

2006

Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain: America's 1898 Adventure in Imperialism

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Recommended Citation

Norton, Richard and Edgerton, Robert B. (2006) "Remember the Maine, to Hell with Spain: America's 1898 Adventure in Imperialism," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 59 : No. 4 , Article 21.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol59/iss4/21>

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leadership at its most inspiring and effective in the person of Lt. Gen. James Mattis, the division commander, who is seen visiting front-line positions in the middle of a freezing night.

After the campaign in Afghanistan, Fick transfers to the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, an organization whose emphasis on finesse over force appeals to the thoughtful young officer. The war in Iraq finds this unit at the point of the advance toward Baghdad. It is impossible to summarize all that Fick and his platoon see and do in the space of few lines; indeed, it may be impossible even for a Homer or a Tolstoy to render them adequately into words at all.

Fick decides to leave the Corps after his unit is withdrawn from Iraq. A "reluctant warrior," he has decided that he will not be one of those who live and define their lives by fighting on command, without much questioning, as professional soldiers are perhaps required to do. Some of his comrades return to Iraq after he has left the service, and Fick learns of the death of his replacement, Capt. Brent Morel. The ending chapter of the book may seem rushed, as if Fick has not yet come to terms with his service by the time he has finished writing his story. He finishes on a positive note, but the full meaning of what he has seen might be years in coming. Fick appears to be too decent and honest a man to be content with simple answers. Classicist Fick often intersperses his tale with classical allusions, none more meaningful or moving than the quotation with which he opens his last chapter.

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Edgerton, Robert B. *Remember the Maine, To Hell with Spain: America's 1898 Adventure in Imperialism*. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 2005. 225pp. \$109.95

Robert Edgerton, a noted anthropologist and member of the UCLA faculty for more than forty years, has written extensively about the small wars of empire that dot the historical landscape of the nineteenth century. Among the better known of his works is *Like Lions They Fought*, an examination of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, which no collection on the subject should be without. He would, therefore, seem to be eminently qualified to explore the historical and cultural aspects and ramifications of the Spanish-American War.

Like many conflicts of the era, the Spanish-American War has until recently been under-examined and largely forgotten. Yet it remains one of America's more important armed conflicts. The war marked the emergence of the United States upon the world stage as a major, externally focused power. It was, in many ways, the physical manifestation of the strategic thinking of Alfred Thayer Mahan. The war left the United States with a physical as well as commercial empire, forever altering the lives of millions of peoples, as well as the development of state power in the Caribbean, Latin America, and Asia. The war occurred when both the U.S. Navy and Army were in the process of revolutionary change. The war would eventually involve U.S. forces across a wide variety of points on the spectrum of conflict, from fleet-to-fleet actions to protracted nation-building efforts. Some scholars have gone as far as to suggest that the U.S. experience in the

occupation and pacification of the Philippines still contains lessons that may be applicable to current operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the global war on terror. Thus by any reasonable measure *Remember the Maine, To Hell with Spain* would seem to be one of those books that cover the right subject at the right time, by the right author.

Alas, Edgerton does not replicate his success in dealing with the Anglo-Zulu War when it comes to the United States in 1898. This may be due in part to the greater physical scope of the Spanish-American war, its longer duration, and the involvement of a much larger cast of characters. Perhaps the war was simply too big and too complex to do the subject justice in one volume of less than three hundred pages.

To his credit, Edgerton tries to cover all theaters of the war, as well as social and political currents that led to the fighting. Unlike most historians who have examined the subject, he devotes an entire chapter each to the conquests of Puerto Rico and Guam. Little has been written about these theaters of operations, predominately because neither saw much fighting.

Remember the Maine, To Hell with Spain suffers from a lack of cohesion. It is an untidy work that leaves intellectual threads to dangle almost immediately after it picks them up. For example, Edgerton touches on the work of Mahan but fails to examine similar tectonic shifts in Army thinking—shifts that changed the culture of the institution and have been well chronicled in Graham A. Cosmas's *An Army for Empire*. Edgerton also attempts to correct a historical injustice paid to the Cuban *insurrectos*, who made crucial contributions to the defeat of the Spanish.

Indeed, it is highly likely that while U.S. intervention hastened the Spanish defeat, the defeat was already inevitable. Yet again, this look is cursory and the reader is left wondering about just how the *insurrectos* won the “hearts and minds” of the populace, and how the movement was funded.

These shortcomings pale in comparison, however, to those that occur when the book looks at the U.S. invasion and occupation of the Philippines. To be sure, the Philippine campaign was infinitely more complex and lengthy than that in Cuba. It is even misleading to speak of *the war* or *the campaign*. In actuality, there were numerous insurrections, and the revolt of the Moro came from very different cultural wellsprings than that found in the more northern islands. Rather than provide a detailed look at the insurgency and counter-insurgency, Edgerton reviews only a few of the better known events, such as the Balangiga massacre and the trial of Brig. Gen. Jacob H. Smith for war crimes.

Not only does Edgerton fail to paint a complete picture of the insurrection, but he is also equally sketchy when it comes to describing U.S. efforts to achieve victory. These efforts were by no means uniform and ranged from cooperation to confrontation, from nation building to tactics of scorched earth. A far better treatment of this subject can be found in the works of Brian McAllister Linn, notably *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War 1898–1902*; another exceptional treatment that focuses on one center of the resistance is *The War against the Americans: Resistance and Collaboration in Cebu, 1899–1906*, by Resil B. Mojares.

In a nutshell, this work is a disappointment. It fails to serve as either a balanced introduction to the Spanish-American War or a useful addition to our knowledge of the imperial era or the impact of colonialism. Its shortcomings may be due more to structure than scholarship, but they are still severe enough to warrant bypassing it in favor of more comprehensive and balanced works.

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Little, Benerson. *The Sea Rover's Practice: Pirate Tactics and Techniques, 1630–1730*. Washington, D.C.: Potomac, 2005. 253pp. \$27.50

There is a fascination about pirates of old. Most of us as children first learned about them from Peter Pan in the figure of Captain Hook or from Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*.

This work provides a detailed historical examination of sea rovers (an umbrella term used to cover pirates, privateers, and others with the same essential motivation of greed), how they lived, what they did, and how they did it. It will be of high interest to the maritime spectrum, from armchair sailors to admirals.

Little, a former naval officer and SEAL, details where many pirates came from and their motivation, which was primarily a desire for treasure. He notes how the Hollywood image of a pirate attack on the high seas was far different from the real thing, and he discusses

attack planning and execution for both at-sea and land assaults.

Within the book's well documented twenty-three chapters, Little provides fascinating material on pirate personalities and their lives both ashore and at sea. Rovers, of course, all had different personalities, some more savage than others. It is easy to see how one would not choose to be at the mercy of L'Ollonois, who cut out one man's heart and ate it.

The ships are also described, along with the weapons of choice. Line drawings are numerous and include a wide variety of personal weapons, such as muskets, pistols, swords, and pikes, as well as cannons of various types.

Another value of this book lies in its seven appendixes, which include a sea rover's lexicon, weapons and ranges, and, for those with a desire to dine like a pirate, a description of what they ate and drank. These appendixes are excellent, with definitions provided for all reasonably relevant (and generally unknown) items, such as kilderkins and demiculverins. There are many footnotes, a complete bibliography, and a good index.

This is a really good book. Be prepared—after reading only a few pages—to feel the wind in your face and taste the salt air. The only downside for ever-optimistic adventurers is that no treasure maps are provided for some sandy beach. The pirates never buried their treasure.

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