty-Ninth Volunteers to Adjutant General, April 21, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>115</sup> Historical Sketch of Forty-Ninth Volunteers, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

impunity, the American troops will thereby be placed at a great disadvantage.”<sup>116</sup> Further investigation shows the real issue came from the captain’s inability to convince the local civil government to take action on this issue.

The inability to convince local governments to take action, or responsibility, presented a constant problem for both regiments. In November of 1900, Company B of the Forty-Eighth complained local presidentes refused to aid in the maintenance of roads and bridges.<sup>117</sup> This inaction made movement difficult and provided cover for potential ambush. The solution to this type of issue came in the form of military force. In a separate incident, the Forty-Eighth informed a local presidente if he failed to fix the local roads the Forty-Eighth would compel him and his people into fixing the roads under supervision.<sup>118</sup> This inaction also threatened the Army in other ways as one report from February 1900 states, the civil government failed to prevent disease. One town reported 40% sick, or around 12,000 people. The report blamed the presidente for a lack of action.<sup>119</sup> Whether the failure of local governments was from lack of materials, inexperience of leadership or willful disobedience is difficult to prove. In other areas where black soldiers operated similar issues failed to arise.

Two reports from the volunteer regiments lead to the possibility of willful disobedience among local leadership. In April of 1900, local police in Bauang arrested a native guide. The captain of Company M, Forty-Eighth Volunteers, stated, “The native police don’t like America.” The captain concluded his letter with a plea for the release of the man and one final statement on local loyalty, “I am clearly convinced that the imprisonment of this man is an attempt to get him

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<sup>116</sup> Captain Leon McDowison Forty-Ninth Volunteers to Adjutant General, November 8, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>117</sup> Company B Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, November 13, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>118</sup> Letter to Adjutant General, June 14, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>119</sup> Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, February 6, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

out of the way, because of his services rendered the Americans.”<sup>120</sup> This hostility from the civil government gave reason for the Army to suspect local leadership. Arresting trusted guides intimidated other locals from supporting the U. S. Army, and denied the Army access to useful information.

In early February, the Forty-Ninth faced a true problem with the local government of one town. Major Johnson complained of the town’s leadership early on, “The presidente of this town is a very young man, and in my opinion entirely untrustworthy, while as yet no overt action on his part justifies removal, it would not be amiss to keep him under close observation.”<sup>121</sup> Major Johnson observed the local leadership tended towards overt action. General Order no. 3 called for the arrest of the leadership of Cordon, “For conspiring against the United States and complicity in the murder of two American soldiers.”<sup>122</sup> In the rush to establish civil government in northern Luzon the Army allowed for unwelcome events such as those listed here. Other areas under the influence of black soldiers took longer to establish civil government. This extra time lends itself to the election of peaceful governments. The rush in northern Luzon left the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth with loose ends to tie up.

The native populations under the watch of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Regiments worked with the U. S. Army. The men of these regiments worked diligently to maintain positive relationships with the locals in an effort to foster peace. Whether or not the local populations truly wanted American rule, American rule brought with it peace and a chance at prosperity. Working with the U. S. Army, the locals in northern Luzon assured a return to normal life which resistance failed to bring.

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<sup>120</sup> Captain of Company M, Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, April 5, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>121</sup> Historical Sketch of Forty-Ninth Volunteers, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>122</sup> General Orders, no. 3, Forty-Ninth Volunteers, February 21, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

The Men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty Ninth, possess different backgrounds than their regular army counterparts. Like their counterparts, the majority of the volunteers called the South home; with Missouri, North Carolina, Georgia and Kentucky providing the majority of the black volunteers.<sup>123</sup> Due to the Army's segregation policies, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth openly moved soldiers between themselves as well as the four regular army regiments of black soldiers.<sup>124</sup> Because of this, these regiments contained a relatively high number of soldiers with practical experience, where white regiments of volunteers lacked this same level of experience.

One interesting feature of the two black volunteer regiments comes from the previous occupations of the men involved. Unlike the regular regiments, the enlisted men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth came from civilian occupations prior to service. Because of this, they offer an interesting look at the types of jobs available to the black community at the time. Outside of the band, whose members claimed musician prior to service, the two popular jobs for the volunteers proved farming and labor. This is unsurprising given the fact African Americans from the South primarily worked as sharecroppers and found themselves barred from jobs with higher pay and skills. The next common jobs; cook, waiter, and miner. These jobs proved common for African Americans during this period in American history. The outliers though offer a glimpse at other occupations available to African Americans at this time. Pharmacist, student, teacher, tailor, stenographer, teamster, cowpuncher, and boilermaker proved less common jobs among the volunteers. These jobs were also not jobs usually associated with economically disadvantaged African Americans in this period.<sup>125</sup> Of particular interest are the teachers and students joining the volunteers, signaling the educated saw this war as an opportunity. One paper praised the effective soldiering of these men, "The enlistment was largely from the classes of

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<sup>123</sup> Descriptive Books of Forty-Ninth, Officers, Band, Recruits, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>124</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1272.

<sup>125</sup> Descriptive Books of Forty-Ninth, Officers, Band, Recruits, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

young colored men in the South without any military experience . . . they put in more hours at drill than white soldiers. They are enthusiastic to learn.”<sup>126</sup>

Unsurprising to the modern observer, although surprising to the Army, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth suffered from the exact same diseases as the white regiments in the Philippines. The common affliction to kill men of the black volunteer regiments was variola, smallpox.<sup>127</sup> Colonel Duval wrote in his Historical Sketch of the Forty-Ninth the high rates of smallpox among the men came from two sources. First Colonel Duval argued, “May be ascribed to the Negroes admitted susceptibility to this disease, to the malignant character of it in the tropics.” While Colonel Duval’s estimation of black physiology and the tropics falls short of scientific fact, his second estimation of the causes of the diseases’ prevalence proves much more plausible. “The practical suspension for four years of the excellent compulsory vaccination system of the Spanish at least four crops of children have accumulated wholly unprotected.”<sup>128</sup> This lack of vaccination due to wartime chaos certainly added to the high rates of smallpox in the Philippines. Particularly northern Luzon, where rebellion existed prior to the Spanish American War, suffered. The next common killer of these men was dysentery. As one soldier described in a letter home, “My health is excellent, but we have a few sick men in the company. They are suffering from dysentery. That is the disease that does more toward killing men than the enemies’ bullets do and I am taking care not to get it. I am very particular about what I eat and drink and that is the main thing.”<sup>129</sup> To prevent the spread of various diseases the Army issued explicit instructions on how the men should conduct themselves, “The men will be required to soak their blankets and underclothing in a disinfecting solution prepared by the surgeon. All

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<sup>126</sup> “Colored Officers,” *Yakima Herald*, October 19, 1899.

<sup>127</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*.

<sup>128</sup> Historical Sketch Forty-Ninth Volunteers, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>129</sup> Letter from Soldier, *Colored Citizen*, November 9, 1900.

blankets will be placed in the direct sunlight for as many hours each day as is practicable.”<sup>130</sup> In this way the Forty-Ninth attempted to prevent the spread of disease, without proper germ theory many of these efforts failed.

Although the soldiers of these regiments received praise in Army reports for their commitment to service, white soldiers observing the regiment produced their own views of these men. John Clifford Brown recorded in letters home scathing reviews of the soldiers of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth. At one point he commented, “These nigger regiments have to be handled differently than the white troops . . . the men are a rough set of scamps picked up anywhere and everywhere.”<sup>131</sup> Brown provides evidence for these men as a “rough set of scamps,” in the form of their failure to pay local debts on payday. To this action Brown states the colonel of the Forty-Ninth issued statements chastising the men, however this statement is not found in the records of the Forty-Ninth. In fact, Colonel Duval of the Forty-Eighth praised his men and their behavior, commenting in his historical sketch of the patriotic zeal of his men in joining the regiment’s chorus and “developing soldierly pride, cultivating a love for the military, and an affection for the regiment.”<sup>132</sup> This statement from Brown seems fabricated given other praise previously recorded for these men. It is unlikely their officers would issue a complaint such as comparing the enlisted men to “thieves and cut-throats,” as Brown insisted.<sup>133</sup> In fact, those writing home complained of America’s lack of interest in the efforts of black soldiers in the Philippines. As one letter described, “No credit is given to negro solders, though if it were not for Negro soldiers. . . Uncle Sam would not have much on these islands.”<sup>134</sup> In his farewell statement Colonel Duval of the Forty-Eighth declared, “The district commander views with

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<sup>130</sup> Circular no. 14, Forty-Ninth, March 1, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>131</sup> McCallus, *Gentlemen Soldier*, 237-238.

<sup>132</sup> Historical Sketch Forty-Eighth Volunteers, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>133</sup> McCallus, *Gentlemen Soldier*, 237-238.

<sup>134</sup> “No Credit Given,” *Richmond Planet*, April 14, 1900.



regret the departure of the regiment and in severing relations with its officers and men, each having performed his duties and gallantly, patriotically, and well as occasions demanded. He can only wish them a safe return to their respective homes, and prosperity and happiness in all the future of their lives.”<sup>135</sup>

The men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth expressed a great deal of interest in active duty. One soldier writing home stated, “The troops enjoy excellent health and are anxious for active service.”<sup>136</sup> In terms of local interactions, the soldiers of both regiments viewed the locals with favor. One soldier, Corporal Arthur Peters, wrote home describing the Igorot, “They are only semi-civilized and wear no clothes, only a gee-string. The women wear little aprons about three inches wide in front and of course they are a sight. But of all they are the most moral people I ever saw. Our civilized brethren and sisters in the States could learn something in that line.”<sup>137</sup> Corporal Peters continued his praise of the locals commending them on their ability to survive with few tools outside of the bolo.

Soldiers writing home commented on the friendly relations between the volunteers and the local inhabitants. This friendliness led several officers to entertain the possibility for immigration following the war. Captain Crumbley commented on the relations between soldiers and locals, “As a rule they are well liked by the peaceable natives and many will ask for their discharges with a view of staying over here, and will marry native women as soon as they are free of Uncle Sam.”<sup>138</sup> This desire to stay in the Philippines led to an insistence the archipelago potentially provided a home for industrious black citizens.

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<sup>135</sup> Colonel Duval to Forty-Eighth Volunteers, May 26, 1901, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

<sup>136</sup> Letter from Capatian Crumbley, *Savana Tribune*, March 7 1900.

<sup>137</sup> Letter from Corporal Peters, *Colored Citizen*, (Helena, Montana), November 9, 1900.

<sup>138</sup> Letter from Captain Crumbley, *Savana Tribune*, May 4, 1901.

Two letters home insisted African Americans with business and missionary interest would do well in the Philippines. “This is a good place for the active professional Negro, or one who has capital to go into business; but the Negro as a laborer would starve to death here so cheap is native and Chinese labor.”<sup>139</sup> Likewise, missionaries received encouragement to go to the Philippines to save the souls of the Filipinos long under Catholic rule. “The natives are very friendly to the Negro soldiers, and since it will soon be the purpose of the churches and Christian agencies to send missionaries to the islands, the young colored men and women of Christian education who desire to labor among an appreciative people ought to be selected to come as missionaries with spelling book and Bible.”<sup>140</sup> This push for immigration provides evidence the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth possessed favorable opinions of the local populations.

The officers of the two regiments held reservations concerning locals and where their loyalty fell. On two separate occasions the Captain of Company G, Forty-Eighth Volunteers, stated his feelings towards locals. In one instance the captain informed his superiors the locals, “I believe are as good as any Filipinos can be, except those that are dead.” The captain concluded a month later his difficulties with local insurgents came from a lack of loyalty from the locals. The captain implied his inability to catch fleeing enemies came from local support of the insurgents, not from any shortcoming of his men or himself.<sup>141</sup> Officers, given more responsibility, viewed the locals with a little more suspicion.

Court-Martial records from the Forty-Ninth reveal the regiment, although volunteers, suffered from the same issues as the other regiments. The common issue for soldiers of the Forty-Ninth came from absent for roll call, the regular fine consisting of a few dollars. The next

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Letter from Captain Crumbley, *Savanna Tribune*, March 7, 1900.

<sup>141</sup> Letters sent Company G, Forty-Eighth Volunteers, September 11, 1900/October 19, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

issues dealt with common military discipline; disobeying orders, drinking on duty, and improper language.<sup>142</sup> Desertion presented few problems for the Forty-Eighth, only six cases occurred, and these occurred before the regiment left the United States and likely came from men getting cold feet.<sup>143</sup> Soldiers carried out worse crimes. One instance took place between a soldier of Company D of the Forty-Ninth. The soldier offered a local man money in return for the company of his daughter. When refused access to the man's daughter, the soldier proceeded to a local bar where he became intoxicated and was arrested for disorderly conduct after a report by the local man.<sup>144</sup> This indiscretion matches those of the other black regiments, not a common occurrence but one the Army took seriously.

The Army linked the majority of issues concerning military discipline with the use of alcohol. In letters to General MacArthur, the Adjutant General's office asked for specifics on the use of alcohol, "Telegraph the condition of army, Manila and elsewhere Philippine Islands, with reference to drunkenness and use intoxicating liquors." General MacArthur's reply insisted, "Drunkenness this army, no more noticeable here than in garrisons United States . . . effect of drunkard in public places creates impression among citizens of extensive disorders throughout whole force, which is not case. Army in splendid discipline, high state efficiency, doing hardest kind service, most faithful inspiring manner."<sup>145</sup> The issue of drinking directly affected both locals and soldiers. On two separate occasions, Colonel Duval of the Forty-Eighth dealt with civilians caught in camp selling whiskey to soldiers.<sup>146</sup> Despite these transgressions, the men of

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<sup>142</sup> Court-Martial Records of Forty-Ninth Volunteers, November – December, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>143</sup> Letters Sent Company C Forty-Eighth Volunteers to Adjutant General, September – October 1899, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>144</sup> Captain of Company D to Adjutant General, February 17, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

<sup>145</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1246-1247.

<sup>146</sup> Colonel Duval to Provost Martial, February 2, 1900, Captain Dwight to Adjutant General. March 9, 1900, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 117.

the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth possessed a reputation as law-abiding soldiers with few infractions of military law linked to their regiments.

Although the use of black officers provoked a great deal of conversation before the introduction of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth, these arguments vanished from the American press once the regiments headed to the Philippines. The only reports on the subject came from soldiers in the Philippines. Almost as though once started everyone in America waited to see how the use of black officer would play out.

Soldiers writing home expressed discontent with this lack of attention. Corporal Walter E. Merchant commented in a letter home, “I must say brilliant work, for when our regularly army officers day to day, send out circulars congratulating colored officers of the volunteer service, that is enough to tell the world that somebody is doing Nobel work. For it is well known that white officers . . . are deadly opposed to Negro men wearing bars.” The corporal continued discussing how the Forty-Eighth proved black men would follow other black men into battle, “The men of our regiments are proud of our black officers and will follow them where ever they lead.”<sup>147</sup>

Despite this success, white soldiers proved harder to win over. John Clifford Brown routinely wrote home complaining of black officers. “Met several colored officers of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth. The regulations state that the salute is a matter of courtesy only.”<sup>148</sup> Brown’s disrespect of black officers continued in his refusal to meet with them on social occasions, “Naturally I did not go. Of course he has a commission and I am an enlisted man, but I retain the privilege of my prejudices and I won’t be patronized by anyone, least of all a

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<sup>147</sup> Letter from Walter E. Merchant, *Richmond Planet*, June 12, 1900.

<sup>148</sup> McCallus, *Gentlemen Soldier*, 183.

nigger.”<sup>149</sup> In one journal entry Brown stated his total dissatisfaction with black officers. After a trip to the company surgeon Brown concluded the surgeon, insisting on a prayer, was unprofessional and stated, “I am rapidly acquiring a very poor opinion of the race and should heartily support any attempt to disfranchise them, or limit their suffrage.”<sup>150</sup> While the officers of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth earned favor with their own superiors and men, winning over the average soldier proved difficult. In the face of this racism against black officers and the Filipino people one officer of the Forty-Ninth issued a statement to the Filipino people in his territory. Captain David J. Gilmer stated,

My dear people, with visible negro blood that flows in the veins of my body, I would be the last man on earth to try to deceive you or to sanction the cause of your oppressors, the United States government of America is a true democracy and the majority of our national legislative representatives are Christian men, opposed to the oppression of human and religious rights, and to enforce their protectorate policy to all people under the shadow of my country’s flag, stand the soldiers of the noble republic, ready and willing to obey the command to march against the iron gates of infamy in the face of the most destructive fortification in defense of their country’s subjects. . . I beg of you not to believe all white men of my country are its sympathizers (racism), for there are American white men by the thousands who would die for your rights, with no desire for compensation other than the blessings of heaven.<sup>151</sup>

Although the war in the Philippines technically ended on July 4, 1902<sup>152</sup> the men of the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteers started heading home in 1901. On May 28, 1901 the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Regiments steamed away from the Philippines, the majority of the soldiers leaving on the transport *Grant*.<sup>153</sup> After a brief stay in Nagasaki, Japan, the ship continued on to arrive in America by late June, 1901.<sup>154</sup> Although soldiers fulfilled earlier

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<sup>149</sup> Ibid, 227.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, 23 -233.

<sup>151</sup> Letter from David J. Gilmer, *Colored American*, (Helena, Montana), January 19, 1901.

<sup>152</sup> Walter Nugent, *Habits of Empire; A History of American Expansion* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008), 271-272.

<sup>153</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*, 1282, 1284.

<sup>154</sup> Historical Sketch Forty-Eighth Volunteers, Record Group 94, NARA, Entry 187.

prophecies of staying in the Philippines, the vast majority returned to civilian life in America, content with their service to the country.<sup>155</sup>

The Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth broke stereotypes regarding black volunteers. Primarily in the use of black officers. These officers carried out the same duties as their white counterparts, with few complaints against their conduct (aside from those of men like John Clifford Brown). The attitudes of Brown and others shaped the Army's policy towards black officers. Following the Philippine War the Army avoided the use of black officers. This avoidance freed the Army from answering the question of black officers commanding white soldiers. The black community's desire for black officers in the army meant little when faced with the issue of how white soldiers would respond to black authority.

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<sup>155</sup> Welch, *Response to Imperialism*, 114.

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION

Following the conflict in the Philippines African American soldiers met with resistance in the United States. Returning to America, these regiments found themselves forced into a marginalized role. The period between the end of the Philippine War and the start of World War I found these soldiers subjected to racism at home and a diminished role within the Army itself. The regiments returned to the “frontier,” although the West now posed fewer challenges than in the past. The native population offered little resistance, local American populations proved stable, and (aside from occasional raids) the border with Mexico remained silent.

This peaceful situation led to increased conflict with locals who no longer depended upon these soldiers for protection. In 1906, the Twenty-Fifth took up station in Texas. Local politicians started complaining almost immediately to the new Secretary of War, William Howard Taft. These politicians worried locals would react negatively to the placement of black soldiers near their communities. Taft explained to the politicians of Texas that the Twenty-Fifth possessed an outstanding record of discipline and hard work. Taft also explained he understood the fears of local racism. Taft clarified that wherever the men went they would incite racial issues but they needed to station in Texas regardless, owing to manpower constraints.<sup>1</sup> Taft’s promises failed to ease tensions and in August of 1906 racial issues led to the infamous Brownsville Raid. Locals claimed members of the Twenty-Fifth raided the town of Brownsville and fired shots at civilians. The civilian and Army investigators failed to identify exactly who participated in the attack. To avoid further issues, President Theodore Roosevelt dismissed any members of the Twenty-Fifth who could have possibly participated. Included in the 167 men

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<sup>1</sup> Astor, *Right to Fight*, 79.

dishonorably discharged were six Medal of Honor holders.<sup>2</sup> Following these events, the black regiments were moved to posts far from population centers.

Following the Brownsville Raid, the regular army regiments took on a diminished role. Regiments focused on training and living in forts. In 1917, members of the Tenth aided in the expedition to capture Pancho Villa. The remainder of the regiments sat out the expedition, stationed on the Mexican-American border. When America joined the First World War, the four regular army regiments did not participate; the Army instead sent black volunteer regiments, four regiments went to the French Army while the U. S. Army added the Ninety-Second and Ninety-Third Divisions, made up of black draftees. For reasons that remain unclear, the Army sent regular cavalry and infantry regiments to the Mexican border and stations in the Philippines and Hawaii.

This dissertation set out with the goal of examining the experiences and contributions of African American regiments serving in the Philippine War. The contributions of the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry, the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth Infantry, and the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteer Regiments offer a unique look at American history. As in the European militaries for this period, racism in America and the U. S. Army affected the use of these soldiers. Service in the Philippines challenged preconceived notions on race, although nothing changed in terms of military or social policy.

The contributions of these regiments has been largely unknown and forgotten. The literature on the subject of African American involvement in the Philippines represented a sparse generalized overview. Again, the major sources for this time came from Willard Gatewood, Jr., and Marvin Fletcher. Both of these authors focused on the effects of the war as a whole on American society, not specifically on the regiments.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 83.



This dissertation offers a more complete understanding of the experiences of these regiments. Through an examination of each regiment and their individualized experiences, it is possible to paint an in-depth picture of the experiences of the African American soldier during the Philippine War. Unlike previous works, which only tell a few stories, this dissertation has collected more information regarding these soldiers than any other work.

The three main goals of this dissertation were to address how ideas about race affected the men of the African American regiments. Specifically:

1. How did the service and combat record of African American soldiers differ from that of their white counterparts?
2. What role did ideas about race play in the interaction between African American soldiers and the Filipino population?
3. What was the overall contribution of African American service during the Philippine War?

How did the service and combat record of African American soldiers differ from that of their white counterparts? In terms of population, African American soldiers served at less than their percentage in American society. In 1900, African Americans made up 12% of the American population.<sup>3</sup> A review of the soldiers sent to the Philippines shows African American soldiers made up 7% of the soldiers sent. Between artillery, cavalry, engineering, hospital, and infantry regiments, the regular army sent forty-eight regiments. Black soldiers made up four of these regiments. The volunteer regiments sent included infantry, artillery, cavalry, and engineers, which totaled thirty-five regiments. Black Soldiers made up two of the volunteers regiments.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> William P. O'Hare & Kevin M. Pollard, *America's Racial and Ethnic Minorities* (Washington D.C.: Population Reference Bureau. 1999), 10.

<sup>4</sup> United States Army, *Correspondence*.

Prior to the war in Cuba the African American regiments made up 11% of the Army, a number closer to their population percentage. During the war in Cuba, the black regiments again made up roughly 11% of those who went to fight. African American troops prior to the Philippine War represented the black community in a number close to the percentage of their population.

In the Philippines this number changed, diminishing the number of African Americans represented in the fighting. This decrease in representation reflects the official Army view that black soldiers would fraternize with the Filipinos, a ludicrous assumption fully in keeping with the casual and not so casual racism of the time. In the American West and the war in Cuba, the Army had depended on these soldiers. Regardless of whether the Army wanted them or treated them fairly, the four regular army regiments proved vital. The Army, stretched thin prior to the Spanish American War, needed whatever soldiers it had to maintain order in the West. During the war with Spain, the Army needed well-trained soldiers. Because the Army mistrusted the state volunteer regiments, the Army relied upon the four black regiments to help in the war effort. The Philippines were different. Efforts in Cuba took only months, meaning any fears the Army harbored about black soldiers – indiscipline, fraternization - would likely not rise to the surface. By 1899, many accepted the war in the Philippines would take several years. This longer duration meant a greater likelihood of those issues – really irrational phobias – developing among the black soldiers.

Initially General Otis suggested not employing black regiments in the Philippines. Likewise, Governor Taft urged sending home black regiments as soon as the conflict started to wind down. The same reflex emerged in 1918, when the first Division returned to the States from France was the African American Ninety-Second Division, on spurious ground that it had a

“rape problem.” Both Otis and Taft feared racial affinity with Filipinos would cause the black regiments to perform poorly. Leadership wanted to keep the number of black troops used in the Philippines to a minimum.

The other major change between Cuba and the Philippines comes in the form of the volunteers. In Cuba the state volunteer system proved a disaster. Inconsistent training, equipping, and recruitment lead to issues from the start. The Army changed its volunteer system from state to federal in the Philippines. Under the federal system, Army leadership expected better-trained soldiers capable of carrying out basic functions. Experienced black soldiers proved less important because the Army potentially possessed better-trained volunteers.

Another key area in which these regiments differed from their white counterparts came in the form of labor. This trend started in the American West as black soldiers helped build roads and telegraph lines. In Cuba, these soldiers also dug or repaired defensive trenches, moved supplies, and cared for wounded and sick after fighting. White soldiers usually rested while black soldiers worked. In the Philippines, black soldiers carried out more fatigue details than their white counterparts. As evidenced by the Circular Orders of General James Franklin Bell, white soldiers made use of Filipino labor to complete work. Filipinos received orders to build roads, build their own dwellings, gather wood, move supplies for the Army, and maintain telegraph lines. These Filipinos worked under compulsory terms, either for food or as prisoners of war.

Black soldiers carried out much of these fatigue duties on their own. Fatigues, such as the clearing of brush in villages, carried out by the Ninth Cavalry, was done by Filipinos in areas under white regiments. Likewise, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteers performed basic labor duties in building roads and bridges, while their commanders complained the duties should fall to the Filipinos. The burden of labor fell so heavily on blacks that commanders like Colonel

Markley of the Twenty-Fourth and Colonel Burt of the Twenty-Fifth issued complaints over the use of their soldiers as laborers. These soldiers also struggled with racism within the Army. As evidenced by the Twenty-Fourth, white regiments refused services at guardhouses when black soldiers stopped on overnight scouting missions. Members of the same regiment also suffered imprisonment at the hands of white officers in Manila after an alleged riot.

These men also differed in the almost complete lack of representation as officers. Only two regular army officers came from the African American community, Charles Young and Benjamin O. Davis. The Army and much of the American public feared the use of black officers and worked to keep their numbers low. These men proved their leadership capabilities, and that their black soldiers would follow them. The Army however, would not permit black officers to command white soldiers. In this they were reflecting American society. Under pressure from the African American community, the Army did allow black field officers in the all black Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteers. These men proved up to the task of leadership, and their men proved willing to follow. This contribution effected no long lasting change for black soldiers. As evidenced by John Clifford Brown, white soldiers refused to accept black leadership, and would not until after the Army was desegregated in 1948. Certainly, Brown's example did not apply to all white soldiers, but it applied to enough white soldiers that the Army discontinued the plan after the war.

The way these regiments differed from their white counterparts stemmed from their racial classification. The Army decreased their participation and continued the trend of forcing these soldiers to do more work than white counterparts. Because of ideas on race, these soldiers received a marginalized role in the war. The African American community did not receive full representation as in the past. Instead, the African American community watched as racial

shibboleths – like the fear that black troops would fraternize with Filipinos – eroded their contributions.

What role did ideas about race play in the interaction between African American soldiers and the Filipino population? The Army and American public feared a racial collusion between black regiments and Filipinos. The American press in particular feared this would lead to wide spread desertions. The Army felt strongly the willingness to mix with Filipino women would hinder American efforts to win over the Filipino people. A collusion between Filipinos and black regiments never formed.

Initially locals viewed black soldiers as Americans, or in some cases feared them as cannibals. This initial hesitance gave way to friendliness over time. This easing of tensions can be seen as an example of how African American soldiers sympathized with locals. Many of the areas these soldiers served in were desirous of peace when the soldiers arrived. In particular, the areas under the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth proved so peaceful that the Army rushed to institute civil governments. Those locals already worked with the Army and demonstrated that they wanted a stable way of life. Peace depended upon the area the soldiers occupied, not the skin color of the soldiers. Evidence exists that these soldiers treated Filipinos slightly better than white soldiers. This treatment might have eased tensions but ultimate peace came from the population itself.

Areas where the locals proved unreceptive to American intervention, such as Samar, saw no racial affinity between black soldiers and Filipinos. This shows in the fact that the Tenth Cavalry came under suspicion of torturing locals for information. The concept of racial affinity claims these men would see the plight of the Filipinos and sympathize with them. In several

cases these men openly refer to the Filipinos as treacherous and used racial terms such as “gooks” and “gugu.”

Those who wanted to criticize black soldiers on racial grounds pointed to the affection black soldiers showed for native women, although this may have reflected the psycho-sexual fears and fantasies of white onlookers as much as reality. Court-Martial records from each of the regiments indicate black soldiers did seek out native women for companionship – this was by no means confined to black soldiers. In these cases, the Army took a firm line and worked diligently to stop the trend. Although some soldiers took wives and cared for families, others threatened the local peace by attempting to purchase companionship from local women and girls. Strict punishment worked to curb this trend. Although the Army and American public obsessed over this issue, the number of cases presented do not indicate this was a true problem for these units.

Letters home from black regiments stated a desire to serve America and took on patriotic tones. Although members of these regiments expressed concern for the Filipino people, they followed orders and worked towards the goals of the United States. The small number of deserters coming from these regiments helps prove this idea. While those soldiers who deserted did help the insurgency, such as David Fagen, deserters remained few in number: only nine reported cases between the six regiments over nearly three years. These soldiers did not identify with the Filipino cause, they identified as Americans. They burned insurgent pamphlets calling on desertion, they engaged in the torture and mistreatment of insurgents, and wrote home describing a backwards Filipino people. These men may have resented that racism accompanied the stars and stripes into the Philippines, but they continued their duties.

Lastly, what was the overall military impact of African American service during the Philippine War? In the Spanish American War, these soldiers performed above average service.

They served in all three of the Army's major battles. Black soldiers led the charges up El Caney and San Juan Hill. These soldiers proved themselves fighting equals to white soldiers. This exceptional conduct failed to make an impact on the American press and public.

These soldiers did not participate in the initial stages of the Philippine War. The Army did not want to use these soldiers feeling the war would end quickly and moving them from Cuba to the Philippines would take too long. The Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth did take part in the final push to destroy Aguinaldo's Army. This effort proved mismanaged and failed to achieve its goal. After Generals Lawton and Young failed to apprehend Aguinaldo, the war turned into a guerilla insurgency.

When the war shifted to occupation, the Twenty-Fourth and Twenty-Fifth set about the same missions as white infantry regiments. These regiments scouted and patrolled for insurgents. They relocated villages and attempted to create civil government. In addition, they worked with locals in attempts to create civil government. These soldiers worked alongside white regiments. The black regiments issued complaints of racial bias in their treatment by whites. Despite this racial bias, these soldiers expressed a loyalty to America and chose to fulfil their orders rather than identify with the Filipino cause.

The Ninth and Tenth Cavalry arrived during the shift to guerilla warfare. The Ninth worked in a relatively peaceful area initially, bringing peace and fostering positive relations with locals. The Tenth and units of the Ninth went to the openly rebellious island of Samar. On Samar, these regiments helped to subdue an active insurgency. The cavalry regiments used many of the same tactics and techniques as white soldiers, including torture, to achieve their goals. Much like the rest of the Army, these regiments based their actions towards locals on the

situation. In peaceful areas, they treated the locals in a positive manner. In areas with more resistance, they used harsher methods to subdue the people.

Finally, the Forty-Eighth and Forty-Ninth Volunteers arrived in the Philippines. These soldiers, recruited from civilian life, took charge of the most peaceful areas previously under rebellion. The Army rushed to use these soldiers to protect locals and ensure a quick transition to local rule. As a result, while these soldiers did engage the insurgency, they operated largely as a local police force. This contribution is on par with the activities of other (white) volunteer regiments. As stated when the volunteers started forming, their initial purpose focused on garrisoning peaceful areas; freeing regular army regiments for actively rebellious areas.

These regiments did not make a particularly large contribution to the war. Overall, they performed the same duties as white regiments, often side by side with them. The only outstanding contribution to the war came from the Twenty-Fourth, which captured one of Aguinaldo's messengers. This apprehension led to the final capture of Aguinaldo by General Funston and white soldiers. All other duties carried out by these soldiers were routine. As the war turned into an occupation, and combat against a poorly armed and trained insurgency, few regiments made remarkable contributions, merely ordinary ones.

These men entered the war with a large hill to climb. The Army, American press, and American people looked critically on them because of notions on race. They were expected to perform poorly because of racial affinity for the Filipinos. They were expected to perform poorly under black officers. Their overall conduct was expected to be poor because of racial views in America. In spite of all this, these regiments performed their duties as well as white soldiers. In the face of discrimination, these soldiers focused their efforts on fulfilling their duty and carrying out their assigned missions and goals. As a result, they dispelled many myths connected with



race. However, the contributions of these soldiers did not change the opinion of white society in America. The African American soldiers of the Spanish American and Philippine Wars were heralds of racial change that would require another century to accomplish.

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