

Empire's Mastheads: Rewriting the "Correspondents' War" from the Edge of Empire

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Following his stint as a war correspondent for Pulitzer's *New York World* and Hearst's *New York Journal* in Cuba and Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War, Stephen Crane spent the autumn months of 1898 in Havana, where, in addition to writing about postwar life, he reworked many of his previous dispatches into fictional war tales for domestic publication.¹ Presenting the ordinary soldier as a heroic figure of masculine stolidity and courageous nobility, Crane's stories resonated strongly with the heady romance of war and empire that suffused national culture, finding a welcome audience in the pages of popular periodicals like *Cosmopolitan*, *McClure's Magazine*, and *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* throughout 1899.² Crane's financial straits as well as his growing sense of shame over deserting his wife for Havana led to his departure from Cuba in late December, shortly after the arrival of an American occupation force. Three months later in March 1899, however, Crane would return, in a manner of speaking, to Cuban shores. His Cuban war story, "Marines Signaling Under Fire at Guantanamo"—itself a romantic amplification of an earlier dispatch for Pulitzer's *World*, "The Red Badge of Courage was his Wig-Wag Flag"—appeared in redacted form in the pages of the *Volunteer*, a weekly newspaper published at Trinidad, Cuba, by the Fourth Tennessee Infantry, US Volunteers, during its garrison duty from December 1898 to late March 1899 (see *Figure 1*).³



Figure 1. Stephen Crane's "Marines Signaling Under Fire at Guantanamo" as it appeared in the Fourth Tennessee's *Volunteer*, March 12, 1899.

Originally published in February in *McClure's Magazine* in the same issue as Rudyard Kipling's exhortation to the United States to take up the "white man's burden" in the Philippines—a poem, incidentally, that was also reprinted in the *Volunteer* the week prior to Crane's story—"Marines Signaling Under Fire at Guantanamo" highlights the heroic stoicism of a solitary signalman atop a craggy ridge, calmly transmitting messages with his wig-wag flag to warships in the harbor, his body perilously silhouetted against the sky, an open target for Spanish sharpshooters. Like much of Crane's war fiction of this period, the war correspondent figures prominently and his proximity to the signalman's fraught semaphoric action creates the pathos of the story,⁴ not only enabling the very reporting of the signalman's heroics, but also embedding Crane's tale in the spectacular logic of contemporaneous popular romantic fiction, a primary medium, according to Amy Kaplan, for imaginatively yoking the fate of American masculinity to national culture's imperial turn during the 1890s.⁵ As a war correspondent and member of the yellow press during the Spanish-American War, Crane himself was heavily implicated in this romancing of empire. Known as the "correspondents' war" because of the bombastic influence of the yellow press (specifically Crane's employers) and the dramatic popularity and literary notoriety of war correspondents like Crane, the Spanish-American War was frequently cast as a romantic rescue mission for the domestic audience back home.⁶ The work of Crane's fictional correspondent in "Marines Signaling" thus parallels his own wartime self and journalism, plotting the extraordinary actions of the individual hero of the romantic imagination—the signalman at Guantanamo in this instance—as an imaginative template for the project of empire and its resuscitation of American manhood.

Crane's thematization of communication in "Marines Signaling," however, goes beyond the romantic production of extraordinary figures of American tenacity and courage. While his correspondent certainly heroizes the signalman as such a figure, the story itself revolves around the signalman's work: transmitting messages from soldier to soldier, conveying information to facilitate imperial war, and protecting the community of soldiers engaged in empire-building. While war correspondents like Crane and his fictional doppelgänger may have welded a romantic cultural imaginary to the popular imperial ethos at the turn of the century, Crane's focus on the signalman's semaphoric labors also spotlights the ordinary soldier as a crucial, if alternative, relay in the information networks of empire. Neither aimed at nor given meaning by a distant domestic audience—unlike the yellow press's (and Crane's) war correspondents—the signalman's wig-wagging helps to consolidate an imagined community of ordinary soldiers whose manifold labors made possible the very empire-building that the romantic imagination projected back to national culture.

In this regard, the appearance of Crane's "Marines Signaling" in a soldier newspaper founded in March 1899 by and for volunteer soldiers in Cuba takes on added significance. With the majority of their articles and columns composed by

soldiers stationed across the nascent imperial archipelago, soldier newspapers such as the *Volunteer* not only relied on the on-the-ground reportage of their own war correspondents, but, like Crane's signalman, also engaged in the work of mediation, communication, and community-building in an imperial occupation force. More than that, the existence of soldier newspapers complicates our understanding of the so-called "correspondents' war" and its romancing of empire, revealing an extensive and diverse field of war correspondence that standard histories have neglected. Although our critical frameworks often trace the ideological effects of this romancing to the national sphere, they have little to say about the experience of imperial agents on the ground in the Philippines and Cuba. The romantic imaginary was clearly available to imperial foot soldiers, as evidenced by the reprinting of Crane's story. And yet their imperial experience—often a monotonous procession of the daily minutia of camp life—did not always coincide with its imperial imaginings. Indeed, the romantic ideology of empire underwent a process of revision and remediation in the pages of soldier newspapers as the gap between the romantic imagination and soldiers' experience forced soldier-writers to accommodate that ideology to their daily lives in an occupation force. On a purely formal level, moreover, a more abstract remediation was taking place on the pages of empire's mastheads as the juxtaposition of soldiers' quotidian experiences alongside heroic stories like Crane's created an imagined community of empire far different from that promised by romantic ideology.⁷

This essay explores this process of revision and remediation by examining a series of soldier newspapers published in Cuba and the Philippines during the fall of 1898 and the spring of 1899. Despite the dearth of critical attention regarding these imperial mastheads, their establishment across the imperial archipelago was a fairly regular, if short-lived, occurrence, particularly in the Philippines.⁸ The Fourth Tennessee's *Volunteer* was not, in fact, the first soldier newspaper to appear in Cuba during the war and subsequent occupation. Shortly after the fall of Santiago on July 16, a group of Port Huron printers serving in the Thirty-Third Michigan Volunteers published what was arguably the first newspaper of American empire, a souvenir edition titled *Co. F Enterprise*, a four-page sheet (plus a two-page supplement) that reported on the regiment's departure from Port Huron, its current situation in Cuba, its recent battlefield engagements, and its advertising policy.⁹ On the other side of the globe, newspapers sprouted up regularly in the Philippines, as enterprising soldier-editors found an eager audience in the barracks and camps that dotted Manila and its surrounding environs. The first newspaper established as a private enterprise by American soldiers in the Philippines was the *American Soldier*, a weekly paper founded in early September 1898.¹⁰ Launched by George Arthur Smith, a private in Company C, Thirteenth Minnesota Volunteers, the *American Soldier* served the entire Eighth Army Corp and was financed by advertising revenue from American businessmen in the Philippines, most prominently W.W. "Mayor" Brown and his American Commercial Company.¹¹ In addition to the *American Soldier*, individual

regiments and companies in the Philippines also started their own newspapers and periodicals.¹² The First Colorado Volunteers printed a weekly paper, the *Manila Outpost*, on November 12, 1898, a four-page sheet that focused almost exclusively on the regiment's individual companies.¹³ The *Soldier's Letter*, an illustrated monthly with a decidedly more literary flavor, also appeared in November, courtesy of members of Company C, First California Volunteers, and published literary, travel, and journalistic pieces reminiscent of popular illustrated monthlies that soldiers would have read at home (see Figures 2a–2d).¹⁴

Unlike their more famous stateside counterparts who trafficked in national culture's romantic sensationalism, soldier-correspondents mapped the everyday culture and shared values of their imperial community, reporting on daily life in the imperial outpost like baseball games, debate clubs, popular barbers, robberies, sanitation violations, mail deliveries, and local advertisements. This is not to say that soldier-correspondents were not influenced by the same cultural forces underwriting empire back home; indeed, the appearance of Crane's "Marines Signaling" shows that the romantic ideology of empire traveled with the troops to the barracks and camps of American empire. However, these imperial mastheads reveal that the romantic rhetoric of the extraordinary and the heroic was only a part of the story of empire; indeed, the formal simultaneity of the newspaper page, as discussed famously by Benedict Anderson, brought this romantic rhetoric into contact with the banal realities of camp life, presenting both as part of the same quotidian world of the imperial soldier.¹⁵ As the imperial forces on the ground in Cuba and the Philippines shifted their attention from imperial warfare to colonial occupation, the soldier newspapers that served them ultimately revised—quotidianized, one could say—the romantic paradigm into a flat account of empire, an alternative narrative of the personal habits, routines, and desires of imperial soldiers.¹⁶ As they sketched the daily life of the imperial campground, soldier-correspondents revealed the nonheroic, even ordinary, nature of imperial occupation. Flattening the depiction of empire from the extremes of heroic adventure on the battlefield, soldier newspapers quotidianize empire, remodeling its romantic spaces into the familiar spaces of everyday life and thus making the everyday a central site for the production of empire as a way of life.¹⁷

CO. F ENTERPRISE.

Printed and Published by Printers of Co. F. 33rd Michigan Volunteer Infantry.

Souvenir Edition.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, TUESDAY, JULY 26, 1898.

Price, 10 Cents.

PORT HURON, MICH.

The Native Home of Members of Company F.

Port Huron, Michigan, the home of Co. F, is located on the St. Clair river at the foot of Lake Huron, and is 60 miles north of the city of Detroit. The city has a population of 21,000 and is one of the prettiest and healthiest cities in the west. The beaches, a favorite summer resort all over central United States, are located in the northern part of the city and attract large crowds of visitors yearly. Port Huron has all the advantages of a modern city,—manufactories and other business enterprises. At the commencement of the present war patriotic feeling was at a high pitch in Port Huron and when orders were received for Co F to move to Camp Eaton the citizens took up the matter of a "send off" for the company. For the financial part the citizens raised the sum of \$710 and each member of the company was given \$5 each and the balance of the money raised was put into a company fund. The evening before the boys left the city for camp they were given a reception at the Auditorium building and a street parade formed a part of the program. A liberal display of fireworks served to arouse the patriotic feeling to a still higher pitch. At the meeting Col. Boynton and Adj. Harvey, of the 33rd Mich., were presented with horses for the field and Capt. Walsh was presented with a handsome sword by the local division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. On the morning of the departure of the company the boys were escorted to the depot by Mayor Stevens and members of the common council and various city boards as well as other citizens. This display of feeling on the part of the citizens of our home gave the boys a stout heart and started them on their way to the front with a determination to conduct themselves in such a manner as to reflect credit upon our city. This feeling has ever been with the boys and all are looking forward to the time when we can return to our native city and say to its citizens "We have done our duty." This action of the citizens of Port Huron will ever be a bright spot in the history of Co. F.

THE COMMISSARY TRAIN.

An item of some importance, at least to the members of this printer's firm, is the trip from our camp on the sea shore to Santiago for the purpose of printing our souvenir paper. Gen. Shafter's permission having been granted to the printers of Co. F to print such a paper, the boys quickly prepared for the journey. We packed up our three day's rations and had just rolled our rubber blankets when the toot, toot of an engine was heard and we hurried to the track, where we succeeded in boarding a commissary train bound for Santiago. We were given permission to ride on the top of a box car, which was used as a caboose, and made ourselves fast. This came natural to Corp. Cuy-

kendall and Priv. McCutcheon, "who had been there before." The train was too heavy for the engine to pull up the heavy grades and so after getting within about three miles of Santiago the train was cut in two, the engine taking the first part on, leaving the other part on the grade all night. We were left as guard and spent the night on the cars. We were in the midst of plenty of good things to eat, but had to be content with our regular army fare. After sleeping on the boxes until morning we were full of kinks, but after waiting an hour or so for the engine to return and as we were due in the city at eight o'clock we started out and walked the rest of the distance. Our night on the commissary train, however, will long be remembered.

THE 33rd's PRESENT CAMP.

The present camp of the 33rd Michigan Volunteers is located on the sea shore near Sardenas, which is located between Sbonay and Agadores. The camp ground prior to our occupation was covered with a low underbrush, but a few hours work transformed the spot into an ideal camping ground. It is located on a bay and the bathing facilities are excellent, while the fresh sea breeze is continually bracing the boys up and giving them fresh strength with which to withstand the heat. Just how long we will stay in our present camp is uncertain, as orders are expected at any time which will take us from the island, but where we are to go is also uncertain.

ARRIVAL OF MAIL.

An Event Anxiously Looked for by Our Boys.

Receiving news from home is the one connecting link between us and the United States and the arrival of our mail is eagerly watched for and about the first thought that strikes us when a new vessel appears in the harbor is whether it brings us any mail or not. If we are lucky the mail bags soon appear and are taken to the post office where the mail is sorted out for the different regiments. After this process is given into the charge of the chaplain who in turn sorts it out into company mail, after which it is delivered to the captains of the different companies. From the time the word is passed that the mail has arrived until its final distribution at the captain's quarters everyone is anxiously waiting for his letter that he is sure is in the bag, and if his expectations are realized he is happy but on the other hand if he is disappointed it almost makes him sick watching the lucky ones reading communications from loved ones at home. Sometimes, however, after twenty-four hours of this feeling he is refreshed by being called to the captain's headquarters and receiving a letter or two that had been delivered to the wrong company or regiment. The arrival of mail only stands second to orders to sail for home.

FIRST JURY TRIAL.

Under the American Code of Law, in Cuba.

The first jury trial in Cuba according to the American code of law, was held in the camp of Co. F, 33d Mich on July 12, the contesting parties being Private Geo. Griggs, complainant, and Private Geo Youngs, defendant, the cause of the complaint being a canteen which was in the possession of the defendant and claimed by the complainant. Capt. Walsh was presiding officer of the court, and "Danny" Donahue, representative of the Detroit Evening News, and Private T. H. Butler appeared as attorneys for the complainant, while Corp. C. R. Black and Priv. N. McLean appeared for the defendant; Wagoner Stephen Miller acted as court officer and the following jury was drawn: Sergt. J. Mann and Privates C. Jackson, W. Hoffman, H. Darr, L. Scramin and C. Henry. Both parties called a large number of witnesses and the case was hotly contested. The case finally reached the jury and after a deliberation of about an hour that body returned a verdict for the complainant. The poll of the jury stood four to two.

REGS AND VOLUNTEERS.

Ever since the organization of the National Guard there has been a feeling in the Guard that the regular soldier felt himself above the Guard and volunteer soldier and there has been a consequent coolness between them. The present service in Cuba has served to wipe out this coolness, for never were men given a more cordial welcome anywhere than are the volunteer soldiers when they enter the lives of the regulars. We are all like brothers here, whether we are regulars or volunteers, cavalry or infantrymen or artillerymen, it is all the same. This will be felt also on our return to the States.

THE GREAT NAVAL BATTLE.

The Thirty Third Regiment was given an opportunity to witness a naval battle on Sunday, July 3rd, as we were located on the sea shore close to the entrance of the harbor of Santiago. While we were close enough to see the engagement, we could not distinguish the different vessels. Early in the morning as we lay behind our entrenchments we were made aware that war was in progress by a fierce cannonading in the direction of the harbor, and on looking that way we could see one vessel after another come out of the harbor and steam away in the direction of Havana, at the same time firing upon our fleet. The Spanish vessel Vizcaya fired the first shot of the engagement, but it was quickly returned by our vessels, and in a moment the whole fleet was almost lost to view in a cloud of smoke, but the noise of the cannonading was almost deafening, and in a

short time the fleet had steamed out of sight in chase of the Spaniards. The engagement proper lasted only fifteen minutes, during which time the entire Spanish fleet was destroyed. Of course we did not know the exact condition of affairs, and for a time expected to see a Spanish vessel come out of the harbor and come out way and give us a few shells as it passed as our entire fleet had left in the chase, but we were happily disappointed, and the next day we learned the particulars of the engagement.

GENERAL NOTES

Of The Engagement on July 1 and 2 Before Santiago.

On the evening of June 30 it was given out that a general attack was to be made upon Santiago and its defenses. The part assigned to the Thirty-third as the left wing of the army, was to uncover the enemy at Agadores, so that the fleet could destroy their works; the main body of the army was to attack the rifle pits in front of the city. The first day the main body captured the rifle pits and drove the Spaniards into the defenses in the immediate vicinity of the city, and the Thirty-third succeeded in uncovering nearly every Spanish battery at Agadores. The second day only the third battalion of the Thirty-third was sent against Agadores and the main body of the army drove the Spaniards into the city and occupied the heights surrounding it. From this time until the surrender July 7, negotiations between the Americans and Spaniards were kept up, with an occasional break of the truce, during which time a few shots were exchanged. On July 3 the Spanish fleet left the harbor and were destroyed. The colored troops fought like tigers throughout the entire engagement, while the cavalry, although unused to operations on foot, made several charges without bayonets that excited the admiration of the English representatives who witnessed their work. The artillery and infantry were found as American soldiers always are, at the front doing their duty.

The cavalry boys do not take kindly to the balloon idea. It is a very warm subject, as many of their boys were killed during the experimental ascension for the purpose of directing the operations of the army.

The only American troops located in Santiago at present are the Ninth U. S. Infantry, and they occupy the theatre building.

A view of the battlefield of July 1 and 2 would lead one to wonder how the American army came out of this campaign with such a comparative small loss of life. The natural fortifications of this city are something marvelous.

Our boys have nicknamed the valley where the Thirty third operated July 1 and 2, "Suicide Alley," and it is always spoken of as such.

P. S.—Please excuse the "rv's" as we ran shy on "w's."

Figure 2a. Empire's Mastheads: Co. F Enterprise (Santiago, Cuba)

MANILA OUTPOST

No. 5

MANILA, P. I. DEC. 10, 1898

Vol. I

Company C.

Having noticed but few items in reference to Co. C. in the recent issues of 'The Outpost,' I will endeavor to give you a few for this number. There is very little stirring in the way of news, but the usual number of rumors is still running riot.

A damper was put upon the hope of returning home soon by the reading of an editorial in the Denver News of November 3, and it is now a case of 'grin and bear it' by the poor 'vols.'

The sick book of the company shows a better condition of health than at any time since entering the city.

Four or five of our messmates will be missed from quarters in the near future, as their discharge papers are either on the way.

Up to present writing (Wednesday) but few boxes have arrived from home and loved ones, but those few show a high degree of taste on the part of the donors. One bottle of the finest McBrayer lasted almost a minute after being opened.

The Colorado base ball team has at last succeeded in pulling off a game and winning it. Heretofore we ground has interfered with every game started, but on Saturday last (3rd dist.) the boys were the guests of the flagship Olympia's team at dinner and then were taken over to Cavite to play. The game was well played and very interesting to a large number of spectators, the final score standing—Colorado 8, Olympia 6.

On Tuesday a postponed game was booked with Astor battery, but the latter failed to show up and thereby forfeited to Colorado. The South Dakota team was on the ground and an interesting practice game of seven innings was played, resulting—Colorado 4, Dakota 5. On Thursday Colorado played Utah on the Lueta grounds, but the game was interrupted during the 4th inning, with the Utahs in the lead. Tuesday night a game was made between the Colorado and Utah teams for \$150 a side, to be played next Saturday, the 19th, at Cavite. Ensign Winslow, of the Olympia, will act as umpire.

Company C received some fine recruits among the last batch, and lots of hand-shaking was done with the sojourners in Honolulu.

Company E.

(Written for last week's paper, and typed as the forms were going to press.)

Private Leary and musician Simmens each have a three day pass to their credits.

Libbert has quit making ice, and will cut some with the company.

Tom Johnson rats the lit end of a cigarette in his eye last Monday, will be all right in a day or so.

Leary and MacArthur are still accumulating flesh. Graham has got a dawg, Fat Heggers brother, Os-

car, is among the latest recruits to Colorado Regiment. O. G. Smith's managerie has escaped. Any stray monkeys, parrots or dogs that are found around any quarters will undoubtedly be claimed by the above named circus agent at 25 Sap Sebastian.

Niema has got snakes—that is, wooden ones, and he has a barrel of fan with them, too.

Carty and Gilbert missed the ferry boat and spent the night in Cavite.

A. B. Johnson, T. E. Terrible Swede, of E Company has mysteriously disappeared. He started for the Division Hospital the other night and there is no record of him in any of the wards.

L. McCullough Hanawald is seen wending his way twice per week in the directory of the Red Cross Society Headquarters.

Lieut. Zollars is making himself felt in the company. His soldierly qualities, and army training will help to keep the company up to the standard.

The good old days of outpost are no more. No longer will we swap lies with the de-luded niggers nor cannot stop around in mud, waist deep, and on good sunny days enjoy a magazine at 'The English Club,' but now we have sunk into the depths of slime and corruption and are doing what is termed guard duty at the penitentiary. Heard some one term the duty as outpost, but I think that is desecration.

Company F.

The company was strengthened last week by the addition of seven recruits, and now the sick of the company are figuring on going home, or at least a number equal to that of new men. The recruits are: Privates Gow Mc.ave, Pithoud, Smith, Shiner, Wolther and Beamer, the last named being in the division hospital. They are a gentlemanly appearing set of men and will be a welcome addition to the guard strength.

The order compelling company clerks to drill has caused no end of grumbling—among the clerks.

Sergeant Humphrey is laid up these days with a mashed great toe which resulted from his inability to stand from under a hardwood board being used in the repairing of a building—an ever present evidence of the boom which has struck the town.

The arrival of the Indiana helped out a trifle on the mail proposition in this company, but there is yet much to be hoped for.

A small fortune in the way of ready money awaits the enterprising individual who first brings American chewing gum to F company.

F company quarters were guarded one night last week as a precaution against the fulfillment of rumors to the effect that a certain Spaniard intended causing trouble, either the rumor was without foundation or the Castilian changed his mind, and the guard was found to be unnecessary.

The arrival Wednesday of the long delayed Thanksgiving boxes fulfilled many joyful anticipations and filled many receding stomachs. The reasons for believing Colorado mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts to be the very best in all t e world are numberless. Let the Colorado men be worthy of the patient zeal, the untiring love of the women of their continental state.

Jack Wagner says 'T e is untouched by the prevailing mania for monkeys, parrots and countless other pets and mascots. His heart is yet true and his affections steadfast to Dewey, the Denver dog that came on the China.

Private Lockett was this week transferred to L company.

Private Green visited with his company this week in the role of a convalescent from the snappers ward of the Division hospital. He has had a hard siege of it, but, thanks to modern methods of treatment, returns unscathed.

Company G.

Comrades Pool and Fitzhugh were taken to the hospital Tuesday—the first with dysentery and Fitz with malaria. It is to be hoped the boys will be with us soon again.

When Lane promenade in his striped pajamas, one can scarcely tell him from an escaped Galton City convict.

Pete Cummings has bought a bottle of anti-fat, and walks three miles every morning before breakfast. He has heard that it is unhealthy here for fleshy men.

Glen Beeche has gone into the shell business in opposition to Henry Gardner.

Herb Winkler goes every night or two—but there, we promised not to say anything about it, for fear his Colorado girl would find it out!

Citizen Wm Beatty has been strutting around quarters lately, putting on lots of airs over Uncle Sam's soldier boys. He has a kangaroo coming.

Capt. Howard, Fred Snyder, Corps. Long and McMichels, Woody Welch and the editor visited the insurgent outposts below Fort San Antonio, last Sunday afternoon, and spent an hour or two with 'Agony's' boys. T e latter expressed a desire to join the American army. Woody thinks they 'ave wheels!

Ball Hill Smith has been on the sick list this week.

Tom Draper has bought his Colorado, it is somewhat smaller than a Philippine bank bill.

Since G company got their new plates and cups, the boys say that canned hovey tastes just like fried oysters; but they are probably lying—prevaricating.

George Godley and Milo Wilder are the only Michigan men in the company. They are to receive a bounty from their native state.

Fred Mulligan is going out after 'orderly' until he gets it.

Barker says if he keeps on gaining flesh, his people will reverse the proverb and slay the fatted prodigal when the calf returns.

Company I.

Private Lowe has returned from the hospital, after a two month 'illness. He has as pretty a growth of whiskers as a man ever saw.

Musican Williams has secured his discharge, and expects to sail for the U. S. Monday.

'Parson' Collins gives lessons from his new hymn book every evening, except Tuesdays and Sundays. Thank heaven, the rest of the Co. has peace at least t e nights out of the week.

The boxes came at last and 't hat a conglomeration of stomach-ache 'fevers' contained; no hopeless cases are reported yet. We will never forget the kind old folks in far-away Colorado.

Ask Riesner why he shaved his mustache off.

'How about that stag dance Co. G. was going to give when the boxes came.'

'Among private Gibbs' collection of thanksgiving 'goodies,' there was a box marked cigars. Gibbs opened it and discovered the fact that it contained saw-dust. Thinking he was the victim of a joke, he gave the box to some friends and t e of the boys opened the box and hunting around in the sawdust found a bottle of fine old Bourbon Rye. I guess t at 'as poor! Now, who was t e joke? Ask Gibbs.

Company K.

(Written for last week's paper, and typed as the forms were going to press.)

Mr. Lynchon the false reporter for K. Co. keeps the wires hot with would-be cablegrams.

Pablo Cummings and his partner Santiago have opened up a genuine dago fruit stand, and Pablo spends his entire time selling bananas.

Pablo says when the war is over that he will marry Santiago's wife's sister and remain in beautiful Manila.

Pynchon received a letter from his Frisco Sweet Heart. Pynchon seems to be quite alndly's man. Pynchon receives two more letters every mail than any other man in the regiment.

K. Co. have quite a collection of pet monkeys, but they are nothing compared to the American monkeys we had in 'Frisco. We should have been overjoyed to have been given the privilege of bringing them along, but masters of the vessels would not allow them on board.

Private L. McDonald has made the acquaintance of a maiden by the name of Maity, but says she isn't in it with his San Francisco girl.

Private A. M. Walcott, who enlisted while we were in Honolulu, longs to return to Honolulu and his Chinese friends. He used to be a Chinese school teacher at t e former place.

It is stated on good authority that Morrison is again sparring for stripes. I he is not careful he will receive a dose of medicine similar to that

he got on board the China for the same offense. Sheriff Turner says he will soon be well enough to administer the medicine needed.

White says soldiering in the Philippines is one continual round of pleasure.

Co. ell, the diamond king, is ready to return to the states.

Corporal Culler will soon join the Blue Ribbon society. So will Chapin.

Sammy Richards will soon be one of Dewey's boys. His transfer papers are being fixed up, and he will join the Olympia to serve for five years. Sam will make a good sailor.

Company L.

Co. L can boast a new corporal. Jesse Patton is having stripes and chevrons sewed in his blues and wonders, during the operation, what made the uniform appear so late and plain before.

Walls' monkey has escaped, but a pretty beast so he only offers a media peso reward for any information leading to its capture.

If L company receives any more boxes the natives keeping stores herabouts will be compelled to appoint a receiver. Fruit cake, and fruit that isn't cake, jellies, jams and marmalades all taste good in the Philippines.

The sick list grows shorter. Corporal Kuhlmeier has returned from the hospital. Privates Brown and Green have also been discharged and are now doing duty with company.

Sgt. Devote of D. Co. is un-

quarters elsewhere the men are for better off. Four rooms occupied by the three officers and the First Sergeant were vacated. The latter no occupies one of the largest rooms all by his 'lones' and the 5 sergeants are huddled together in quarters exclusive. Two rooms were thus added to the company's space and the crowded aspect no longer affects.

Jr. O. U. A. M.

Forty-seven members of the Jr. O. U. A. M. from the 1st California, 1st Colorado and 10th Pennsylvania, met in the dining room of G. Co. church of San Sebastian, last Tuesday evening, for the purpose of forming an organization of the members now in the 8th army corps.

Capt. David L. Howard, of Pike's Peak council No. 13, Cripple Creek, was made chairman, and J. A. Gullerath of Constitution No. 38, Cañon, was chosen secretary.

A committee of three, consisting of Capt. C. Dunbar of Cañon, Chas. E. Hawkins of Penn. and E. L. Riggs of Colorado, was appointed to secure a hall and bring all the members of the order in 8th army corps together at the earliest time possible.

The committee has secured Walden's casinet, under the Manila club, for the next meeting, which will be held on Thursday evening of next week.

SUICIDE

Private Harry McDowell of M company, committed suicide at 2 p. m. last Sunday in a room under C. Co.'s quarters, Santa Ana, by cutting his throat with a sharp case knife. The popular vein and

wind-pipe were both severed, and the unfortunate man only lived a few minutes. After cutting his throat, he gasped: 'Goodbye, boys, mother,' pointing with his hand to an identification badge, a small medal and an American flag which he wore suspended from his neck.

McDowell had been in the hospital for a long time, and had been brooding over his condition a great deal, which no doubt led to the suicide. On Sunday he complained of difficulty in breathing, using a fan continuously and drinking large quantities of water.

McDowell was very popular in his own company, and was well liked by all of the first Colorado who knew him. He left a father and mother at Colorado Springs, and a sister who is married to an engineer on the Revenue tunnel, Utah.

BRIEF MENTION

Prof. Irvine of the band is much grieved that any of the company should think he has been lax in his duties to the companies. The band is, and always has been ready and willing to play for any funeral. They only ask to be notified in time so they can have a full band, for when 4 or 5 members are missing it is impossible to turn out.

Jack Henderson of the band received his box from Charlie Humbert the popular saloon man of Denver. While Charlie said nothing about the Outpost of the division we are sure 'muchas gracias' just the same.

The Colorado band played to a large and enthusiastic audience at the Lueta Tuesday night. Every selection played called forth an encore. Every Tuesday evening from 6 to 7 o'clock the Colorado will entertain the public, and it is well worth one's while to hear them.

Sgt. Devote of D. Co. is un-

quarters elsewhere the men are for better off. Four rooms occupied by the three officers and the First Sergeant were vacated. The latter no occupies one of the largest rooms all by his 'lones' and the 5 sergeants are huddled together in quarters exclusive. Two rooms were thus added to the company's space and the crowded aspect no longer affects.

Private Harry McDowell of M company, committed suicide at 2 p. m. last Sunday in a room under C. Co.'s quarters, Santa Ana, by cutting his throat with a sharp case knife. The popular vein and

Concilio Zamora, the popular silver-smith, gave a grand party at his residence on the 8th. The party was given in honor of the least of the Conception, and lasted all day. Music, singing, eating, and dancing were indulged in and the American guests were treated with the greatest consideration.

Mrs. Col. H. B. McCoy attended the funeral of poor Harry McDowell last Sunday. Mrs. McCoy is the only American lady present.

A. B. Johnson, American Consul at Amoy, China, is in the city, looking over Uncle Sam's new possessions. Mr. Johnson is an old-time Colorado newspaper man, and a friend of the editor of 'The Outpost.' He likes the looks of Lagoon island, and ventures to say he will buy a slice of it before leaving.

It is said that the red Indians seen in the direction of Manila are signs of war.

Ben Lear, ser. of C Company has a lame arm, as a result of playing baseball.

Applications for discharges seem to be in order. There are lots of them going in every day.

SUNDAY SERVICES

Services will be held as follows on Sunday:

9:30 a. m. - Service and address, barracks of C. I. and D. over guard house.

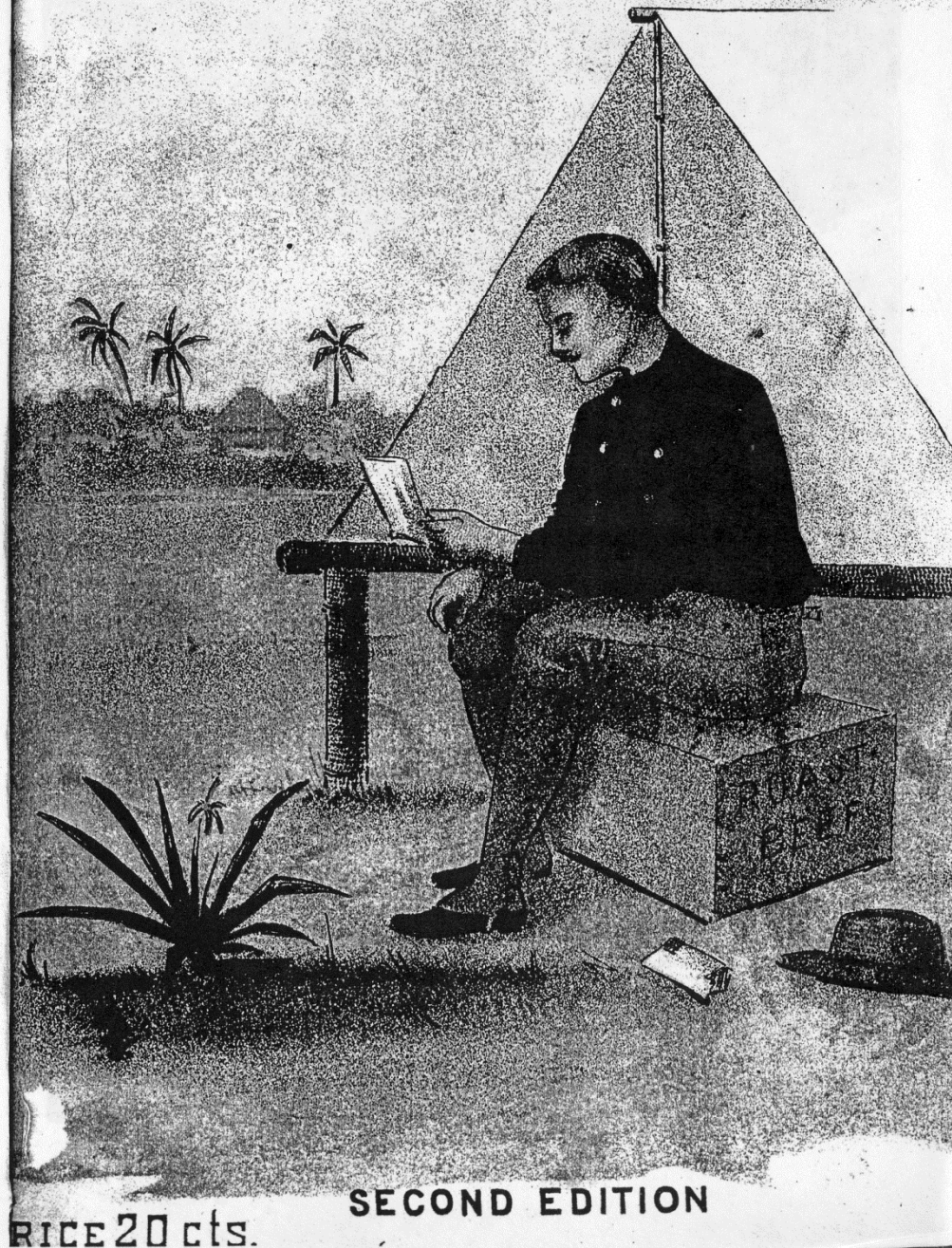
3:00 p. m. - Bible class at headquarters.

7:45 p. m. - At Theatre Herald, on Calle Iris. Colorado band will play before and after the services.

D. L. FLEASHER, Chaplain 1st Co.

Figure 2b. Empire's Mastheads: Manila Outpost (Manila, P.I.)

THE
SOLDIER'S LETTER
for
NOVEMBER 1898.



RICE 20 cts.

SECOND EDITION

Figure 2c. Empire's Mastheads: Soldier's Letter (Manila, P.I.)

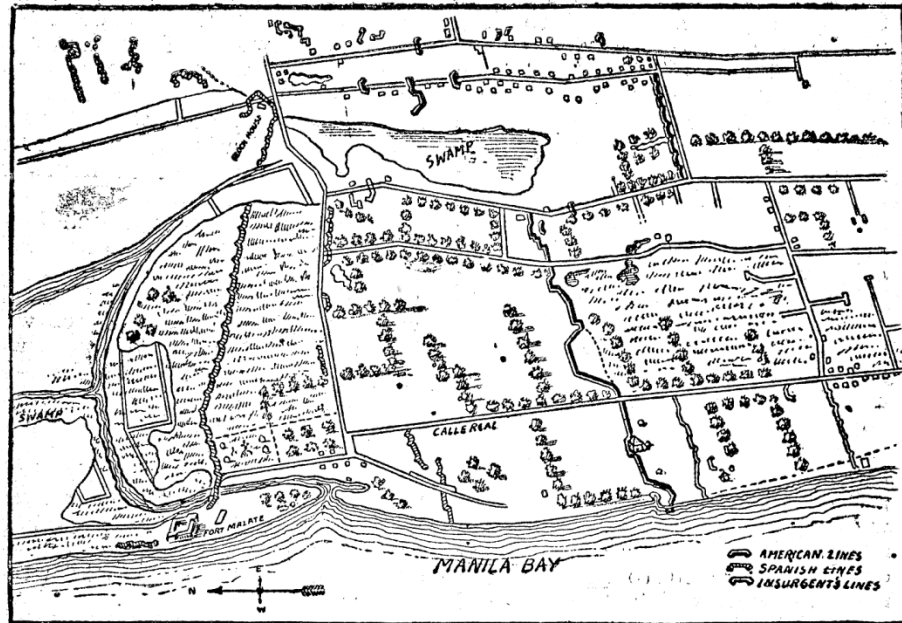
Incidents of Campaigning Days

Like the war correspondents filing their reports for the domestic audience, soldier-editors also found the romantic script of heroic self-sacrifice an appealing narrative for their soldier-readers. In announcing “Incidents of Campaigning Days,” a new column to memorialize the “Taking of Manila,” the *American Soldier* employs a heroic romantic tone before imploring its readers to take up the pen and inscribe their adventures in the annals of historical memory: “Never in the history of the world has any body of men indured [sic] greater hardships than has the eighth Army Corps. The results of our work will ever remain as a bright page in America’s history.”¹⁸ The language of strenuous endeavor evoked by the editors is draped in physical imagery in the opening lines of the inaugural “Incidents of Campaigning Days” column: “August the 13th the Day ever memorable! The supreme moment had at last arrived. Crouching down in the grass the first battle line awaited the command to advance. The troops did not wait long. Courageously toward the enemy’s trenches . . . they pressed.”¹⁹ Later, the soldiers are described as “plung[ing] into the Rio de San Antonio and emerg[ing] with dripping garments on the Manila side of the stream, and push[ing] along the beach to storm the city.”²⁰ Like Crane’s signalman, these images of action, adventure, physical bravery, and unhesitating courage penned by American soldiers endow the imperial soldier with the attributes of the romantic hero. Even in more mundane, everyday coverage, the *American Soldier* sometimes presented an image of the American soldier through the lens of romance. An article titled “The Treacherous Spaniard,” written by an anonymous member of the staff, describes the unwavering chivalry of off-duty American soldiers who protect a group of Filipina dancers from the unwelcome and “disagreeable” advances of two Spaniards, exercising, as the paper puts it, “true gallantry” in forcing the Spaniards to desist.²¹ Such an incident echoes the rhetoric of knight errantry with which the yellow press had characterized the US mission in Cuba, here transposing the Filipina dancers for the Cuban damsel in distress whom the chivalrous US knight frees from the clutches of Spanish tyranny.²²

While some stories in soldier newspapers certainly reinforce the dominant romantic heroism meme of the yellow press, other soldier-writers developed an ironic attitude toward the romantic promises of empire and revalued the meaning of heroism and valor by questioning the high premium soldiers themselves placed on the romantic vision of heroic derring-do upon the battlefield. Frederick Healy, a private in Co. L, First California Volunteers, argues as much in an article titled, “In the Entrenchments,” in the inaugural issue of the *Soldier’s Letter* in November 1898.²³ Although Healy praises American bravery during the “feverish activity of war” and urges his readers to take “a just pride in the splendid excellence of American chivalry,” he cautions his audience against the “erroneous idea” that “their fighting qualities” are the sole index of “military perfection” and suggests that the “mutual patting on the back that is continually going on between the different commands” is

misplaced. Unlike the “Incidents of Campaigning Days” story in the *American Soldier*, Healy’s article dismisses “the battle of Malate and the so called ‘assault’ on Manila” as “nothing more than a couple of slight skirmishes,” counseling his readers that “to boast of the prodigies of valor there performed is merely to make ourselves ridiculous” (see Figure 3).²⁴

Figure 3.
“Map of Spanish-
American
Entrenchments,”
from Frederick
Healy’s “In the
Entrenchments,”
Soldier’s Letter,
November 1898.



Displacing combat and battlefield heroics, Healy uses the remainder of the article to valorize daily life “in the entrenchments” as the locus of proper heroism. Narrating a day in the life of the soldier, he enumerates his daily hardships: the “wet and muddy blankets,” the “cramped muscles” and “chilled blood,” the “sores which covered the entire body,” the weakness caused by dysentery, the “empty stomachs,” and the interminable wait for “an insufficient breakfast of bad coffee and poor hardtack.” Lest his readers forget, Healy meticulously describes the grueling labor that built those entrenchments: “All day long they had labored digging and filling bags which were no sooner full than they were taken on shoulder and carried to the place they were to occupy in the creation of new works or the strengthening of old. In many cases there had not been enough picks and shovels provided and the supply of bags had run short. Whereupon the boys had turned up the soft muddy ground with sharpened sticks, carried it to the breastworks on flat boards and patted it into place with their bare hands.” After a break for cold coffee and more hardtack, the boys worked, according to Healy, “until darkness made further labor impossible.” Healy’s description of the soldiers’ suffering in the trenches becomes repetitive, as he describes the night filled with rainstorms, muddy boots, wet blankets, cold coffee, and other such trials that “merely served to accentuate the general discomfort.”

And yet Healy's intention in detailing this "imperial misery" is ironically to relocate the source of martial pride and heroism away from combat proper.²⁵ Trench duty, according to Healy, "is the thing on which the volunteers should pride themselves and when mutual congratulations are the order of the day, let them be on the fortitude displayed and not the fighting done by the different regiments that took part in the operations against Manila." Healy reveals a gap between the promise and the reality of empire, one, according to him, produced by the soldiers themselves in their rush to "mutual congratulation." In his attempt to correct his comrades' misplaced pride, Healy revises the romantic paradigm itself, displacing it from one extreme—heroic exertion on the battlefield—to another—heroic suffering in the trenches. Although he remains "in the entrenchments" and close to the field of combat, he remakes the extraordinary spectacle of the romantic imagination into an everyday scene of imperial drudgery without ultimately severing the ideological connection between romantic heroism and empire.

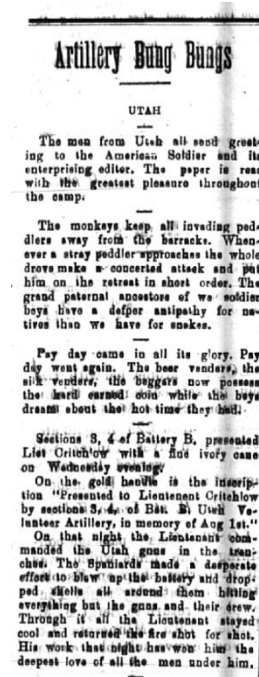
Empire as a Way of Life

Such moments where the lineaments of the romantic imaginary are put under pressure by individual soldier-writers like Healy show the limitations as well as the elasticity of romantic ideology for soldiers in the Philippines and Cuba. Healy's focus on the everyday conditions of soldiers' lives was, in fact, the norm in soldier newspapers. If anything, his heroizing of the grueling labor of trench duty was the exception in the newspapers serving soldiers at the edge of empire. The majority of soldier-correspondents for papers like the *American Soldier*, *Manila Outpost*, and *Volunteer* quotidianize empire in a different way, filling their dispatches with the practical details of the soldier's life, details which endow the project of empire with a sense of the mundane, the uneventful, and the unheroic. Their correspondence reflected the everyday needs, recreations, and customs of the imperial soldier, articulating their shared imperial identity through the experience of camp life. Unlike Healy's rhetorically-nuanced reworking of romantic ideology in an illustrated monthly, the cumulative appearance and arbitrary juxtapositions of the regimental columns in the pages of soldier newspapers produce a flat account of empire that makes the everyday a central site in the ideological production of empire as a way of life. Soldier-correspondents' preoccupation with the quotidian served a multivalent function. On the one hand, the quotidian helped soldiers make themselves at home in empire, revealing their daily routines and habits as familiar social practices that ordered their experience into a way of life that they built and shared at the edge of empire. On the other hand, soldier-writers also domesticated the colonial encounter within the register of the quotidian, a strategy that enabled them to discursively manage colonized subjects and subordinate them to reigning imperial ideology.

Although they carried US and world news from the cable service, published "local interest" articles on Philippine history and Cuban geography, and posted news

of military campaigns and diplomatic talks, the soldier-editors of empire's mastheads envisioned their papers first and foremost as representative of soldier life, with special attention paid to the personal lives of individual soldiers and the social organization of camp life. The *American Soldier* crystallized this aim in one of its masthead slogans, "a soldier's paper for the soldiers," and reminded its readers that "almost every article published in the *American Soldier* is written in Manila by members of the 8th Army corps; so that it is a representative soldier's paper."²⁶ As stated in their very first editorial, titled "The Starting of a Newspaper," the editors "endeavor to make the paper one of interest to the boys here in the field" and "to keep in touch with the daily events in connection with Uncle Sam's Army in Manila."²⁷ Towards this end, soldier newspapers had large and lively regimental departments, enlisting their fellow soldiers in a writer corps, as it were, to complement the official Army Corps. The bulk of their writing concerned daily life in an occupation force, and the columns were composed and submitted by soldier-correspondents from across the campground. Papers like the *Volunteer* and the *Manila Outpost* recruited their writers from the volunteer regiments that comprised their primary audience. The *American Soldier*, on the other hand, had a regular regimental department, with a roster of twenty-five soldier-correspondents assigned to the different regiments and companies that made up the entire Eighth Army Corp. Often scattered throughout the paper, the regimental columns reported camp news of both a personnel and personal nature. One gets a sense of the pedestrian quality of their compositions from the colorful titles of some of the *American Soldier's* regimental columns: "Stray Bullets," "Inklings of Idahos," "Artillery Bung Bungs," "Bum Notes from the Band," "Co. H Happenings," "14th Jottings," "Pencilings from Co. 'C'", "Gleanings from Co. D," "Idaho Iotas," and "Casual Crayons."²⁸ Such titles indicate how little the romancing of empire mattered to these soldier-writers. With their suggestion of the minute, the trivial, and the insignificant, their titles point to an imperial correspondent attentive to the ordinary concerns and unheroic desires of daily experience (see Figure 4).

Figure 4.
A typical regimental column from the *American Soldier*,
September 24, 1898.



Indeed, the subject matter of the *American Soldier's* regimental columns is hardly remarkable. The regimental beat certainly covered personnel matters (illnesses, deaths, discharges, and promotions), but their columns more frequently document the routine affairs and personal habits of individual soldiers. Rather than the romantic spectacle of the yellow press, the *American Soldier's* regimental department scours this spectacle of the heroism, adventure, and honor that we associate with the “correspondents’ war.” Across its pages are scattered diverse reports of gustatory delights and recreational diversions, of personal grooming habits and novelty medical remedies, of barracks-room pets and philatelic pleasures; in short, a spectacle—or perhaps, anti-spectacle—of the everyday life of the imperial camp. Given the repetitive and unexceptional nature of these regimental columns, almost every issue contains examples of this everydayness. In the inaugural issue of the paper, one finds “Stray Bullets” on the second page, reporting Lieutenant Clark’s christening of a monkey named Amigo and Lieutenant Snow’s plans to organize a ball club to make a tour of the islands. In other recreational pursuits, Ben Williams “is attending Spanish evening school” and hopes to “smoke [sic] Spanish before long just as well as the grandest Don.” Another sergeant reports “learning to smoke cigarettes” to “keep in tune with his new girl,” while Charley Meacham laments that he hasn’t “made a mash since he struck town.”²⁹ The Thirteenth Minnesota’s correspondent speculates about many soldiers’ “unusual interest” in learning Spanish (attributed to the “undeniable beauty of these Spanish ladies”) and details Private Perrine’s souvenir collection (including a new 280-lb. shell, a 150-lb. cannonball, four machetes, a payroll pen, and a Spanish prisoner’s gold filling).³⁰ The October 8 issue shows that little has changed in these columns, with the exception of a greater number of regiments covered and a smaller focus on personnel matters. Wortser’s Pain Cure, a remedy for cramps and dysentery concocted by a private in South Dakota’s Company E, is announced in the First South Dakota’s column. Alongside this notice, the “Inklings of Idahos” correspondent reports on the death of their pet monkey; on the following page, the Nebraska regiment reports its acquisition of 7 pet monkeys, explaining that its regimental mascot, a goat named Dewey, is “as lively as ever but doesn’t like monkeys.” The Thirteenth Minnesota’s column reports that Company H’s shoemaker, private Bugton, “works like a beaver,” that their “tonsorial artists, Egbert and Postel are having an easy time of it now as the boys are all leaving their moustaches grow and all they need to shave is a few hairs on the chins of some of the old men,” and that “if you want any pointers on baking biscuits give Al Erikson a call. Kelly can turn out a few sinkers himself.” The same page also finds a report that Sergeant Lamber of Minnesota’s Company D is “collecting old coins and has now some very fine specimens of cannibal coinage” and that Private Sutton “is in charge of the culinary department [and] has exceptional ability as a pastry cook and we have had pie and doughnuts in plenty several times.”³¹

This phenomenon was not confined to the pages of the *American Soldier*. Across the imperial archipelago, the regimental pages of soldier newspapers ripple

with items and observations of this nature. The *Manila Outpost* prominently displayed its regimental columns on its front page, suggesting the primacy of this kind of camp news for the volunteers of Colorado. Much space is taken up in its inaugural issue with personnel matters, as one learns of discharges, promotions, and jobs in the bakery, canteen, and subsistence sales depot. W.G. Bolton's Tonsorial Parlor has undergone changes, with his purchase of a new chair, as has Company I's mess table, newly "adorned with a table cloth, white plates and cups, and new knives, forks, and spoons, a result of Pay Day." One Company M private, Michael Walsh, "challenges any and all comers to a 'bread cultry' matching," while the Company M correspondent also reports that the company monkey is "carrying a pretty good jag," after the company "put in our time giving [him] whiskey straight."³² The *Volunteer's* company news in Trinidad, Cuba, in 1899 is no different nor is the regimental column in the *Co. F Enterprise* in Santiago in the summer of 1898. The *Volunteer's* Company F column on January 22 indicates that Sergeant Scheitlin is the "proud possessor of a fine set of ruddy whiskers, and he seems to glory in the fact that he alone can 'raise' them." The band treated the company to "The Girl I Left Behind" and "Home, Sweet Home," leading Sergeant Heggie to suggest that "the regulations should prohibit the band playing those tunes in Cuba." Elsewhere one learns that among Lieutenant Warfield's impressive souvenir collection is one hairless dog and that Sergeant Brewer owns the "most popular parrot in the camp." Many of the boys have "adopted the Cuban style of footwear," while Private Lewis Brown has "received some postage stamps in one of his letters last week," a sign that "someone" appreciates Lewis' letters."³³ The *Co. F Enterprise's* column, "Among the Boys of Co. F," provides quick snippets and evaluations of camp life (see Figure 5). One learns that Corporal Reynolds "can't stand the ferocious crab, consequently he now sleeps between two trees in a hammock." Corporal Petit "holds his own in making the nice, juicy pancake," while Charlie Hill failed "in trading his can of beef for two nice cans of peaches." The column also pokes fun at some of the soldiers, remarking that "if Rudolph Papst is not a lieutenant before he gets home it will not be because he does not talk about it." Apparently Private Willis Pace thinks that the post office is "very corrupt" because "he mails two eight page letters every other day and has not received one for a month. He eats mangoes to drown his sorrow."³⁴

What can be said about columns like this? On the one hand, this quotidianizing of empire also obscures the violent material realities of imperial encounter. Like Francis Benjamin Johnston's domestic photographs of Admiral Dewey's flagship, *Olympia*, that Laura Wexler has analyzed so brilliantly, the regimental columns' preoccupation with the quotidian domesticates imperial aggression, presenting the American occupation force "on its time off, that is, in domestic time."³⁵ Although the newspapers carried stories about the war and the soldiers' experiences therein, such stories represented a small portion of any issue's newsprint in comparison to the regimental columns.³⁶ To be sure, the notices about soldier deaths and illnesses, the descriptions of souvenir collections of leftover munitions, and the references to

soldiers' "new girls" and to Spanish beauty that one finds in the regimental columns reveal the material traces of the imperial encounter and show that empire remains a contested space of potential violence. However, these remain just traces, and the overwhelming focus on the domestic concerns of camp life marginalizes and disavows the harsh realities of imperial intervention. Indeed, by alluding to soldiers' amorous entanglements with the occupied population, these regimental columns rewrite the imperial encounter within a different romantic register, one anchored in the sentimental preoccupations of *daily life*, not the heroic potentialities of the battlefield.

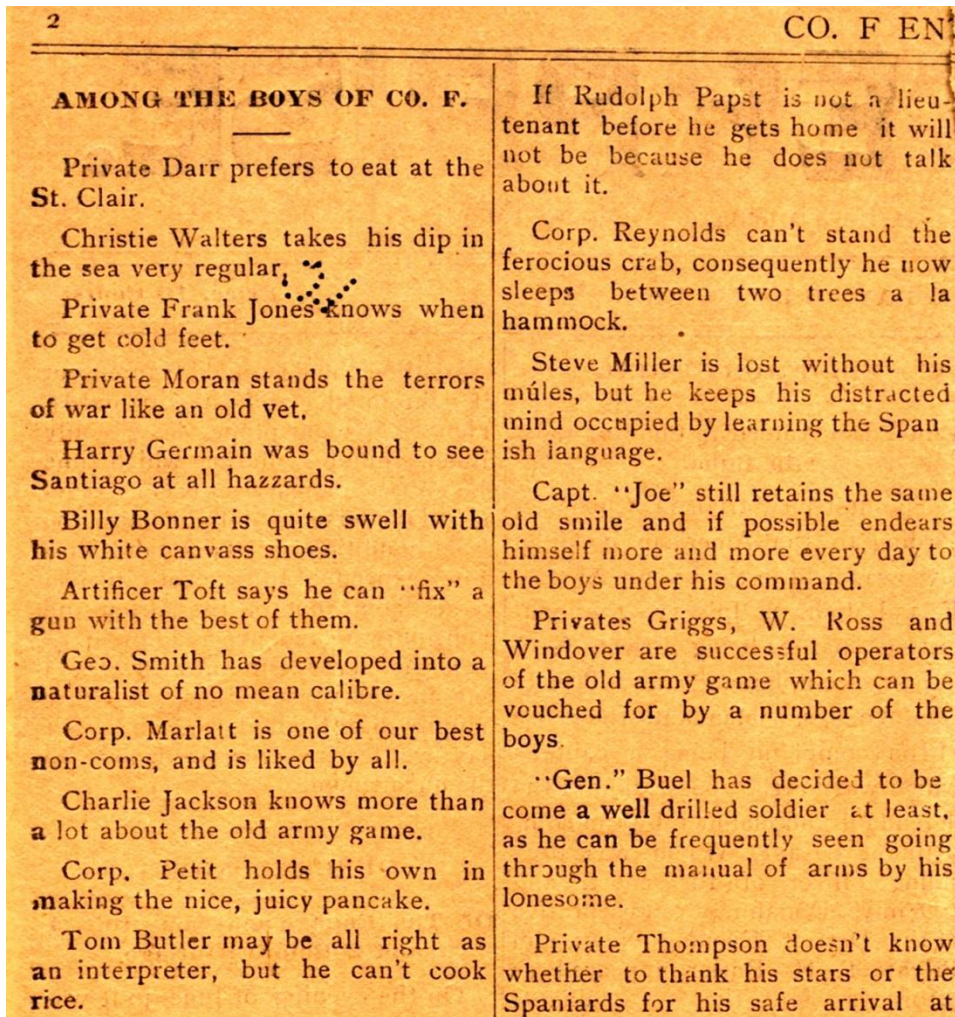


Figure 5.
"Among the
Boys of Co.
F," Co. F
Enterprise,
July 26, 1898.

On the other hand, this hodge-podge of quotidian material is also rather mundane, boring, and insignificant; it is the stuff of daily life in all its minute and tedious detail. That is, however, precisely my point. Far from the romantic spectacle of imperial warfare described by the yellow press's correspondents or the daily hardships of trench duty revalued by Frederick Healy, the soldier-correspondents writing for the regimental department produce a flat account of empire, one that

makes empire into just another ordinary experience. Not only is the subject matter of these columns decidedly quotidian, but their very presentation on the page—the “arbitrariness of their inclusion and juxtaposition,” as Benedict Anderson might say³⁷—illustrates the cultural work of mediation and remediation that soldier newspapers perform. It is true that these soldier-correspondents seem to remain influenced by romantic values, but their writing recasts the heroic tenor of the romantic imagination and traffics instead in the trivial and routine details of camp life. One soldier finds “glory” in his “fine set of ruddy whiskers,” not in his martial prowess in battle. Craving perhaps the competition and struggle of the battlefield, another challenges his peers to a “bread culture” contest. Others are lauded for their “exceptional abilities” in the kitchen, heroes of the doughnut and pancake. However, whereas an individual like Healy recasts empire’s romantic promise by heroizing soldiers’ sufferings in the trenches, the very mundanity of these regimental columns *hollows out* that heroic ideology and severs the link between empire and romance. Instead, it is the everyday that holds value for these soldier-writers and their columns’ subjects.

Soldiers turned to the quotidian in order to write their imperial experience as a way of life, to make empire into an everyday space that was at once familiar and meaningful outside of the ideological structures of the romantic imagination. Camp life—and empire more generally—was not the romantic adventure they had been promised. Arriving in Manila or Trinidad, they found, as the *American Soldier’s* Idaho correspondent put it on October 8, that “it was not given to them to fight for their country and that it was not all the vivid succession of intense and pleasing emotions they had thought it.”³⁸ Soldiers turned to their daily lives for the meaning they thought they would find in the strenuous life of empire and in the process made themselves at home in empire. Indeed, by focusing on such things as haircuts, biscuits, pet parrots, stamps, and coin collections, soldier newspapers reproduced the everyday practices and structures of social life that they left behind when they embarked on the imperial adventure. Moreover, the activities described in their columns—cooking and eating, sleeping and grooming, bathing and health care, entertainment and recreation, etc.—represent the set of practices that helps us to organize the messy and unstructured flow of experience into some kind of meaningful structure. The imperial quotidian they documented in their columns thus helped make empire into a way of life that they shared at the edge of empire. In order to “‘sluff[] off’ some of the mopes and the miserables” of camp life, as Idaho’s correspondent also said, these soldiers quotidianized empire to make it livable, casting their everyday experience as the literary currency of the imagined community they were creating in the pages of empire’s mastheads.

While this focus on the minutiae of their experience helped soldiers imagine and produce their imperial community, soldier newspapers also quotidianized the colonial encounter itself. In addition to the regimental columns analyzed above, these newspapers often published short fictional pieces with decidedly quotidian

settings and themes. One such piece, “The Manila Postoffice,” appeared in late November in the *American Soldier*. Ostensibly about the difficulties of running the post office in Manila, the article stages the colonial encounter as a comic and increasingly dangerous exchange between an American Postmaster, portrayed as a serene model of urbane civilization, and a “dusky,” “coffee-colored” Filipino, caricatured as a semi-literate and violently intemperate savage chieftain dressed “in all the glory of a cretonne sofa over a sailor’s cap.” Unfamiliar with the conventions of modern postal communications, the caricatured Filipino—whose name is Guahano—demands a letter from the Postmaster. Informed that there is no letter for him, Guahano angrily cuts short the Postmaster’s explanation of how the post works and why his tribesman, Inoso, received a letter. Couched in the imperative and punctuated by exclamation points, Guahano’s response appears childish and impetuous: “Me chief! Inoso no chief!...Give Inoso letter! No give Guahano letter! I fight! I kill! Want letter!” Despite the Postmaster’s attempt at explanation, the situation quickly escalates to possible violence with Guahano drawing his knife. At this moment of heightened tension, an “old American resident” breaks into the scene, a kind of imperial *deus ex machina*, to diffuse the tension and contain its violent escalation. Admonishing the baffled and frightened Postmaster, the American resident declares, “Pshaw! Just tear off a piece of wrapping paper, throw some ink over it and give it to him. You’ve got to show some tact and judgment in running this office, old chap.”³⁹

Clearly participating in the rhetoric and rationale of the US program of benevolent assimilation, the article portrays the colonial encounter as an everyday exchange in a post office, eventually domesticating the potential violence of empire as a relationship between a solicitous parent and an unruly child. As Vicente Rafael observes, “benevolent assimilation infantilized [Filipinos] as racial others in need of nurturance and tutelage.”⁴⁰ Interestingly for my purposes, not only is the setting of this imperial encounter decidedly pedestrian, but it is the stuff of daily life—clothing, reading and writing, speech patterns, social interaction—that produces this racialized and paternalistic relationship. Guahano’s problem in the eyes of the postmaster—and the source of comedy for the paper’s soldier-readers, we can assume—resides in his lack of understanding of the social norms governing everyday life in the imperial outpost. His unfamiliarity with the modern postal system—and writing in general, as suggested by the American resident’s patronizing solution—his uncouth attire, his elementary use of language, and his intemperate outbursts coalesce in this story to place him at a distant remove from the literate, temperate, rational, and civilized character of the American postmaster and resident. In the figure of Guahano, Filipinos are rendered uncivilized and in need of colonial intervention through various markers of the everyday. Such an article thus demonstrates how the quotidianizing of empire that I have been tracing in soldier newspapers not only allowed soldiers to make themselves at home in empire, but also served as a strategy for discursively managing and subordinating Filipino subjects within reigning imperial ideology.

The stories and poems that soldiers wrote were their literary attempts to combat the tedium of the imperial quotidian by making it into the subject matter of empire and its mastheads. Indeed, I want to close by suggesting that soldier newspapers themselves, while certainly illustrating the everyday culture of the imperial soldier, exemplify this quotidianizing of empire. In an article written for stateside publication, George Arthur Smith, the founding editor of the *American Soldier*, narrates the origins of the first soldier newspaper in Manila. Smith's narrative focuses on the daily work of a newspaper, soliciting copy, procuring financing, setting type, and promoting it to retailers. However, he begins by explaining why he decided "to try the experiment of getting out an American newspaper." According to Smith, "when we first got into these quarters we had practically nothing to do, and being naturally discontented when idle, I cast about for something to engross my mind."⁴¹ As for so many of his future correspondents and readers, the promised romance of empire had not materialized and Smith was bored and dissatisfied with camp life. To cope with that boredom, he turned to the everyday practice of writing and in the process created a newspaper that made empire into an ordinary way of life for its soldier-readers.

Notes

¹ During this time in Cuba, Linda Davis notes, Crane "recycled stories from his war tales, and in his war tales he used bits from his reporting work" (*Badge of Courage: The Life of Stephen Crane*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998: 286).

² "The Price of the Harness" appeared in *The Cosmopolitan* in December 1898 under the title, "The Woof of Thin Red Threads." "Marines Signaling Under Fire at Guantanamo" was published in *McClure's* in February 1899 as was "The Lone Charge of William Perkins" in July 1899. Finally, a version of "Virtue in War" was published in *Leslie's Monthly* in November 1899.

³ Crane's story appeared under the revised title, "At Guantanamo. Marines There Signal Under Heavy Fire," in the March 12th issue of the *Volunteer*. I wish to thank Larry Butler at the Tennessee State Library and Archives for locating this newspaper and producing a microfilm of it for me.

⁴ On the significance of the correspondent in Crane's war fiction, see William Crisman, "'Distributing the News': War Journalism as Metaphor for Language in Stephen Crane's Fiction," *Studies in American Fiction* 30.2 (Autumn 2002): 207–27; Michael Robertson, *Stephen Crane, Journalism, and the Making of Modern American Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 137–76; and John Dudley, "Crane's Dispatches from Cuba: The Dynamics of Race, Class, and Professionalism in the 'Correspondents' War,'" *Stephen Crane Studies* 11.2 (Fall 2002): 11–22.

⁵ See Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2002), 92–120. For a recent revision of Kaplan’s thesis in the context of the Philippine-American War, see Andrew Hebard, “Romantic Sovereignty: Popular Romances and the American Imperial State in the Philippines,” *American Quarterly* 57.3 (Sept. 2005): 805–29.

⁶ For an overview of the yellow press at the turn of the century, see W. Joseph Campbell, *Yellow Journalism: Puncturing the Myths, Defining the Legacies* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001) and David R. Spencer, *The Yellow Journalism: The Press and America’s Emergence as a World Power* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2007). On the exploits of foreign war correspondents during the Spanish-American War, see Charles Brown, *The Correspondents’ War: Journalists in the Spanish-American War* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1967), and Joyce Milton, *The Yellow Kids: Foreign Correspondents in the Heyday of Yellow Journalism* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1989).

⁷ On the work of cultural mediation performed by newspapers, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Rev. Ed., London: Verso, 1991), 33–36.

⁸ The critical literature on these soldier newspapers has been sparse, confined to historical treatments of the American press in the Philippines that too often fold soldier newspapers into accounts of the larger commercial papers that emerged at the same time. I have been unable to find references to soldier newspapers in Cuba, but on the Philippines, see Carson Taylor, *History of the Philippine Press* (Manila, P.I.: n.p., 1927), 30–42; Jesús Valenzuela, *History of Journalism in the Philippine Islands* (Manila, P.I.: n.p., 1933), 114–22; Lewis Gleeck, *American Institutions in the Philippines (1898–1941)* (Manila, P.I.: Historical Conservation Society, 1976), 178–85; John Lent, *The Philippine Press During the Revolution and the Filipino-American War* (Philadelphia: s.n., 1977), 12; and Carmen Nakpil, “The first English-language papers in Manila,” *Archipelago* 5 (1978): 8–10.

⁹ Illustrating the intra-imperial network across the emerging imperial archipelago, *American Soldier*, the first soldier newspaper in the Philippines, hailed the *Co. F Enterprise* as “the first American paper published in Santiago” in early October (“Newspapers at Santiago,” *American Soldier*, October 1, 1898).

¹⁰ There is some dispute over the first American newspaper in the Philippines, a dispute that stems from the difficulty of categorizing papers that were printed aboard steamships for their passengers. Carson Taylor and Jesús Valenzuela cite *The Bounding Billow*, a monthly newsheet printed aboard Admiral Dewey’s flagship, *Olympia*, during their voyage from Nagasaki, Japan, to the Philippines, as the first American paper in the Philippines. John Lent, however, disagrees, citing the *Bounding Billow*’s origins prior to the war in the Philippines. The question of classification aside, press historians generally agree that *Official Gazette*, a newspaper launched by the US military for official purposes on August 23, 1898, was the first “Yankee publication on Philippine soil” (Taylor 30). See

Taylor, *History of the Philippine Press*, 30–42; Lent, *The Philippine Press*, 12; and Valenzuela, *History of Journalism*, 116–18.

¹¹ Smith recalls the founding of the paper, including initial attempts to procure financing, in “Our First Manila Newspaper,” *Dallas Morning News*, March 26, 1899, <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>.

¹² Although this essay focuses on soldier newspapers, there were a number of daily and weekly American papers of the commercial variety in Manila in the fall of 1898, including *Manila Times*, *American*, and *Freedom*. The *American Soldier* published a list of “Manila Newspaperdom” on December 5, including five English titles and ten Spanish titles (“Manila Newspaperdom,” *American Soldier*, December 5, 1898).

¹³ The *Outpost* was managed by George Fairchild, a corporal in Company G. As an example of our critical neglect of these papers, a recent history of the Colorado Volunteers, *Colorado’s Volunteer Infantry in the Philippine Wars, 1898–1899*, by Geoffrey Hunt, makes no mention of this camp paper.

¹⁴ Edited by A.J. Martineau, a private in Company C, *Soldier’s Letter* had a short-lived publication history, appearing in November and December 1898. For information on the First California Regiment, see Philip Montague’s ornately-designed valedictory tribute, *First to the Front: 1st California, U.S.V.* (San Francisco: Patriotic Publishing Company, 1898).

¹⁵ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 33–36.

¹⁶ Indeed, this quotidianizing of war’s romantic underpinnings is not unique to the imperial wars of 1898. In her recent book on the romantic invention of modern wartime, Mary Favret notes that since at least the Napoleonic wars, soldiers’ writings “brought home the fighting precisely as ordinary experience, thus publicizing a new terrain for the everyday.” Moreover, changing historical and social conditions led to the modern inseparability of war and the everyday: “By the time of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, when ordinary men rather than battle-trained elites assembled on ship and in camp, the quotidian redefined itself both as the goal of warfare, what one was fighting for; and as the very practice of waging war, the daily routine of ordinary men” (*War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Wartime* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010], 150, 151). We can also see a similar quotidianizing subversion of romantic ideologies of war in memoirs and published blogs from recent American military conflicts, including Anthony Swofford’s *Jarhead: A Marine’s Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles*, Colby Buzzell’s *My War: Killing Time in Iraq*, and Jason Christopher Hartley’s *Just Another Soldier: A Year on the Ground in Iraq*, among others.

¹⁷ I am indebted to William Appleman Williams’ conception of empire as a way of life, although my analysis differs significantly from his macro-historical focus on political economy and diplomatic history. See Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

¹⁸ “War Time Reminiscences,” *The American Soldier*, November 12, 1898.

¹⁹ “Incidents of Campaigning Days: Experiences of our Boys during the Taking of Manila,” *American Soldier*, November 12, 1898.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ “The Treacherous Spaniard,” *American Soldier*, October 15, 1898.

²² On the gender politics of this rhetoric, see Kristin Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

²³ F.A. Healy, “In the Entrenchments,” *Soldier’s Letter* 1.1 (November 1898): 1–6. All quotations in the following paragraphs come from this text.

²⁴ Healy’s ironic take on the “assault” on Manila stems from the actual charade manufactured by American and Spanish officers to end the war in Manila. In order to prevent Filipino forces from entering Manila alongside American occupiers and to salvage Spanish honor and manhood, an “opera-bouffe assault,” as Stuart Creighton Miller calls it, was staged on August 13, 1898, complete with a mock battle, white-flag raising, and Spanish surrender (“*Benevolent Assimilation*”: *The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899–1903* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982], 43).

²⁵ Sean Patrick Adams uses “imperial misery” to describe the interminable waiting, monotonous and tasteless diet, poor sanitary conditions and medical treatment, and sometimes execrable living conditions that defined the bulk of imperial experience for many soldiers. See Sean Patrick Adams, “Hardtack, Canned Beef, and Imperial Misery: Rae Weaver’s Journal of the Spanish-American War,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History* (Summer 1998): 243–66.

²⁶ *American Soldier*, December 18, 1898. The paper started carrying the slogan, “a soldier’s paper for the soldiers,” on October 29, a change instituted by the transfer of ownership and editorship from George Arthur Smith to Isaac Russell, a private in the Utah battery. In Cuba, the *Volunteer* used a similar formulation in reminiscing about the paper when it announced its last edition on Cuban soil, writing that it had been “printed by soldiers for soldiers” (“Forward, March,” *Volunteer*, March 26, 1899).

²⁷ “The Starting of a Newspaper,” *American Soldier*, September 10, 1898. The *Volunteer*’s inaugural issue included similar professions of representativeness, claiming that “the boys of the regiment should feel that The Volunteer is published for them and in their interest; that it is their friend and mouthpiece” (Editorial, *Volunteer*, December 25, 1898).

²⁸ Most columns simply identified the regiment (e.g., 1st North Dakota, 14th Infantry, or Astor Battery), but as we can see, there were a number of playful, humorous correspondents personalizing their columns.

²⁹ “Mash” could refer to sour mash, a whiskey concoction, or to a potential sweetheart, crush, or romantic flirtation. See *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “mash,” <http://www.oed.com/> (accessed July 10, 2010).

³⁰ See *American Soldier*, September 10, 1898.

³¹ See *American Soldier*, October 8, 1898.

³² See the front page, *Manila Outpost*, November 12, 1898.

³³ See *Volunteer*, January 22, 1899.

³⁴ “Among the Boys of Co. F,” *Co. F Enterprise*, July 26, 1898.

³⁵ Laura Wexler, *Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 32.

³⁶ In fact, the *American Soldier*’s “Incidents of Campaigning Days” was a bit of a dud, appearing only once after its inaugural column.

³⁷ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 33.

³⁸ “Inklings of Idahos,” *American Soldier*, October 8, 1898.

³⁹ “The Manila Postoffice,” *American Soldier*, November 26, 1898.

⁴⁰ Rafael, “Mimetic Subjects: Engendering Race at the Edge of Empire,” *differences* 7.2 (1995): 128.

⁴¹ Smith, “Our First Manila Newspaper.”