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“I must see what is going on at the firing line.”¹
Maj. Gen. Henry Ware Lawton, December 1899

HENRY WARE LAWTON

Flawed Giant and Hero of Four Wars

By Steven L. Ossad

Seemingly oblivious to the sniper rounds clipping the blades of grass at his feet, the general walked through the rain on 19 December 1899 along the firing line in front of San Mateo in the Philippines, only 300 yards from the enemy riflemen in the town. Wearing a long, yellow rain slicker and the large white pith helmet that had become his trademark since Cuba, the 6-foot 3-inch tall, solidly built man was an obvious target. His officers and men shouted warnings, but the commander shrugged off their concern. He was accustomed to such alarms but never gave them heed, responding, "I must see what is going on at the firing line." His indifference to danger was buttressed by experience; in almost forty years of active service, Henry Lawton had never so much as been scratched in battle.

As the firing intensified, 2d Lt. Ethelbert L. D. Breckinridge, a young staff officer who had served with the general as a volunteer at El Caney near Santiago, Cuba, fell wounded nearby. (The lieutenant was the son of Lawton's friend and peacetime department chief, Brig. Gen. Joseph C. Breckinridge, the Army's inspector general.) Lawton helped carry the lieutenant back to a sheltered location, assured that the injured soldier was tended, and then returned to the open to observe the progress of the fight. Suddenly, Lawton clenched his teeth tightly, clutched his chest, and murmured, "I am shot," falling into the arms of his aide-de-camp, Capt. Edward L. King. A few minutes later he died. Lawton's men set him down gently in a clump of bushes and covered his face with his helmet. About an hour later the cheers of American

soldiers rushing into San Mateo could be heard over a heavy tropical rainstorm and final rifle volleys. Lawton was the only American to die in what proved to be a skirmish of limited significance.²

When he fell a century ago, Maj. Gen. Henry Ware Lawton was one of the most celebrated military heroes of his time. His exploits in four conflicts—the Civil War, Indian Wars, Spanish-American War, and Philippine War—spanning four decades, read like fantastic adventure stories. Lawton was a favorite of contemporary journalists and was closely covered by the "mass media" newspapers, as well as *Harper's*, *McClure's*, *Leslie's*, and other illustrated journals hungry for larger-than-life, picturesque figures.³

Lawton looked the part. In addition to his imposing height and weight, he was striking in appearance, possessing a forehead that was "high and narrow, his cheek bones prominent, his jaw square, his lips thin, his eyes gray, and his hair stood up like bristles."⁴ Even critics acknowledge the appealing virtues that contributed to his legendary stature.⁵ The flowery word portraits of his admirers were supplemented by idealized visual images.⁶ Frederic Remington, whose first assignment for *Harper's* was the pictorial portrayal of the Apache Campaign, made Lawton a subject throughout his career—sketching Captain Lawton on Geronimo's trail in 1886, as well as the victorious General Lawton at El Caney, more than a decade later.⁷

Although hailed for his victories and personal style, unlike some equally colorful contemporaries—Ranald

Mackenzie, George Crook, Nelson Miles, and Leonard Wood—Henry Lawton has never been the subject of a serious biography or a focused consideration of his military service. Apart from the sheer drama and excitement of his life, however, Lawton's story remains compelling for broader reasons, because in many ways it echoes and mirrors the history of the U.S. Army during the last forty years of the nineteenth century.

"Boy Hero" of the Civil War

Henry Ware Lawton was born on 17 March 1843 near Toledo, Ohio, to George W. Lawton, a millwright, and Catherine (Daley) Lawton. Unsettled in his youth as his father frequently moved to pursue work, Henry was raised, after the death of his mother, by Mrs. E. D. Moore. He eventually reunited with his father and settled in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and in 1858 Henry enrolled at Fort Wayne College, a local Methodist institution. Just four days after the attack on Fort Sumter on 12 April 1861, he left his books and signed up for service in Company E of the 9th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment, a 90-day unit. He was quickly chosen the company's first sergeant. Lawton served with this unit in western Virginia and participated on 13 July 1861 in the skirmish at Carrick's Ford on the Cheat River near Parsons, an action that cost the life of Confederate Brig. Gen. Robert S. Garnett, commander of the Confederate Department of Northwestern Virginia, the first general officer to fall in the war. This action also netted for the Union most of the supplies that Garnett's fleeing

forces had been carrying. Even at this early stage of the war, “Long Hank” Lawton was conspicuous in battle—not for his size alone—but because of his eagerness to seize the initiative. Lawton soon mustered out of the unit, but on 20 August 1861 he was commissioned a first lieutenant in the 30th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment.⁸

It soon became clear to the young officer and those around him that Lawton had found his true vocation. In nearly four years of service in the Western Theater, Lawton was under fire repeatedly, fighting in numerous skirmishes and more than twenty major engagements, including such critical battles as Shiloh, Stone’s River, Chickamauga, Franklin, and Nashville. During these engagements, Lawton observed at close hand examples of inspiring leadership as well as monumental folly, moments of what could only be described as blind luck and instances of seemingly futile bravery that altered the outcome of battle. On these bloody fields, his views of regimental combat were formed, including his signature style of personal command marked by stubborn resolve no matter what the circumstances and apparent indifference to mortal danger. Since Lawton essentially went from the command of a depleted regiment at the end of the war to the command of a division decades later with no intervening formal training in the leadership of large formations, his Civil War experiences and views are crucial to understanding his later conduct of combat operations in both Cuba and the Philippines.

Shiloh, or Pittsburg Landing (6–7 April 1862), was the first major battle in which 19-year-old Lieutenant Lawton served. His green regiment, the 30th Indiana (Col. Sion S. Bass), was assigned to Fifth Brigade (Col. Edward N. Kirk), Second Division (Brig. Gen. Alexander McCook), Army of the Ohio (Maj. Gen. Don Carlos Buell). The arrival of General Buell’s men early on the morning of 7 April 1862 allowed Maj. Gen. Ulysses Grant to recover the field that he had yielded the day before and to force the Confederates, already

discouraged by the death of their commander, General Albert Sydney Johnston, to withdraw. According to McCook’s report, his two brigades withstood an attack on 7 April by some 10,000 Confederates along the Corinth and Pittsburg Road in the center of the field and then charged the Confederate lines, causing their defenders to flee.⁹

The regiment’s returns reported that the 30th Indiana lost at Shiloh 12 enlisted men killed, 6 officers and 109 enlisted men wounded, and 2 enlisted men captured. A broader compilation of casualties sustained at Shiloh by the Army of the Ohio shows that the losses suffered by Lawton’s regiment were the third highest of the 28 regiments of that army that were engaged in the battle. The ultimate loss of command personnel in Kirk’s brigade was even greater than these reports suggest. Two of Kirk’s four regimental commanders died of their wounds. Maj. Charles H. Levanway, commanding the 34th Illinois in Kirk’s absence, was mortally wounded by a shell and died on the battlefield. Colonel Bass of the 30th Indiana, who was wounded twice in the battle, died later of his injuries. Kirk was also wounded. West Point-educated General McCook, who would become the highest ranking member of the “Fighting McCooks” of Ohio, took note of the heroism of the men under his command. Not given to idle compliments, McCook called Bass’s wounds “the best evidence of his bearing & bravery.”¹⁰ In this first bloody battle in the West, Lawton experienced the desperate fury of battle, observing how quickly one’s fortunes could reverse, learning the importance of steadfast determination in the face of a strong attack, and finally savoring the ultimate joy of triumph at Shiloh. His experience must have also contributed to his belief that that he was under some kind of divine protection, as men and officers around him fell dead and wounded while he escaped even the smallest wound.

Lawton’s next major engagement was at Stone’s River outside Murfreesboro, Tennessee, on 31 December 1862. After Shiloh he had been

promoted to captain (17 May 1862), and he took command of Company A when Capt. George W. Fitzsimmons was promoted to major. The 30th Indiana (Col. Joseph B. Dodge) was now assigned to the Second Brigade (under now-Brig. Gen. Edward N. Kirk), Second Division (Brig. Gen. Richard W. Johnson), Right Wing (General McCook), Fourteenth Army Corps (Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans). Johnson’s division absorbed the brunt of Confederate General Braxton Bragg’s initial attack against the Union right at Stone’s River, and over the course of the day the division was driven back almost to the Nashville Pike, the critical Union supply line. Stiffened by the determined stand of the Third Division (Brig. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan), the Union troops held this line until 2 January 1863, when a Union victory on its left induced the Confederates to cede the field.¹¹

Once again, the price paid by commanding officers was high. General Kirk was wounded soon after the start of the battle, thrusting Colonel Dodge, who had been promoted to colonel and assumed command of the 30th Indiana after the death of Colonel Bass, into command of the Second Brigade of Johnson’s division. All three of General Sheridan’s brigade commanders were killed in the battle, including Brig. Gen. Joshua W. Sill, for whom Fort Sill would be named.¹²

Dodge reported that on 31 December his brigade checked the advancing enemy from a fence on elevated ground until outflanked on its right. The 30th Indiana, now led by Lt. Col. Orrin D. Hurd and Major Fitzsimmons, was in the heart of the cauldron where those two officers, “needlessly, almost, exposed themselves, and were untiring in their efforts to stop the progress of what seemed a victorious enemy.”¹³ Colonel Hurd’s report painted a picture of desperate struggle with the specter of defeat and destruction hovering over the regiment. He emphasized that the men of the 30th Indiana “would have been cut to pieces or taken prisoners by the enemy” had they not moved back and to the right early on the



Battle of Chickamauga by James Walker

morning of 31 December, and both his and Dodge's reports indicated that the 30th Indiana became disorganized while retreating.¹⁴ During this furious struggle Lawton displayed the kind of cool courage and indifference to mortal danger that became his hallmark. Walking slowly and upright, he sought neither cover nor shelter from the intense enemy fire, while all around him men fell.¹⁵ The casualty toll was enormous. Major Fitzsimmons was captured by the enemy and the regiment lost 31 killed, 110 wounded, and 72 captured or missing, or nearly 44 percent of the 488 officers and men engaged.¹⁶

While the 30th Indiana's role at Stone's River was much less glorious and far costlier than its experience at Shiloh, the survivors, including Lawton, had learned crucial lessons. Perhaps most important was the importance of buying time through a determined though ultimately futile defense of a crucial position even under overwhelming pressure. Such a stand at Stone's River, although it ended in chaos and panicked retreat, altered the ultimate outcome of an important battle. For Lawton personally, his growing conviction that he was indestructible must have been greatly enhanced as he watched the flow of dead and wounded colleagues and counted the cost of the battle.

Nine months later Lawton found himself engaged at Chickamauga, the only clear-cut Confederate victory among the critical battles in which his regiment participated. Fighting under the same leaders as at Stone's River,

the 30th Indiana at Chickamauga formed part of the Second Brigade (Colonel Dodge), Second Division (General Johnson), Twentieth Corps (General McCook), Army of the Cumberland (General Rosecrans). When committed to the battle, Dodge ordered his brigade to charge. It drove the enemy back almost a mile, in the process exposing its right flank. The enemy counterattacked after dark and, according to Colonel Hurd, "captured quite a number of men and officers" of the 30th. Overall, the regiment lost 10 killed, 55 wounded, and 61 missing or captured, which Hurd said was a higher proportion of losses than experienced at Shiloh or Stone's River, as by late 1863 the regiment had less than half as many men engaged in the battle. Even Colonel Dodge was taken prisoner, but he managed to escape.¹⁷

Once more, Lawton was witness to a bloody, seesaw battle, this time ending in defeat. But for the stand of Maj. Gen. George Thomas, "The Rock of Chickamauga," Rosecrans's whole army might have been destroyed. Thomas Dodge's aggressiveness and persistence had, in this case, led to vulnerability and retreat, despite apparent initial success. While the casualties suffered by Lawton's regiment were proportionately very heavy, Lawton still escaped unharmed. Seemingly, the more desperate the situation and the more bravery he displayed, the better his chances of escaping death or injury. The oft-reported sense of indestructibility felt by young men on the battlefield had

by this time for Lawton passed into personal conviction.

Lawton's peak moment in war came on 3 August 1864, during the campaign outside Atlanta, when he led skirmishers from Company A against front-line enemy rifle pits, seized a trench filled with rebel sharpshooters, and then "stubbornly and successfully" held it against two fierce counterattacks. For these actions Lawton was in 1893 awarded the Medal of Honor. In late September 1864 Lawton became the senior officer in his regiment, when all of its officers and men, except those who had reenlisted, were mustered out. Indiana sent new recruits and conscripts to man the regiment in mid-November 1864, but the regiment remained well below its authorized strength. Lawton would command the regiment as a captain until his promotion to lieutenant colonel was approved in February 1865.¹⁸

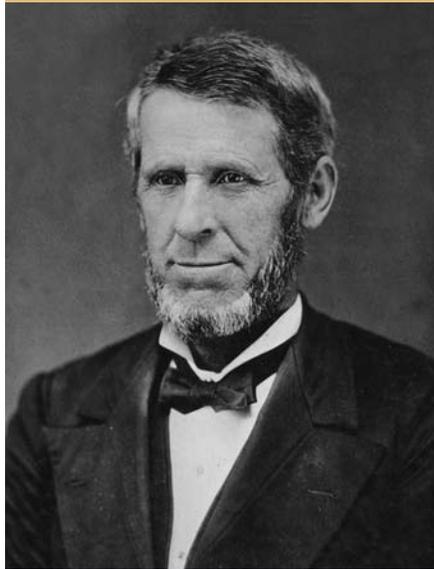
Lawton won the favorable attention of his brigade commander, Brig. Gen. William Grose during the battle at Franklin, Tennessee, on 30 November 1864, in which an outnumbered Union force led by Maj. Gen. John Schofield held off the attacking Confederate army of General John Bell Hood. General Grose wrote in his after-action report, "The Thirtieth Indiana, most of them new recruits, under Captain Lawton, commanding the regiment, stood by the colors to the man and fought well." Lawton's own report that day testifies to the intensity of the combat and suggests his steady demeanor in the midst of

the bedlam. Lawton coolly refrained from responding to a charge made by the enemy toward his lines until the Union skirmishers in front of him had reached the cover of his hastily erected works. Only then did he order his men to open fire on the attackers. Although most of his men had not yet become familiar with their weapons, Lawton reported that his unit's fire, combined with oblique fire from the 9th Indiana Volunteer Infantry Regiment to his right, soon compelled those attacking his lines to retire in disorder.¹⁹

Two weeks later at the battle of Nashville (15–16 December 1864), Grose again cited the regiment, writing that Lawton and his “officers and men, have my grateful thanks for their willing obedience to orders, their brave and efficient execution of every duty upon the battlefield and during the campaign.” In March 1865 Lawton received the brevet rank of colonel “for gallant and meritorious services.” After the surrender of the Confederate armies, Lawton and his regiment were assigned to occupation duty in Texas, before being mustered out in November 1865. Henry Lawton was then just twenty-two years old. Except for a brief assignment as a brigade inspector in 1864, Lawton had served in the line for four years and had never been wounded. He had undergone the most intense on-the-job training imaginable for a company-and field-grade officer. In many ways, the lessons learned on the fields of the Western Theater would serve him well, but they would ultimately cost him his life and may have led him to make decisions in combat that would cost the lives of others who served under his command.²⁰

With the recommendation of General Grose, Maj. Gen. David Stanley, and Bvt. Maj. Gen. Nathan Kimball, under each of whom Lawton had served during the Civil War, and with the support of Conrad Baker, the acting governor of Indiana, Lawton sought a commission in the Regular Army upon his return to civil life. Concerned, however, that the limited size of the postwar Army might leave him without that option, he entered the Fort Wayne office of Judge Lind-

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General Grose

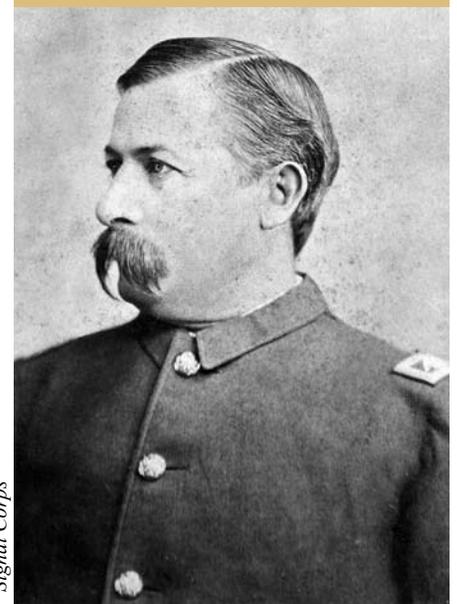
ley M. Ninde to “read law,” and in the summer of 1866 enrolled at Harvard Law School. About that time, Lawton was appointed an original second lieutenant in the 41st Infantry, one of four infantry regiments created by Congress in July 1866 for African American enlisted personnel. Lawton completed an academic year before traveling to New York City to appear before a board examining officers appointed in the infantry. He passed their test, accepted his commission on 4 May 1867, and left Harvard in good standing.²¹

Col. Ranald Slidell Mackenzie (1840–89), one of the most colorful and interesting soldiers in the history of the U.S. Army, became the commander of the 41st Infantry on 25 May 1867, after Civil War volunteer Maj. Gen. Robert Potter declined the position. The decisions of nine other men to decline lieutenantcies in the regiment allowed Lawton to be promoted to first lieutenant in July 1867. Lawton served with the 41st along the Rio Grande in Texas until it was consolidated in 1869 with another regiment with African American enlisted personnel to form the 24th Infantry, which Mackenzie also commanded. Mackenzie named Lawton regimental quartermaster of the 41st in June 1868 and Lawton assumed that position in the 24th when he transferred into that unit.²²

Colonel Mackenzie was the

dominant influence on Lawton's first decade and a half of Regular Army service. First in his class at West Point in 1862 and a Civil War hero, Mackenzie was an easily irritated, tireless worker indifferent to his own comfort, as well as a severe disciplinarian.²³ Marked early for high command despite his youth, he was viewed by General Grant at the end of the Civil War as “the most promising officer in the army.”²⁴ Called “Bad Hand” and “Three Fingers” by his enemies because of the two fingers that had been amputated from his right hand after he was wounded during the fight at Jerusalem Plank Road south of Petersburg, Virginia, in June 1864, Mackenzie had become a volunteer brigadier general in October 1864 and commanded a cavalry division at Appomattox. Mackenzie would subsequently earn a formidable reputation as an Indian fighter. Lawton admired and respected Mackenzie greatly, a feeling that was entirely mutual. Mackenzie came to regard his subordinate as “one of the very ablest officer[s] in the Army, and by far the ablest who has ever served under my command.” The two men served together almost continuously until 1883, by which time Mackenzie was a brigadier general.²⁵

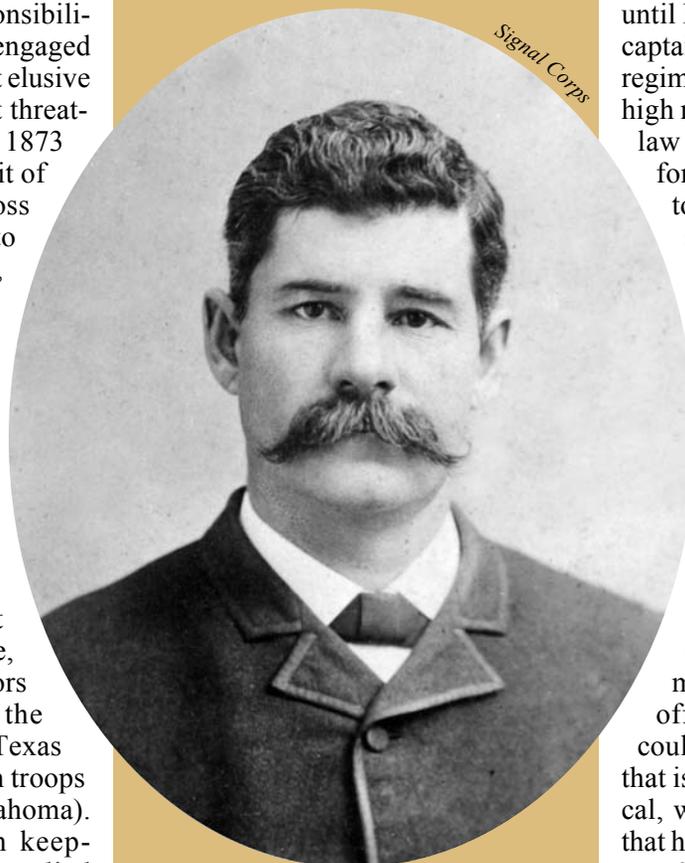
Colonel Mackenzie



Signal Corps

Two Decades on the Frontier

After serving for nearly a decade in the infantry, Lawton on 1 January 1871 transferred to the 4th Cavalry at the request of Mackenzie, who had become the regiment's commander the previous month. In May 1872 Mackenzie appointed Lawton regimental quartermaster. This position gave the young officer important responsibilities for provisioning a unit engaged in repeated campaigns against elusive bands of Indian warriors that threatened the Western frontier. In 1873 and 1878 Mackenzie's pursuit of hostile Indians led him across the international border into Mexico. On the first occasion, Mackenzie's mixed force of black infantry, white cavalry, and Seminole Negro Indian scouts successfully attacked the Kickapoo Indian village of Remolino, forty miles from the Rio Grande. This action ended Kickapoo raids into Texas. In 1874 Mackenzie led one of five columns the Army sent against some 1,200 Cheyenne, Comanche, and Kiowa warriors who had sought refuge in the rugged Staked Plains of the Texas panhandle after clashing with troops in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma). Lawton's gritty success in keeping Mackenzie's troopers supplied through a series of cold September storms as they scoured the headwaters of the Red River allowed his commander to surprise a large Indian encampment in Palo Duro Canyon late that month. Mackenzie's column burned the Indians' lodges and supplies and captured their herd of 1,424 ponies. In the autumn of 1876, Mackenzie joined an expedition led by Brig. Gen. George Crook against Sioux and Cheyenne warriors in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming, near where they had overrun five companies of the 7th Cavalry led by Lt. Col. George Custer that summer. Mackenzie and eleven companies of four cavalry regiments discovered, assaulted, and destroyed an encampment of 200 lodges of Dull Knife's and Little Wolf's Northern Cheyenne.



Captain Henry Lawton, c. 1880

The troopers retrieved military equipment bearing 7th Cavalry markings. Crippled by this blow, the warring Indians returned in the spring to their reservations in western Nebraska, ending the Great Sioux War.²⁶

With the exception of the period from March 1875 through August 1876, Lawton served as quartermaster of the 4th Cavalry from May 1872 until March 1879, when he became a captain and assumed command of the regiment's Company B. Mackenzie's high regard for the one-time Harvard law student was continually reinforced by Lawton's proven ability to keep the regiment's columns supplied and moving, no matter what the circumstances or natural impediments. As one fellow officer noted, Lawton had "exceptional ability as a quartermaster, both in construction work in a post, and in the field, where his knowledge, practical common sense and resourceful makeshifts made him especially valuable to a man of Mackenzie's peculiar temperament and demands." Quartermaster duty was also known to offer financial temptations that could easily lead to corruption. On that issue, Mackenzie was unequivocal, writing that he did "not believe that he has ever made dishonestly one cent."²⁷ Lawton held Mackenzie in extremely high regard as well. Many years later, when he faced battlefield difficulties in the Spanish-American War, he would ask rhetorically, "What would Mackenzie do in this situation?"²⁸

Fellow officers and ordinary troopers respected Lawton. Some fifty years after their first encounter—and twenty years after Lawton's death—retired Capt. Robert G. Carter, a Civil War veteran, West Point graduate (1870), Medal of Honor recipient, and erstwhile 4th Cavalry lieutenant recalled with great immediacy the powerful impression Lawton inspired. All the companies of the regiment gathered in mid-July 1871, the first time the whole unit assembled since the end of the Civil War, to ride against the Comanche

and Kiowa in the Texas Badlands. As they readied themselves for the pursuit of Chief Kicking Bird, the officers got a chance to meet Mackenzie and his trusted subaltern. Lawton was “rather restless, quick spoken, energetic in his movements, and full of life and fire; in fact, what could be better expressed as—‘a live wire, and hard as nails.’ ” But there was another, more reserved and hidden side to Lawton, and Carter noted that as well, observing “He seemed, at first glance, diffident, retiring, and rather reserved or reticent in manner; a little stiff, upon first acquaintance.” Of course, Lawton also had his critics and competitors; Carter overheard one jealous, high-ranking West Pointer remark that “He [Lawton] was a mere ‘rough-neck’ wagon master.”²⁹

Personality aside, Lawton was known as someone who could cut through red tape and get things done. These characteristics would prove invaluable during Lawton’s many years of hard duty on the frontier, in which the 4th Cavalry endured long, arduous pursuits and scouting missions, endless tracking, ‘hit and run’ tactics, savage fighting punctuated by atrocities on both sides, and operations conducted from far-flung posts often isolated from traditional supply lines. It was grim and brutalizing duty, and the tribes rarely discriminated among the soldiers confronting them. More than one observer noted that immediately after battle Lawton seemed to harbor no animosity toward the enemy. In the relocation of the defeated Northern Cheyenne in 1877, for example, Lawton allowed the old and sick to ride in wagons and made sure they had shelter. This inspired one former enemy to say, he “was a good man, always kind to the Indians.” On that tragic journey they called him “Tall White Man.”³⁰ Lawton, absolutely fearless and hard in battle, was a man of good will as soon as the guns fell silent.

Despite his record and the high regard in which he was held by his superiors, Lawton had to complete nearly a dozen years of Regular Army service, and wait eighteen years after first donning a uniform, before he was

promoted to the permanent rank of captain. The grinding routine and loneliness of service bore down heavily on Lawton, who, despite several unsuccessful courtships, remained single until he became a captain. Finally, at the age of thirty-eight, Lawton on 6 December 1881 married Mary (Mamie) Craig (1855–1934) of Louisville, Kentucky. Among the children she bore him, three daughters (Frances, Catherine, and Louise) and a son (Manley) survived infancy.³¹ Otherwise, the only break in the monotony came from the fairly relaxed off-duty life on the post, which helped ease the tensions bred by periods of danger paced by boredom. Somewhat free of the restrictions and conventions of normal society, soldiers on the frontier did not as strictly observe the barriers of class and race that elsewhere typically governed both the Army and society in general. Officers and men mixed relatively easily. Lawton’s service with African American troops had moderated, but decidedly not erased, a generally benign, but commonly shared racism. Lt. Henry Flipper, who in 1877 became the first African American to graduate from West Point and later served with Lawton at Fort Elliott, Texas, wrote of his “great admiration” for the veteran, noting that he had helped ease his transition to life in the West and that they had shared a night of comradeship drinking. Flipper was naïve and probably put at ease by the alcohol. Describing to a friend an encounter with Flipper a few years later, after the younger officer had been dismissed from the Army, Lawton could write that he had been “glad to see even a darkey whom I had known before.”³²

Not all of Lawton’s drinking could be so genially described, however, and he gained a reputation as volatile and occasionally violent when drunk. In one episode, Lawton assaulted an enlisted man and avoided disciplinary action only because Mackenzie could not afford to lose him. While not uncommon on the lonely posts of the frontier, Lawton’s drinking clearly went

beyond reasonable limits and nearly ended his career on more than one occasion.³³

The Epic Pursuit and Capture of Geronimo

After more than a decade and a half of obscure service and slow advancement, Lawton’s great opportunity was approaching. In late 1884 Troop B (cavalry companies had been redesignated as troops in 1883) was ordered to Fort Huachuca, Arizona, to join the fight against the Chiricahua Apaches, among the fiercest of all the frontier tribes and one of the Army’s most successful adversaries. Their medicine man Goyathlay (One Who Yawns), better known by his Spanish name, Geronimo (1827–1909), had been leading the cavalry on a series of frustrating chases for years. Alternately fleeing to Mexico, raiding the territories of Arizona and New Mexico, surrendering, and escaping, Geronimo had continually outmaneuvered, evaded, and embarrassed his long-time nemesis, the celebrated Indian fighter General Crook. By late March 1886, however, it appeared that the elusive Apache warrior and his small band would finally return to Arizona and submit to two years of imprisonment. After agreeing to come quietly, however, Geronimo escaped yet again. Crook was finished. On 12 April 1886 Brig. Gen. Nelson A. Miles relieved him as commander of the Department of Arizona with orders from General Sheridan, now the Army’s commanding general, to capture or kill the fugitive.³⁴

Miles, a thrice-wounded Civil War veteran whose heroism at Chancellorsville would bring him a Medal of Honor, was Crook’s rival as the Army’s most effective Indian fighter. Known as “Old Bear Coat” because of the flamboyant fur-trimmed overcoat he wore on campaign, Miles was well connected politically, having married the niece of Senator John Sherman and General William T. Sherman. Nevertheless, Miles seemed to be perpetually in the middle of a controversy. He was an officer who openly hungered for promotion and whose ambitions very likely reached as high

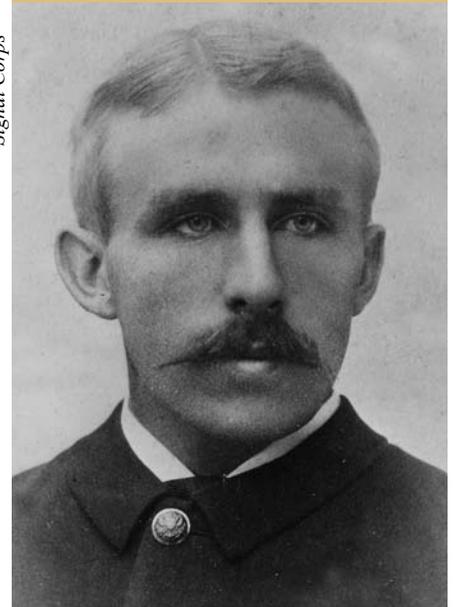
as the White House. Mindful of the risks and potential impact of success in this new assignment, Miles was determined to avoid the humiliation that had ended the career of his rival and predecessor.³⁵

By this time the desire to finish off Geronimo had become a top priority for the Army. The wily and greatly feared Apache leader had, with a small band of braves and while encumbered by women and children, skillfully evaded the Army's pursuit for years and achieved almost mythic stature. Miles, as well as top officers all the way up to Commanding General Sheridan, were also anxious to show that Crook's reliance on Indian scouts—a tacit acknowledgement of the superiority of the Apache warrior in his own territory—had failed, and that ordinary American soldiers were able to meet the Apache on his own ground and prevail. Geronimo's numerous bloody raids and seeming ability to go where he pleased had sparked considerable citizen unrest, posing a political challenge to the administration of President Grover Cleveland. Further, the Army's cross-border operations in pursuit of Geronimo had complicated relations with Mexico and led to a clash in which Mexican militiamen had killed a well-regarded American officer, Capt. Emmet Crawford.³⁶

Miles decided to hunt down and finish off Geronimo once and for all. He selected Captain Lawton, whom he described as a “giant in stature, and a man of great energy and endurance,” to lead the major pursuit group into Mexico. Lawton's orders were simple: “follow constantly the trail, locate their main camp, and destroy or subdue” the hostile Indians. Miles considered the tough, leather-skinned, hard-driving Lawton to be one of his “best athletes”—a hard-edged mustang without a college degree, brevetted on the battlefields of the Civil War, and “educated” by brutal experience in desperate struggles against a half dozen hostile tribes on the Western frontier. In short, Lawton was a man like Miles, himself, who could stand as an equal with the West Pointers who ran the Army.³⁷

Accompanied by another of Miles's “athletes,” newly appointed assistant surgeon Leonard Wood (1860–1927), Lawton on 5 May 1886 led a mixed column of 4th Cavalry and 8th Infantry troops, Apache scouts, and packers out of Fort Huachuca, while the post band played “The Girl I Left Behind Me,” and they soon headed south across the Mexican border. Wood shared Miles's controversial view that Regular soldiers could best the Apaches in their natural

Signal Corps



Leonard Wood in 1886

environment, and he and Lawton were equally determined to prove it. The two men became very close during the expedition. Rising frequently at 0400 hours, rarely resting, and sometimes going for days without issued rations, the column operated in terrible terrain, with irregular resupply, and in the most extreme and debilitating weather.³⁸

For nearly five months, Lawton led his troops on a grueling 1,386-mile march through the Arizona desert and Mexican Sierra Madre Mountains in pursuit of Geronimo, the resourceful and tenacious adversary. The hardships were beyond anyone's expectations; at one point, Wood was laid low by a tarantula bite. Despite the extraordinary difficulties, the men retained their trust and confidence in Lawton. Alfred F. Sims, one of the soldiers on the expedition, wrote of his leader, “To his men a kinder officer never lived, and the one thing that made him so popular was that he would never send any one to a place where he would not go himself.” By the end of the ordeal, the robust, 230-pound Lawton had shed 40 pounds and like his men was reduced to rags and exhaustion.³⁹

The march was punctuated by exhilarating moments of imminent success and long stretches of disappointment and despair. In late July, the column surprised Geronimo's

Apache leader Geronimo, right, and three fellow warriors at the Cañon de los Embudos, Sonora, Mexico, March 1886

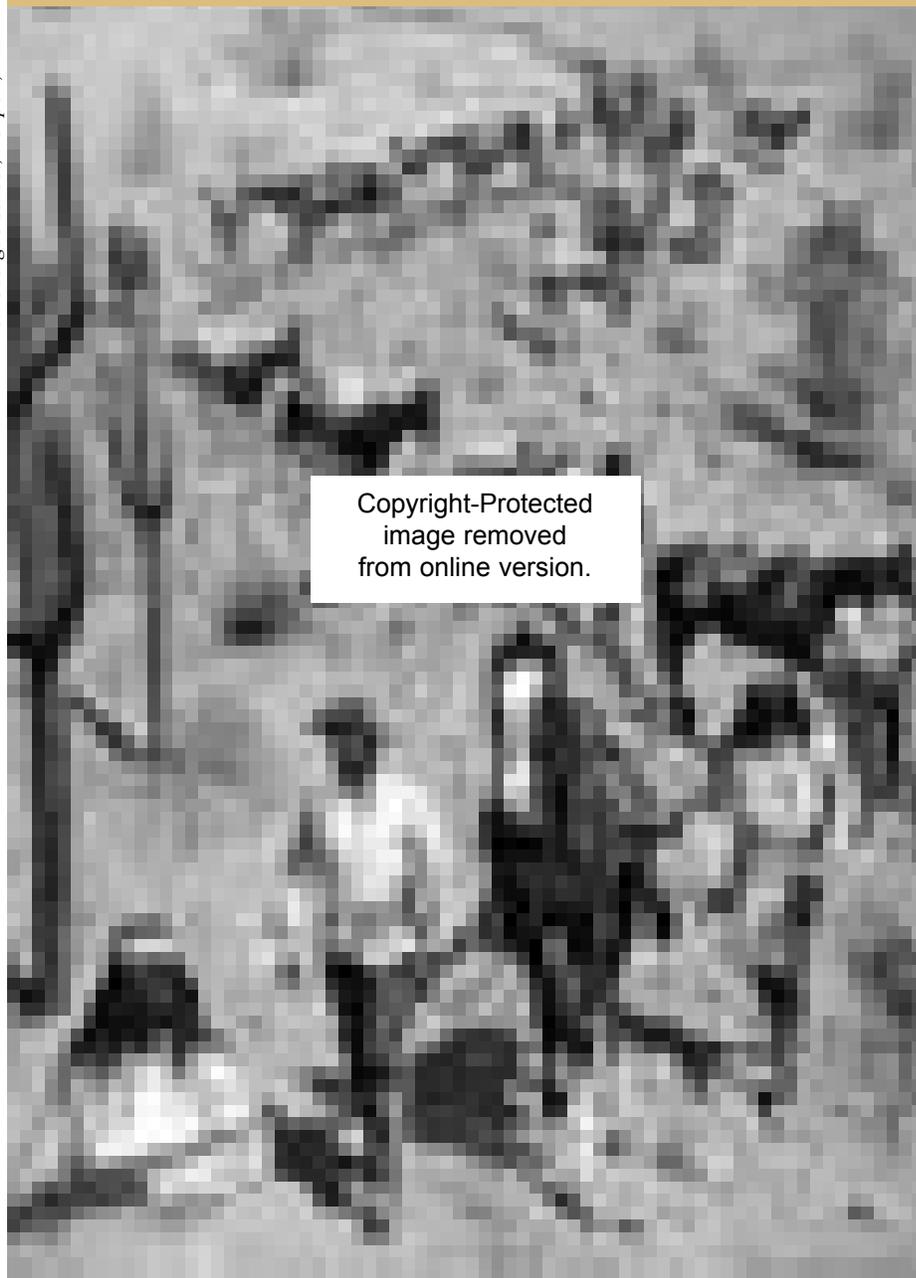


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camp in the mountains, but the Apaches fled, leaving behind their horses and supplies. Later, the Apaches surprised Lawton's men and killed five before they were driven off. Lawton's letters to his wife reveal his frustrations, weariness, and growing doubts about the mission. It was increasingly apparent to General Miles that his hopes for a dramatic—and relatively quick—victory would not be fulfilled. On 13 July 1886, Miles altered his plan and ordered 1st Lt. Charles B. Gatewood—an experienced 6th Cavalry officer, who was a West Point graduate and former aide to General Crook—on a parallel mission to negotiate Geronimo's peaceful surrender, thus changing the nature of Lawton's assignment. It was a clear, if belated, acknowledgement that even though Lawton and his men had persevered with superb stamina and tenacity, Crook's tactics also had merit. Perhaps feeling betrayed, Lawton was initially angry at the change of orders and miffed by Gatewood's request for help, but eventually he softened his stance. In letters to his wife, Lawton even expressed some concern for Gatewood's safety.⁴⁰

By the end of August the Apaches were exhausted and willing to capitulate. At the last moment, however, the surrender mission nearly collapsed into violence. On 28 August 1886 after Gatewood had given the Indians assurances of safety, a detachment of Mexican infantry, led by Jesús Aguirre, the prefect of Arispe, suddenly appeared demanding that the Americans turn over Geronimo to them for trial. Despite being on Mexican soil—as well as seriously outnumbered and outgunned—Lawton refused to give up Geronimo, agreeing only to allow the Mexicans to speak with the Apache leader. Wood wrote in his journal that he, Lawton, and an officer of the 10th Infantry actually jumped between the prefect and Geronimo when it appeared that the two adversaries were ready to draw their pistols and fire at each other, a claim that most historians have treated with considerable skepticism. Whatever the truth of Wood's version, defying the Mexicans at all was certainly audacious as well as honor-

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Lawton's Pursuit of Geronimo by Frederic Remington

able, as Lawton had given Geronimo his word that he would be protected from his Mexican enemies. In fact, as soon as the chase was over, Lawton's hostility toward Geronimo seemed to evaporate, and their first face-to-face encounter—arranged by Gatewood at Geronimo's request—featured a round of “bear-hugging.”⁴¹

Finally, on 4 September 1886, after Gatewood's heroic and dangerous final negotiating effort, Geronimo surrendered personally to General Miles. He was never actually captured, but Lawton's unrelenting pursuit had clearly exhausted the

Apache band and must be considered the major factor in Geronimo's decision. In a move that generated lasting controversy, Miles publicly and officially lauded both Lawton and Wood, while seeming to minimize the role of Gatewood. The slightly built West Point graduate, who often found his assignments in the West to be physically arduous, died a decade later in obscurity.⁴²

Lawton's career, boosted by the publicity surrounding the Geronimo expedition, soon began a rapid upward climb. After escorting the Apaches to San Antonio, Texas,

where they would be held for a month before being sent to Florida, Lawton returned to Albuquerque, where the grateful citizens of New Mexico honored him at a banquet, during which he was presented with a gold watch and chain.⁴³ The professional rewards were also considerable. General Miles heaped praise on Lawton, writing in his official report that the intrepid captain had “assumed the arduous and difficult task of pursuing [the hostile Indians] continuously through the broken, mountainous country of Sonora for nearly three months. In this remarkable pursuit he followed them from one range of mountains to another, over the highest peaks, often nine and ten thousand feet above the level of the sea, and frequently in the depths of the cañons, where the heat in July and August was of tropical intensity.” In July 1887 the Army transferred Lawton’s Troop B, 4th Cavalry, from the Department of Arizona to Fort Myer, Virginia, across the Potomac from Washington, D.C., as General Sheridan transformed that installation from a Signal Corps garrison to a cavalry post.⁴⁴

Seeking to capitalize further on his fame, Lawton sought appointment to the vacancy in the seven-man Inspector General Department that would occur in August 1888 when the Army’s senior inspector general, Brig. Gen. Absalom Baird, reached the mandatory retirement age. General Miles; General Stanley, now commander of the Department of Texas; Brig. Gen. Samuel Holabird, the Army’s quartermaster general; the governors of Indiana, Texas, and the territories of New Mexico and Arizona; all four senators and all but one of the congressmen from Indiana and Texas; and other officials joined in supporting Lawton’s appointment to that department. The campaign proved successful, and on 17 September 1888 President Grover Cleveland nominated Lawton as the juniormost member of the Inspector General’s Department, an appointment that involved his promotion to the rank of major and took effect on 2 October 1888. The deaths of two other members of that department led to Lawton’s promotion on 12 February 1889 to lieutenant colonel.⁴⁵

During his first five years as an inspector general, Lawton served as an assistant in the Office of the Inspector General of the Army, a position held by General Breckinridge from 1889 to 1903. On 22 May 1893, while serving in Washington, D.C., Lawton received the Medal of Honor, an award conferred nearly thirty years after his heroic actions in the Civil War that was undoubtedly pushed through channels by his friends in Washington. In addition to his work in his department’s headquarters, Lawton inspected national cemeteries, disbursing officers’ accounts, and military instruction at civilian colleges. The extent of his inspection trips in this period varied widely. In fiscal year 1892, his inspections involved more than 24,000 miles of official travel, more than any other inspector general, but in 1891 he had traveled less than any of the others.⁴⁶

During Lawton’s second five years as inspector general, he was based successively in Los Angeles, California; Denver, Colorado (1894–95); Santa Fe, New Mexico (1895–97); and again in Los Angeles (1897–98). In December 1894 he peacefully helped persuade Chief Ignacio and some 400 Southern Ute Indian herdsman to return to their Colorado reservation from eastern Utah, where they had moved for winter grazing without authorization. In fiscal year 1896, after inspecting eighteen Army posts, Lawton severely criticized the condition of the buildings at Fort Grant in southeastern Arizona. The federal garrison would be withdrawn from that post in 1898, never to return.⁴⁷

As war with Spain loomed in early April 1898, Lawton hurried to Washington to offer his “services in command of troops.” Several possibilities soon emerged for both staff and line assignments. There was even some “native son” pressure to consider Lawton for command of the Indiana volunteers. General Miles, who since 1895 had been commanding general of the Army, helped arrange Lawton’s appointment as a volunteer brigadier general and his assignment to command the 2d Division of Maj. Gen. William R. Shafter’s 15,000-

man Fifth Corps, earmarked for the Cuban invasion.⁴⁸

After a hurried muster in Tampa and a confused, and fortunately unopposed, landing in Cuba on 22 June 1898, Lawton, at Shafter’s order, led the advance from the beachhead at Daiquirí; occupied Siboney, where additional American troops would debark the next day; and entrenched there to await their landing. Maj. Gen. Joseph W. (“Fighting Joe”) Wheeler, who commanded Shafter’s dismounted cavalry division, including now-Col. Leonard Wood’s 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, or “Rough Riders,” then maintained the tactical initiative, pushing ahead without orders or support against Spanish positions at Las Guásimas. President William McKinley had named Wheeler to his senior volunteer rank, wishing to give the war a bipartisan and multi-regional hue, and Wheeler’s biography made him perfect for that role. An 1859 Military Academy graduate, Wheeler had compiled a distinguished Confederate military record in many of the same Civil War campaigns in which Lawton had fought, leading an Alabama infantry regiment at Shiloh and large cavalry formations at Stone’s River and Chickamauga. By 1898 he was a senior Democratic congressman from Alabama and a strong supporter of war with Spain. Shafter did not reprimand Wheeler because his attack was successful and had secured the avenue of attack on the more heavily defended Spanish positions on a ridge line east of Santiago, called San Juan Hill, that Shafter preferred. The Spanish defensive line was anchored on the north flank by the fortified village of El Caney. Shafter’s willingness to accept Wheeler’s unsolicited initiative would embolden Lawton to act independently as well.⁴⁹

The Bloody Storming of El Caney

Situated among a group of small hills, the village of El Caney lay about six miles northeast of Santiago astride the main road linking that city with Guantánamo. The road offered the enemy a route of reinforcement or retreat and represented a potential threat to



General Shafter

Signal Corps

the American operation. El Caney was also close to the pipeline that supplied the whole area with fresh water. Any American approach to San Juan Hill and the city of Santiago would find El Caney on the right flank initially and in the rear as an advance gained ground. Shafter thus decided to secure his northern flank before moving against the main objective, the ridge in front of Santiago. He ordered Lawton to first take El Caney and then swing left along the road between Santiago and Guantánamo to join the main attack from a flanking position.⁵⁰

Lawton and his brigade commanders prepared for the assault by conducting a personal reconnaissance. They were accompanied by correspondent Stephen Bonsal who described Lawton sitting astride his horse as the very “ideal of a *beau sabreur* (cavalry leader), if ever there was one.” At Shafter’s commander’s conference on the afternoon of 30 June, Lawton gave his assessment that the position would fall in two hours. Everyone agreed. Shafter made his plans accordingly; the main attack on the ridges in front of Santiago would await the capture of El Caney and the consolidation of forces that would follow in the late morning. The plans sounded good, but they were predicated on taking El Caney quickly and painlessly.⁵¹

Three companies of the *Constitución* infantry regiment and a

company of riflemen, all under the command of Brig. Gen. Joaquín Vara del Rey, faced Lawton. These 520 Spanish troops were aided by perhaps 100 armed villagers. Despite the overwhelming superiority of the force arrayed against them, the Spaniards had several important advantages. The village was heavily fortified, being protected by a network of rifle pits, barbed wire, and five blockhouses, as well as a commanding stone fort called El Viso, located 400 yards southeast of the village. The fort was surrounded by entrenchments cut into solid rock. A fortified old stone church dominated the center of El Caney, which—as legend recorded—had been the site of the final prayers offered by Hernán Cortés before he set out to conquer Mexico in 1519. The defenders were highly motivated, well trained, and determined to buy as much time as possible for their comrades at Santiago.⁵²

Lawton originally planned a two-pronged attack on El Caney. His Third Brigade (7th, 12th, and 17th Infantry Regiments), commanded by Brig. Gen. Adna R. Chaffee, a veteran cavalryman whom Lawton greatly respected, would deploy on Sugarloaf Hill, north of El Viso, and advance on El Caney from the north and east, while Brig. Gen. William Ludlow’s First Brigade (8th Infantry, 22d Infan-

try, and 2d Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry) would give support from positions south and west of El Caney. Lawton would initially hold Col. Evan C. Miles’s Second Brigade (1st, 4th, and 25th Infantry, the last an African American unit) and Brig. Gen. John C. Bates’s attached Independent Brigade (3d and 20th Infantry) in reserve. Capt. Allyn Capron’s light artillery (Battery E, 1st Artillery) would provide support. Altogether Lawton had some 6,650 men and four 3.2-inch guns for the attack.⁵³

Lawton marched his men most of the night, taking position in front of El Caney just before dawn on 1 July 1898. The “boy hero” of the Civil War was about to lead ten Regular Army regiments in the U.S. Army’s largest land engagement since April 1865. Lawton ordered Captain Capron to open fire just after 0630 hours. Unlike the immediately devastating impact Capron’s battery had achieved at the Battle of Wounded Knee seven-and-a-half years earlier, its destructive power in Cuba was more evenly matched by the strength of the Spanish fortifications. The capture of El Caney, it soon became clear, would take considerably longer than two hours. Capron’s battery was initially positioned about 2,300 yards southeast of El Caney, despite the fact that the enemy had no counter-battery capability. This distance limited

El Viso, the fort that dominated El Caney, after its capture by Lawton’s division



Signal Corps

the accuracy of the shells against the fortified Spanish positions. Moreover, the fire was not concentrated, continuous, or adequately focused on the main target. Technically, Capron's guns, which still used black powder and lacked the advances that enabled French artillery to lay down accurate indirect fire, were not well matched to the task of quickly reducing the enemy's fortifications. Capron was likely distracted, as well. On the march to El Caney, he had passed the grave of his son, Volunteer Capt. Allyn K. Capron, a Regular Army cavalry lieutenant serving in the Rough Riders who had been killed in General Wheeler's attack on Las Guásimas just one week before.⁵⁴

There was confusion from the beginning. Early on, Lawton ordered an artillery strike "on a column of Spanish troops, which appeared to be cavalry moving westward from El Caney." They turned out to be friendly mounted Cuban insurgents moving to cut off the possible retreat of the Spaniards northward. Fortunately, that barrage was no more effective than the initial attempt to soften up the El Caney fortifications. After a short time, it was apparent—especially to the correspondents and foreign observers "embedded" with the front line troops—that the shelling was virtually useless in reducing the source of rifle fire raking the U.S. infantry that

Signal Corps



Captain Capron's battery in action near Santiago, Cuba, July 1898

approached to within half a mile of El Caney.⁵⁵

The Americans had virtually no cover except for scrub brush and other light vegetation. Very soon, the attackers began paying the price of hurried preparations, poor planning, and technical deficiencies. While the Army's regular infantrymen carried modern Krag-Jorgensen rifles, the 2d Massachusetts Infantry was still using the older Springfield rifles that were fired with black powder cartridges, whose telltale discharge revealed their users' positions. The Bay Staters suffered terrible losses from the Spaniards' smoke-free and accurate Mauser rifles and had to be withdrawn under a withering fire. Sir Arthur Lee, a British attaché and combat veteran accompanying Chaffee's brigade, sensed immediately that this fight would be determined by the foot soldier and that it would be long and bloody.⁵⁶

By early afternoon, with the sounds of battle undiminished to the north, Shafter and his aides recognized that reducing El Caney would take substantially longer than two hours. By then Brig. Gen. Jacob Kent's infantry division and Wheeler's dismounted cavalry division, led this day by Brig. Gen. Samuel S. Sumner, had approached the base of the ridges in front of Santiago. Aided by a barrage launched by a detachment of three Gatling guns commanded by

2d Lt. John H. Parker, the Americans charged the blockhouse atop San Juan Hill, driving its outnumbered defenders back toward Santiago. Around 1400 hours, as these attacks were succeeding, Shafter sent an aide to urge Lawton to break off his action, march to San Juan Hill, and join the main attack as soon as possible. Shafter's note read, "I would not bother with the little block-houses. They can't harm us. . . . [You] should move on the city and form the right of the line." Lawton, who had been enduring mounting losses while hammering away at El Viso and the blockhouses in El Caney for hours, undoubtedly concluded that a withdrawal under fire would be viewed as a defeat. Having become sufficiently angry about Spanish intransigence at El Caney, Lawton essentially ignored Shafter's instructions, insisting, as he later wrote his wife, that he was "so hotly engaged with all my troops, that I could not do so at once." Shafter would ultimately yield to the judgment of his respected brother officer made on the field to persist with the capture of El Caney.⁵⁷

By this time, Capron's battery had moved closer to the objective and his guns were blasting holes in the El Viso fort that anchored El Caney's defenses. Lawton soon decided the time was right for an all-out effort. At roughly 1500 hours, the 12th Infantry,

General Vara del Rey



National Archives

supported by several companies of the 25th Infantry, moved forward and took El Viso by direct assault, leaving it, in the words of an eyewitness, “floored with dead Spaniards.” A *New York Times* reporter, reflecting the opinions of the accompanying foreign attachés and officers, described the final infantry assault on the stone fort as “the finest achievement of the entire war.”⁵⁸

After two more hours of conflict with Spanish troops in El Caney proper, where General Vara del Rey continued to rally his troops until he was shot through the legs, the battle finally concluded at 1700 hours. The Spaniards had fought heroically, virtually to the death. Of the garrison of 520 men, some 85, including General Vara del Rey, were killed, 150 wounded, and 120 captured; the rest either escaped to Santiago or sought refuge in the hills. Total American losses were even higher: 81 dead and 360 wounded, with Chaffee’s brigade suffering the heaviest losses. Lawton’s two hours had turned into twelve and produced a bloody, grinding, uninspired, loosely coordinated, and poorly supported infantry assault against a well-entrenched, strongly fortified position held by brave soldiers. In the end, the cumulative effect of hours of artillery pounding, an overwhelming numerical superiority of more than 12 to 1, the Spaniards’ dwindling supply of ammunition, and the wounding and ultimate death in battle of the Spanish commander decided the outcome. Despite the official pronouncements and public adulation that followed, this had not been a moment of great generalship—at least not on the American side.⁵⁹

With his ranks thinned and his men exhausted and disorganized, Lawton rested his troops, albeit only for several hours, and, consistent with his practice in pursuit of Geronimo, began before midnight an all-night forced march to reinforce the attack toward Santiago. A failure to reconnoiter the main road—one of the objectives of the attack—and a change of direction led to further delay. Lawton’s division arrived on the morning of 2 July, well after the battle of San Juan Hill had concluded, but luckily in time to help convince Shafter to hold his

position, rather than withdraw, as the tired, sick, and physically exhausted commander considered doing.⁶⁰

A week after Lawton’s victory on the approach to Santiago, President McKinley followed the recommendation cabled to him a day earlier by General Shafter and promoted Lawton to major general of volunteers. An act of Congress passed on 7 July temporarily expanding the Inspector General’s Department, followed by a routine presidential nomination and Senate confirmation, also gave Lawton the permanent rank of colonel in the Regular Army.⁶¹ Lawton’s dream of being named a general in the Regular Army thus seemed within his grasp. Spanish Maj. Gen. José Toral y Vázquez finally surrendered Santiago on 17 July 1898, along with some 23,000 Spanish troops. Lawton served as one of the six commissioners, three from each side, who arranged the terms of the capitulation. Among the American goodwill gestures was the return to the Spaniards of the gallant General Vara del Rey’s sword and spurs.⁶²

Evaluation of Lawton’s generalship at El Caney has generally been offered as a sidebar to a critique of the overall Santiago campaign, especially the flawed performance of the Fifth Army Corps’s commander, General Shafter.⁶³ Lawton did, however, have independent discretion over the attack on El Caney, and his performance should be analyzed in that context, if for no other reason than that the battles of 1 July 1898—especially the attack on San Juan and Kettle Hills—have entered popular mythology as great victories of American arms. The truth may be somewhat less enthusiastically stated; bravery, yes, but inspired military performance, no.

Contemporary scholars of Lawton’s major campaigns have not excused him from criticism. Graham Cosmas, in a fairly mild observation, wrote, “At El Caney, General Lawton certainly bears much responsibility for the delay in developing an effective attack and then the abandonment of fruits of belated victory.” Brian Linn is not so restrained, describing Lawton as “a self-pitying alcoholic who was

often lost in the complexities of higher command.”⁶⁴

Lawton’s most serious mistake at El Caney was his faulty assessment of the enemy’s forces. Even after close personal reconnaissance should have revealed the depth and strength of their fortifications, he continued to underrate his opponent. While Lawton deserves some credit for conducting reconnaissance in the field—in sharp contrast to Shafter who was essentially disconnected from the battle—the results were poor. Lt. Col. Arthur L. Wagner, a father of modern military intelligence from whom Lawton received useful information about one of the approaches to El Caney after Shafter declined his services, observed that a handful of patrols would have helped spare an “infinite of troubles” at El Caney.⁶⁵ The excessive optimism expressed by Lawton at the 30 June commander’s conference, however, would be very costly to the men of Lawton’s division, especially Chaffee’s brigade. The defenders of El Caney were tough professionals, determined, brave, tenacious and well led. General Vara del Rey proved to be a heroic warrior and a worthy adversary who finally died while fighting wounded from a stretcher, along with two of his sons. In the words of his surviving aide, the Americans “fought like lions.” It is also true that they met heroes.⁶⁶

The assault plan as it developed had serious flaws. The piecemeal commitment of forces subjected the units that initiated the attack to disproportionate casualties. Lawton’s placement and use of his single artillery battery was faulty and certainly added to the time required to reduce the main defensive fortifications. The artillery played a limited role until late in the battle, and even when it was moved closer to the target, and its fire concentrated, it was not employed as part of a coordinated assault.

On the tactical level, the question remains whether an assault against El Caney was even necessary. A much smaller force could have isolated the fort and cut the Guantánamo road, thus eliminating the threat of reinforcement and allowing the main elements of the

division to support the primary attack against Santiago. When Shafter came to that realization and asked Lawton to shift his focus, Lawton ignored him and continued the attack. Shafter's change in orders is powerful evidence that there was no real need to capture El Caney.

Like most senior Army officers, Lawton simply lacked any relevant experience or training in commanding large formations. Even those who had previously held high rank and did have such experience—General Wheeler, for example, had commanded a Confederate corps—were unfamiliar with modern techniques. Lawton's largest prior combat command had been an understrength Civil War regiment, and that had been a third of a century before. Since that time considerable progress had been made in weapons, tactics, and doctrine, but most of the men who had persevered to enjoy high rank had not really kept up. Most, like Lawton, had little formal military education and little knowledge of, or practice in, combined arms tactics or the special logistics problems of leading large formations. Lawton basically attacked El Caney as if he had been ordered to take an Indian village with his cavalry troop.

Lawton was far from unique in that regard, however, and this criticism is as much a general observation about the entire professional officer corps at the close of the nineteenth century as it is a specific criticism of Lawton. In the end, his well-earned reputation for determination, dogged perseverance, and single-minded pursuit of the mission was rewarded by general acclaim after El Caney fell, but his was one of the bloodiest engagements of the entire Cuban campaign. One of every three battle deaths that the U.S. Army suffered in Cuba in 1898 and 22.5 percent of the Army's combat casualties in the Spanish-American War were incurred on the heights of El Caney.⁶⁷

A Career-Ending Scandal Barely Avoided

Less than a month after U.S. forces took Santiago, the War Depart-

ment established a military department for the area of Cuba that the United States controlled around that city and appointed Lawton as its commander. He would effectively head a military government of Cuba's Santiago Province. Shortly before taking that post, Lawton had become involved in what became known as the "Round Robin Letter affair," in which a number of Shafter's subordinates, including Lawton, signed an unusually blunt missive to support their corps commander's call for the withdrawal from Cuba of his increasingly unhealthy troops. Quickly leaked to the press, the letter did not enhance its signatories' standing with the War Department, as it appeared to criticize the administration's handling of American troops on the island. Before serving long as department commander, Lawton also began quarrelling over the funding of public works projects in Santiago with his erstwhile companion of the frontier, now-Brig. Gen. Leonard Wood, who held a subordinate role in the department.⁶⁸

The frustrations of his new assignment, and perhaps loneliness and other personal concerns, put increasing pressure on Lawton. By late September, he had fallen into his old habit of binge drinking. This time, however, Lawton's behavior nearly ended his career. He went on a weeklong rampage, during which he assaulted several local citizens, including Santiago's police chief, and nearly destroyed one of the city's taverns in a brawl. A reporter for New York's *Evening Sun* witnessed that episode and contacted his editor, William Mackay Laffan, before filing the story. A scandal of monumental proportions was avoided only because Laffan decided to quietly inform President McKinley of this episode rather than publish the story, and the president chose to give Lawton another chance, saving him from an ignominious, or at best, unceremonious conclusion to his career.⁶⁹

In early October, the War Department recalled Lawton to the United States, an action the press would later imply resulted from Lawton's contracting a tropical fever once the campaign had ended.⁷⁰ After accompanying President McKinley on

a victory tour, during which he was able to regain the president's trust by swearing to stop drinking, Lawton took command of the Fourth Army Corps, a kind of "probationary" assignment.⁷¹ According to Dean C. Worcester, a prominent member of the Philippine Commission who would befriend Lawton in Manila, he honored his pledge to McKinley and henceforth "never allowed a drop of alcoholic stimulant to pass his lips."⁷²

The administration's effort to avoid embarrassment is as understandable as it is indefensible. Lawton's outrageous behavior was clear evidence that he was prone to uncontrolled and dangerous outbursts and was unfit for further command. He should have been quietly retired as a Regular Army colonel on account of his reckless behavior. Instead, Lawton was given an important field command in the Philippines—America's first major attempt to bring democracy to an Asian people.

The Philippine War— A Laboratory for Fighting Insurgency

On 19 January 1899, accompanied by his entire family, Lawton boarded the USS *Grant* and began a 55-day voyage to the Philippines. The newly appointed military commander there—Eighth Army Corps commander Maj. Gen. Elwell S. Otis—was not happy about Lawton's appointment, although he was pleased with the two regiments that landed with the newcomer. The contrast between the tall, handsome, and charismatic Lawton and the dull, lumbering, and cautious Otis was not lost on the local press corps, which was critical of Otis's policies and outraged by his ongoing attempts at censorship. They quickly embraced Lawton, lionizing his victories and ignoring his failings. The hero of El Caney had learned the importance of cultivating the correspondents, and soon they were suggesting that perhaps Lawton ought to be in charge.⁷³

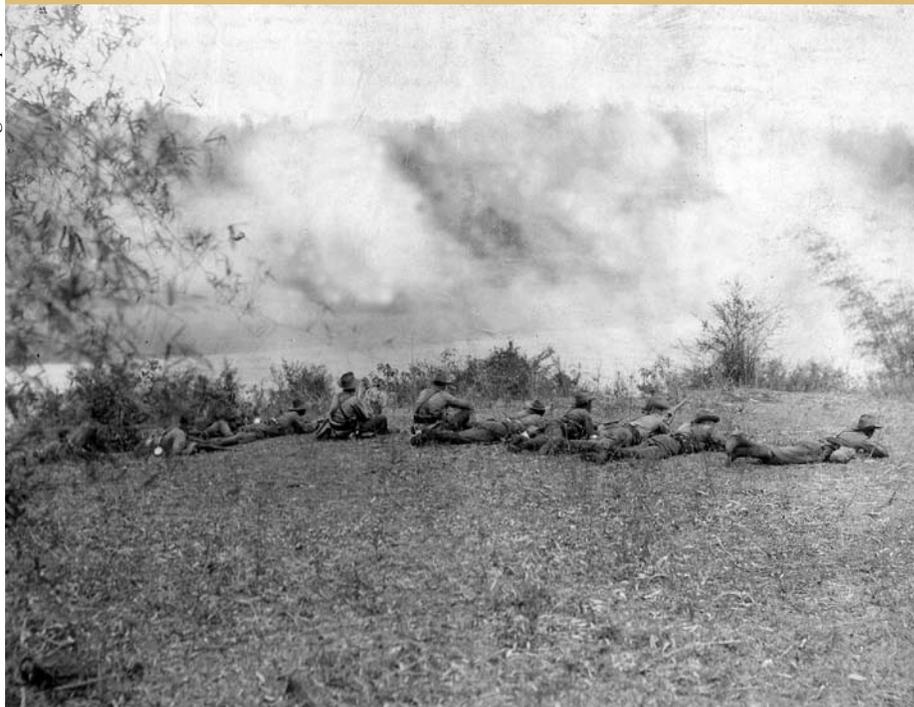
Otis's early treatment left Lawton both disappointed and surprised. According to his friend, Robert Carter,

President McKinley had told Lawton that he was going to the Philippines to relieve Otis. It is more likely that the president, who supported Otis and a strategy of “benevolent assimilation,” offered a somewhat more vague assurance that in the event that Otis stepped down, Lawton would be the natural successor. Sometime between his discussions with the president and Lawton’s arrival in Manila, however, Otis had succeeded in reversing the negative sentiment in the press, and Lawton found himself a not very welcome subordinate. Still, Lawton’s ambition to succeed Otis persisted, fueled in part by his political and military supporters.⁷⁴

By the time Lawton arrived, the situation in the Philippines had exploded into large-scale hostilities with Manila itself under siege. The American military strategy was to secure the capital and other major population centers, initiate public works projects to cultivate good will, build up forces, and then take the field to isolate and defeat the army of about 30,000 men loyal to independence leader Emilio Aguinaldo, who had led an insurrection against Spanish rule in 1896–97. Otis began the war against Aguinaldo’s forces with fewer than 21,000 regulars and volunteers, too few to accomplish the mission, and domestic pressure to bring home the volunteers was growing. On 17 March 1899 Otis placed Lawton in command of the 1st Division, relieving Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Anderson, and in early April Otis allowed Lawton to take the field.⁷⁵

In his initial campaign, Lawton’s forces were organized into a provisional brigade comprising parts of several regular and volunteer regiments, numbering all together about 1,500 men and a few artillery pieces. With Lawton in overall command, the brigade steamed south up the Pasig River and across Laguna de Bay toward Santa Cruz, a major enemy stronghold in Luzon’s southern interior. On the second day of the operation, Brig. Gen. Charles King, Lawton’s tactical commander, suffered a heart attack, and Lawton quickly assumed direct control of his forces. He took Santa Cruz on 10 April 1899 and then

Signal Corps



American infantrymen engage insurgents in the Philippines, March 1899

marched south, taking other towns, only to abandon them all by 16 April in line with Otis’s orders.⁷⁶

Lawton took his eleven-year-old son Manley along on the expedition, and, after bullets struck the ground between the young boy’s feet, his father remarked to an officer, who expressed concern, “Why, sir, he would make a first class soldier right now! Did you see him under fire?” At one point, Lawton himself came under rifle fire from a single Filipino soldier who fired three times at the general from 30 yards away. It was a close call, but the newspapermen loved it. Despite the headlines proclaiming a great victory, however, the operation was a real eye opener for Lawton. After this encounter, he reckoned it would take 100,000 troops to pacify the islands.⁷⁷ He was not far wrong. By the end of the war, nearly 125,000 Americans had served in the Philippines, and 4,000 did not return.

Within two weeks of the capture of Santa Cruz, Lawton’s men were back in the field, advancing north through the foothills and battling Filipino insurgents on the march. Making excellent use of the natural cover, the Filipinos had been so effectively harassing the communications of Maj. Gen. Arthur MacArthur’s 2d Division

between Manila and San Fernando, some forty miles to the northwest, that they had halted his advance. Otis had hoped to have MacArthur and Lawton envelop the insurgents, but when Lawton’s advance to Norzagaray in southern Bulacan Province proved arduous, Otis advised his 1st Division commander to halt until his logistics could be assured. Lawton, however, soon shaped the campaign to his will, pressing ahead on 1 May. In fighting reminiscent of his frontier days, he marched his men 120 miles in twenty days over poor roads and trails in unforgiving terrain, destroying the enemy’s supplies, capturing towns, traveling light, moving quickly. His forces finally took San Isidro, Aguinaldo’s new capital, on 17 May 1899, prompting President McKinley to send Otis a telegram instructing him to convey the commander-in-chief’s congratulations to Lawton and his men.⁷⁸

Along the way, on 6 May 1899, Lawton had hosted a town meeting that elected a local government in the village of Baliuag, the first such U.S.-authorized government in the Philippines. Once again, however, Lawton’s tactics had nearly put his division out of action—by the time they took San Isidro the men were exhausted,

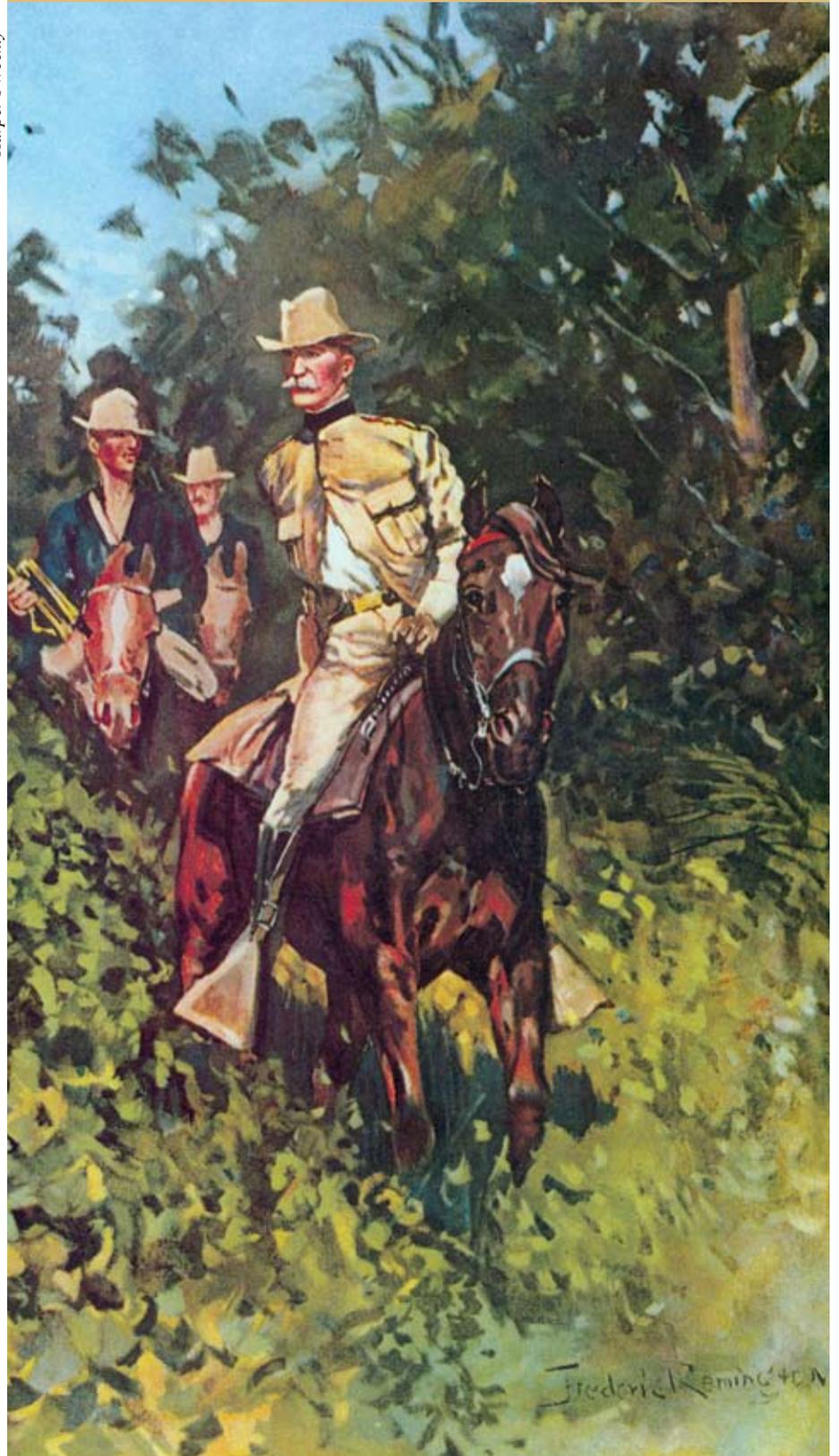
sick, and out of supplies. Just as he had done the previous month when Lawton had captured Santa Cruz, Otis recalled Lawton to Manila and allowed Aguinaldo's forces to reenter San Isidro.⁷⁹

Harper's Weekly

The Bridge at Zapote River— “The Liveliest Engagement of the War”

Otis again sent Lawton into the field in early June 1899 with orders to attack insurgent forces active east and south of the capital. Lawton first drove east to Morong on the north shore of Laguna de Bay, scattering but not soundly defeating the 2,500 troops of Brig. Gen. Pio del Pilar operating in the area. Lawton then attacked south with 4,000 men toward Cavite, Aguinaldo's hometown, to expand the security perimeter south of the capital. The insurgents made a determined stand at entrenchments on the west bank of the Zapote River, from which Philippine independence fighters had won a noteworthy victory against the Spanish in 1897. Here Lawton's division faced “the largest and best organized body of men which has yet to meet American troops.” The battle started when “a large body of insurgents” ambushed and nearly surrounded two companies of the 21st Infantry that were reconnoitering in advance of the rest of the division, forcing the companies to retreat after losing two men killed and two officers and eleven enlisted men wounded. At the critical moment, Lawton arrived and rallied the men, personally picking up a rifle and shooting several enemy snipers hidden in the treetops. Finally, their ammunition exhausted, Lawton led the survivors back to the remainder of his division, carrying their wounded. Lawton then advanced again with his main force, and the fighting rapidly developed into the largest battle thus far in the war with the insurgents, with naval participation as well as at least one fierce artillery duel.⁸⁰

Accurate American rifle and artillery fire proved decisive, the latter neutralizing the advantages of the Filipinos' fortifications, from which the insurgents withdrew after engaging in what Lawton called, in its midst,



General Lawton, Leader of Expeditions South and North of Manila,
by Frederic Remington

“a beautiful battle.” An enemy rear guard, however, held off the Americans long enough for the main Filipino force to escape inland. Both sides suf-

fered heavily. The Americans reported more than 54 casualties, including 8 killed, and Otis reported that enemy casualties exceeded 1,300.⁸¹



Six-inch cannon taken from Philippine insurgents at the Zapote River, June 1899

the interior, the Americans failed to capture Aguinaldo.⁸³

The day before the battle of Tila Pass, Otis ordered Wheaton to report to Lawton's headquarters to relieve him, so that Lawton could return to fight the insurgents still active nearer to Manila. Lawton then drove the troops of General Pio del Pilar from San Miguel in Bulacan Province. On 16 December Lawton returned to Manila to visit with his family before undertaking a new offensive aimed at recapturing San Mateo on the Mariquina River just eighteen miles northeast of the capital. The attack sought to permanently sever the lines of communication between insurgents in the northern and southern halves of Luzon, and this time, Lawton intended to take and hold the town. On the evening of 18 December 1899, before leaving for the field, Lawton met with his close aides and a trusted reporter, William Dinwiddie of *Harper's*, at his Manila home, a grand Spanish colonial mansion. The conversation ranged over many subjects, political, military, and personal. Among the most painful was Lawton's expressed disappointment over not having been promoted to general officer rank in the Regular Army. Lawton feared that he might be paying a price for having stated publicly that 100,000 troops would be required in the Philippines. Lawton said goodbye to his wife and children and rode all night in the rain with his escort from the 4th Cavalry, arriving on the outskirts of San Mateo at 0630 hours on 19 December 1899. Three hours later, he was dead.⁸⁴

Lawton's body was returned to the United States, and his funeral in Washington and burial in Arlington National Cemetery on 9 February 1900 was a national event, attended by President McKinley and his entire cabinet, members of Congress, justices of the Supreme Court, hundreds of lesser ranking officials, all the senior Army and naval officers in the Washington area, and thousands of ordinary citizens. Tributes flowed from those who knew him. Retired Maj. Gen. Oliver Otis Howard, the one-armed Civil War hero, famed Indian fighter, peacemaker, and philanthropist who had been General Miles's superior during the Geronimo campaign, mourned his

Shortly after the victory, Lawton implemented a well-publicized policy of turning power over to the local population by recognizing the municipal governments in Cavite Province, most notably that of the town of Imus, the center of the 1896 rising against the Spanish colonial regime. The Philippine Commission supported this policy and a member, Professor Dean C. Worcester, began to advise Lawton on civil matters. This effort was often cited as an example of Lawton's views on winning the hearts and minds of the people. Coupled with the carrot was the stick. Lawton pushed hard for the recruitment of local forces, which could help fight the insurgency. One of Lawton's subordinates, 1st Lt. Matthew Batson, formed such a unit in September 1899, drawn largely from a Pampanga Province town that became part of its name, the "Macabebe Scouts."⁸²

In October Otis assigned Lawton to lead one of three U.S. Army elements he sent into north-central Luzon in an effort to finally surround, defeat, and capture Aguinaldo, his ministers, and the troops that protected them. Lawton's division, spearheaded by a brigade led by Brig. Gen. Samuel Young, would advance north by river and road on a more easterly route through San Isidro, San José, and Tayug to San Fabian on

Lingayen Gulf. At the same time General MacArthur's division would advance further west along the rail line through Tarlac to Dagupan, just south of San Fabian, and Navy ships would land a force under Brig. Gen. Loyd Wheaton in the San Fabian–Dagupan area to intercept the insurgent leaders once MacArthur and Lawton had defeated their forces. Young recaptured San Isidro on 19 October, and he and Lawton pushed north, along the western edge of Luzon's mountainous interior, seeking to block escape routes. MacArthur, meanwhile, took Tarlac, Aguinaldo's new capital, on 12 November and Bayambang on 19 November, before reaching Dagupan the next day. Just six days before MacArthur had entered Bayambang, the Philippine independence leader had in that very town ordered his army to disperse and fight in small detachments. Aguinaldo then made a dash to the north and managed to pass through Pozorrubio just before Lawton and Wheaton closed the noose. Lawton sent Young after the insurgent leader, and although on 2 December a battalion under Maj. Peyton March caught up with and defeated Aguinaldo's sixty-man select guard on the trail to the Tila Pass east of Salcedo, as the fleeing independence leader attempted to cross from the coastal Ilocos Norte province to

fallen comrade with a special poignancy, observing that his own son, Lt. Col. Guy Howard, who “loved General Lawton and often praised him without stint,” had been killed on 22 October 1899 while serving as Lawton’s chief quartermaster.⁸⁵

Lawton was eulogized as a great warrior, but he was also described as a proponent of enlightened colonial administration. Sensitive to the political and social aspects of America’s new global role, Lawton was sympathetic to the Filipinos’ desire for independence and had been critical of some aspects of American policy, for example, the early “conquer and relinquish” strategy. His support for a benevolent approach, however, was essentially personal and rooted in his character, as he was anxious to “impress the inhabitants with the idea of our good intentions and destroy the idea that we are barbarians or anything of that sort.”⁸⁶

Lawton supported the establishment of local government—as he demonstrated after his first Cavite campaign—and delegations from the towns and villages where he established civil rule presented wreaths at his Manila funeral and flowers to his widow.⁸⁷ In a tribute shortly after Lawton’s death, Jacob G. Schurman, president of the Philippine Commission, said, “no man more loyally or cordially adopted the policy of conciliating the Filipinos. . . . He heartily advocated displacement of military power by civil government, in which the natives should manage their own affairs throughout all the regions in which American sovereignty has been established.”⁸⁸

Lawton’s sympathy for the Philippine people, however, did not mean he sided with the anti-imperialists. In a November 1899 letter to former ambassador to Siam John Barrett published just after his death, Lawton wrote, “If I am shot by a Filipino bullet, it might as well come from one of my own men, because I know from observation, confirmed by captured prisoners, that the continuance of fighting is chiefly due to reports that are sent out from America.”⁸⁹ At the beginning of America’s colonial experiment, Lawton was a proconsul who, while successful in war, also tried to establish the condi-

tions that would make peace possible. Later soldiers turned rulers were not always so wise.

When assessing Lawton, it is easy to succumb to the seductive praise of contemporary admirers. Certainly, the catalogue of his heroic deeds rivals the most exciting adventure tales. But, against these appealing images, his limitations must also be measured, and they were considerable. The effects of his lack of professional education, a fundamental failure of enemy assessment, and a lack of experience with large force operations led to costly mistakes at El Caney. At the tactical level, his faulty field reconnaissance at El Caney and consistent lack of logistics planning are difficult to fathom, considering his long service as a company-grade infantry and cavalry officer and a quartermaster. His decision to take position there with his artillery—and to act as his own artillery officer—was a clear mistake on several levels. The artillery fire was initially ineffective and Lawton was in a poor location to coordinate his infantry brigades.

At the operational and command level, Lawton’s performance was scarcely exemplary. His disregard of Shafter’s order to break off the action at El Caney might have had a serious impact had the outcome of the 1 July attacks on the Santiago ridges been less successful. Lawton’s recurrent alcoholism, which flared up during his service as a military governor in Cuba and nearly ended his career, points to many unresolved conflicts. Finally, his field performance in the Philippines was mixed, although he understood the fundamental necessity for establishing a strong political effort as well as achieving military success. In the end, however, his core strengths as a soldier and a man—a strong personal code of honor, unflinching loyalty to his comrades and they to him, cool personal courage under fire, extraordinary physical endurance, and good will towards his fellow man—overshadowed his flaws. In several notable instances, even those who were once his enemies came to regard him with respect.

A dedicated soldier for almost forty years, Lawton died with relatively modest assets, but he was so respected and admired that ordinary

citizens quickly raised \$100,000 for the benefit of his widow and children. His boyhood home city of Fort Wayne, Indiana, erected a monument in his honor topped by a cannon he had captured in the Philippines. Fort Lawton, Washington, and Lawton, Oklahoma, were named in his honor.⁹⁰

Henry Ware Lawton was the only general officer awarded the Medal of Honor during the Civil War to be killed in action, the first serving American general to be killed outside of North America, and the only serving general lost in the Philippine War.⁹¹ On the day before his death, his commission as a brigadier general in the Regular Army—the great prize that had seemingly eluded him—was being prepared in Washington by order of the president, and it was ready for submission to the Senate on the day he died.⁹² In a stroke of almost unbelievable irony, the Philippine forces Lawton faced at San Mateo were commanded by a general whose last name was Geronimo.⁹³

The Author

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NOTES

1. Charles Morris, *Heroes of the Army in America*, 2d ed. (Philadelphia, 1919), p. 327.

2. Ltr, Brig Gen H. W. Lawton to the Adjutant General, Fifth Army Corps, 3 Jul 1898, printed in *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1898*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1898), vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 170; "Extract from Report of Maj. W. D. Beach, Inspector-General, U.S. Volunteers, Giving Particulars of the Death of Gen. H. W. Lawton," *Annual Report of the Inspector General to the Lieutenant-General Commanding the Army for the Year 1900* (Washington, D.C., 1900), pp. 90–91, in box 7, Papers of Henry W. Lawton, Library of Congress (hereafter Lawton Papers); *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1900*, 3 vols. (Washington, 1900), vol. 1, pt. 4, pp. 366–68; Dean C. Worcester, "General Lawton's Work in the Philippines," *McClure's Magazine*, 15 (May 1900): 30; "Lawton Falls in Battle," *St. Louis Republic*, 20 Dec 1899 (quote), posted at <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/hwlawton.htm>; "Gen. Lawton Killed by Filipino Bullet," *New York Times*, 20 December 1899; "General Lawton's Death," *Outlook*, 63 (30 Dec 1899): 991; H. H. Sargent, "The Action of San Mateo. The Death of Major General Lawton, U.S. Volunteers," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 30 (January 1902): 51–52, 58–61; William Dinwiddie, "General Lawton's Last Fight, San Mateo, Dec. 19, 1899," *Harper's Weekly*, 24 Feb 1900, pp. 175–76; *Official Army Register for 1901*, p. 396. A leading historian of the Philippine War called the fight at San Mateo "a botched engagement in which no one distinguished themselves." See Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899–1902* (Lawrence, Kans., 2000), p. 161. Ethelbert Breckinridge survived in 1899 but would die in North Carolina in 1914; see *Official Army Register for 1915*, p. 656. King would command a brigade in combat in World War I and serve as the Army's assistant chief of staff for operations and training during the Hoover administration, ending his career as a major general; see George W. Cullum, *Biographical Register of the Officers and Graduates of the U.S. Military Academy*, 9 vols. (3d ed., Boston, 1891–1950), 4: 613, 6: 769, 7: 423, 8: 104.

3. The Lawton Papers contain newspaper clippings and magazine articles from across the nation. Uniformly positive in tone, they begin just after the capture of Geronimo in 1886 and reach a crescendo in 1898–99. I have followed Brian Linn's use of the name "Philippine War" for the struggle waged from 4 February 1899 to 4 July 1902, rather than any of the alternatives, Philippine Insurrection, Philippine-American War, or Filipino-American War. See Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899–1902* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1989), p. xii.

4. "Gen. Lawton Killed," *New York Times*, 20 Dec 1899. Accounts of his height vary from 6 feet 3 inches to "six and a half feet."

5. Linn, *The Philippine War*, p. 123.

6. In his eulogy, Professor Melancthon Woolsey Stryker compared Lawton to Richard the Lion Heart, Bayard, and Gustavus Adolphus, all rolled up into one. See M. Woolsey Stryker, *In Memoriam, Funeral Oration at Obsequies of Major General Henry W. Lawton, U.S. Volunteers* (Washington, D.C., 1900).

7. After studying at the Art Student's League in New York, in 1886 Remington went West to illustrate the campaigns of the U.S. Cavalry, beginning with Lawton's pursuit of Geronimo. During the Spanish-American War, Remington worked as an artist/correspondent in Cuba, where he created images of Lawton and his men at El Caney. See Howard F. Kuenning et al., eds., *Frederic Remington, The Soldier Artist* (West Point, N.Y., 1979) and Peter H. Hassrick and Melissa J. Webster, *Frederic Remington: A Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings, Watercolors, and Drawings*, 2 Vols. (Cody, Wyo., 1996).

8. Staff of the Public Library of Fort Wayne and Allen County, Indiana, *Major General Henry W. Lawton of Fort Wayne, Indiana* (n.p., 1954), pp. 1–2, 4, 6; "Historical Notes," *Indiana Magazine of History* 17 (December 1921): 370–71; Oliver L. Spaulding, Jr., "Henry Ware Lawton," *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20 vols. (New York, 1928–36), 11: 62; Oliver O. Howard, "Gen. Henry W. Lawton: A Sketch of His Long Service," *American Monthly Review of Reviews* 21 (February 1900): 184–85; Typescript, Henry W. Lawton, Statement of military service, 15 Apr 1898, box 3, Lawton Papers; U.S.

War Department, *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1880–1901), ser. 1, vol. 2, pp. 222–23 (hereafter cited as *OR* with series and volume numbers); Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army*, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1903), 1: 620. Fort Wayne College has become Taylor University.

9. *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 10, pt. 1, pp. 302–05; *The Seventy-Seventh Pennsylvania at Shiloh* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1908), map after p. 114.

10. *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 10, pt. 1, pp. 105–07, 303–05, quote, p. 305; vol. 52, pt. 1, p. 20; Steven L. Ossad, "The Fighting McCooks," *Military History Magazine*, October 2005, pp. 22–29.

11. *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 20, pt. 1, pp. 192–95, 296–97, 347–51; Steven Woodworth and Kevin J. Winkle, *Atlas of the Civil War* (New York, 2004), pp. 148–49.

12. *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 16, pt. 2, p. 591; vol. 20, pt. 1, pp. 320, 348–51.

13. *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 20, pt. 1, pp. 320–22, quote, p. 322.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 297, 332–33, quote, p. 333.

15. Fort Wayne Library, *Major General Henry W. Lawton*, p. 7.

16. *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 20, pt. 1, pp. 208, 324.

17. *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 30, pt. 1, pp. 174, 556, 561 (quote).

18. *Congressional Medal of Honor: The Names, The Deeds* (Chico, Calif., 1988), p. 832; Fort Wayne Library, *Major General Henry W. Lawton*, pp. 8–9; Howard, "Henry W. Lawton," p. 185; Lawton to A. F. Noble, 2 Feb 1867, and Conrad Baker, Acting Governor of Indiana, to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, 9 Dec 1865, both in box 1, Lawton Papers.

19. *OR*, ser. 1, vol. 45, pt. 1, pp. 209 (quote), 222–23.

20. Rpt, Col F. C. Ainsworth, Chief, Record and Pension Office, "Statement of the Volunteer Military Record of Colonel H. W. Lawton," 12 May 1894 (first quote), box 2, Lawton Papers; *Official Army Register for January 1880*, p. 123 (second quote); Fort Wayne Library, *Major General Henry W. Lawton*, pp. 8–9.

21. Bvt Maj Gen William Grose to Stanton, 8 Dec 1865; Maj Gen D. S. Stanley to Stanton, 19 Sep 1865; Bvt Maj Gen Nathan Kimball to Brig Gen L.

Thomas, 9 Sep 1865; Lt Col A. J. Slemmers to Lawton, 3 May 1867, all in box 1; "Certificate of Enrollment of Henry W. Lawton," Harvard University, 15 Sep 1866, box 3, and "Certificate of Attendance and Recommendation for Henry W. Lawton by Prof. Joel Parker, Royall Professor of Law," Harvard University, 6 May 1867, box 4, all in Lawton Papers; "Once Harvard Law School Student; Records Show that Lawton Studied at Cambridge in 1865–1866," *New York Daily Mirror*, 22 Dec 1899; *Army Register 1880*, p. 123.

22. Michael Dale Pierce, *The Most Promising Young Officer: A Life of Randal Slidell Mackenzie* (Norman, Okla., 1993), pp. 56–57; *Official Army Register for 1867*, pp. 124, 128, 131; *Army Register 1880*, p. 123.

23. Gregory J. W. Urwin, *The United States Cavalry: An Illustrated History, 1776–1944* (Poole, England, 1983), p. 159; Pierce, *The Most Promising Young Officer*, p. 56; Adjutant General's Office.

24. Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs*, 2 vols. (New York, 1885–86), 2: 541.

25. 1st Ind, Mackenzie to General William T. Sherman, 25 Jun 1876 (quote), to Lawton to Mackenzie, 19 Jun 1876, box 1, Lawton Papers. Mackenzie remained Lawton's regimental commander until his promotion to brigadier general in 1882, and he named Lawton to his staff when serving as commander in 1881 of the Department of Arkansas and in 1882–83 of the District of New Mexico. See Cullum, *Biographical Register*, 2: 841; Mackenzie to Brig Gen R. C. Drum, Adjutant General of the Army, 7 May 1881, and GO 11, District of New Mexico, 23 Oct 1883, box 1, Lawton Papers.

26. *Official Army Register for January, 1871*, pp. 46, 47; James N. Leiker, *Racial Borders: Black Soldiers along the Rio Grande* (College Station, Tex., 2002), pp. 48, 62; Robert M. Utley, *Frontier Regulars: The United States Army and the Indian, 1866–1891* (New York, 1973), pp. 219–26, 257–60, 272–79.

27. *Army Register 1880*, pp. 24, 123; R. S. Mackenzie, "Endorsement on an Application for appointment to the rank of Captain and Assistant Quartermaster," 25 Jun 1876, box 1, Lawton Papers.

28. Pierce, *The Most Promising Young Officer*, p. 230.

29. Robert Goldthwaite Carter, *The Pursuit of Kicking Bird: A Campaign in the Texas "Bad Lands"* (Washington, D.C., 1920), pp. 4–5.

30. Pierce, *The Most Promising Young Officer*; Richard F. Snow, "American Characters: Henry Ware Lawton," *American Heritage* 33 (April/May 1982): 41 (quotes).

31. "The Lawton's," posted at <http://www.littlecolonel.com/Walton.htm>; "Mary Craig Lawton, wife of General Henry W. Lawton, 'Mrs. Walton' of the Little Colonel Stories," posted at <http://www.littlecolonel.com/People/Waltons/MrsWalton.htm>.

32. Edward M. Coffman, *The Old Army* (New York, 1986), p. 229; William Bruce White, "The Military and the Melting Pot: The American Army and Minority Groups, 1865–1924," Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin, 1968, p. 271.

33. Robert Goldthwaite Carter, *The Mackenzie Raid into Mexico* (Washington, D.C., 1919), p. 11; Pierce, *The Most Promising Young Officer*, p. 184. Leonard Wood suggests in his journal that during the Geronimo pursuit, Lawton succumbed to bouts of drinking which were covered up by other officers. See Jack C. Lane, ed., *Chasing Geronimo: The Journal of Leonard Wood May–September 1886* (Albuquerque, 1970), p. 11. Nelson Miles—generally very supportive of Lawton—at one point actually considered a court martial. See Louis Kraft, *Gatewood and Geronimo* (Albuquerque, 2000), p. 144.

34. Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, pp. 358–59, 369–70, 375–86; Trevor N. Dupuy, Curt Johnson, and David L. Bongard, eds., *Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography* (New York, 1992), p. 278; Sharon Malinowski et al., eds., *Gale Encyclopedia of Native American Tribes*, 4 vols. (Detroit, 1998), 2: 86. Geronimo was the hereditary medicine man of the Arizona Bedonkohe Chiricahua.

35. Dupuy, *Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography*, p. 506; Robert Wooster, *Nelson A. Miles and the Twilight of the Frontier Army* (Lincoln, Nebr., 1993).

36. Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, pp. 383–87.

37. Peter R. DeMontravel, *A Hero to His Fighting Men: Nelson A. Miles, 1839–1925* (Kent, Ohio, 1998), p. 164 (first quote); "Report of Captain Lawton," 9 Sep 1886, printed in *Annual Report of*

the Secretary of War for the Year 1886, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1886): 1: 177 (second quote); Odie B. Faulk, *The Geronimo Campaign* (New York, 1969), pp. 105–07.

38. Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, Calif., 1978), pp. 6–13; Roger J. Spiller, *Dictionary of American Military Biography*, 3 vols. (Westport, Conn., 1984), 2: 590; *Report of the Secretary of War for 1886*, 1: 170, 178; Steven L. Ossad, "The Frustration of Leonard Wood," *Army Magazine*, 53 (September 2003), posted at <http://www.ausa.org/webpub/DeptArmyMagazine.nsf/byid/CCRN-6CCSAG>.

39. Franklin Matthews, "Henry W. Lawton: The Soldier and the Man," *Harper's Weekly*, 6 Jan 1900, p. 4; Lane, *Armed Progressive*, p. 10–13; Walter Holden, "Captain Lawton's Pursuit of Geronimo," *Wild West Magazine*, 12 (October 1999); Howard, "Henry W. Lawton," p. 185 (quote); Spiller, *Dictionary of Military Biography*, 2: 590.

40. Rpt, Charles B. Gatewood to Miles, 15 Oct 1886, box 4, and Ltrs, Lawton to "Mame," 2, 4, Aug 1886, box 1, both in Lawton Papers; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, pp. 388–93; Kraft, *Gatewood and Geronimo*, pp. 133–46.

41. Lane, *Chasing Geronimo*, pp. 105–07; Kraft, *Gatewood and Geronimo*, pp. 161–78, 257; Lane, *Armed Progressive*, p. 12; Faulk, *The Geronimo Campaign*, p. 129.

42. William M. Edwardy, "Border Troubles," *Harper's Weekly*, 18 Aug 1888, p. 611; Utley, *Frontier Regulars*, p. 391; Spiller, *Dictionary of Military Biography*, p. 590.

43. DeMontravel, *Hero to His Fighting Men*, p. 190; Jack McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider, Surgeon, Architect of American Imperialism* (New York, 2006), p. 44.

44. *Annual Report of Brigadier General Nelson A. Miles, U.S. Army, Commanding Department of Arizona, 1886*, p. 18 (quote), in box 4, Lawton Papers, reprinted in *Report of the Secretary of War for 1886*, 1: 169; SO 72, Department of Arizona, 9 Jul 1887, box 1, Lawton Papers; GO 42, Adjutant General's Office, Headquarters of the Army, 16 Jun 1887; William G. Bell, *Quarters One: The United States Army Chief of Staff's Residence, Fort Myer, Virginia* (Washington, D.C., 1981), p. 11.

45. Miles to the Adjutant General of the Army, 18 Feb 1888; Stanley to President Grover Cleveland, 20 Dec 1887; Holabird to the Secretary of War, Dec 1887; Isaac P. Gray, Governor of Indiana, to Secretary of War William Endicott, 22 Dec 1887; L. S. Ross, Governor of Texas, to the Secretary of War, 24 Jan 1888; C. Meyer Zulick, Governor of Arizona Territory, to the president, 23 March 1888; Edmund G. Ross, Governor of New Mexico, to the president, 6 Jan 1888; Congressional delegation of Indiana to Endicott, 25 Feb 1888; Congressional delegation of Texas to the secretary of war, 6 Feb 1888; Col Z. R. Bliss, 24th Infantry, to whom it may concern, 14 Dec 1887; Leonard Wood to Lawton, 10 Dec 1887, all in box 1, Lawton Papers; *Annual Report of the Secretary of War for the Year 1888*, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1888), 1: 98–99; David A. Clary and Joseph W. A. Whitehorne, *The Inspectors General of the United States Army, 1775–1903* (Washington, D.C., 1987), pp. 306, 318. The Indiana congressman who did not join in recommending Lawton was Jonas G. Howard.
46. *Annual Report of the Secretary of War*, 1891, 5: 21, 23; 1892, 4: 701–02; 1893, 4: 743; 1894, 1: 91.
47. *Ibid.*, 1895, 1: 106, 138–39; 1896, 1: 101, 117; 1897, p. 267; GO 18, Adjutant General's Office, Headquarters of the Army, 30 Mar 1895; Robert B. Roberts, *Encyclopedia of Historic Forts: The Military, Pioneer, and Trading Posts of the United States* (New York, 1988), p. 38.
48. Ltr, Lawton to the Adjutant General of the Army, 14 Apr 1898 (quote), with 1st Ind, General Breckinridge, 14 Apr 1898, and 2d Ind, General Miles to Secretary of War Alger, 15 Apr 1898, box 3, Lawton Papers.
49. David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898*, The Macmillan Wars of the United States (New York, 1981), pp. 212–24; John C. Fredriksen, "Wheeler, Joseph," in John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, eds., *American National Biography*, 24 vols. (New York, 1999), 23: 140–41.
50. Trask, *The War with Spain*, pp. 231–33; Angus Konstam, *San Juan Hill 1898: America's Emergence as a World Power* (Oxford, England, 1998), p. 39.
51. Trask, *The War with Spain*, pp. 233–35; Howard, "Henry W. Lawton," p. 186 (quote); William R. Shafter, "The Capture of Santiago de Cuba," *The Century* 57 (February 1899): 621–22, posted at <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa>.
52. Herbert H. Sargent, *The Campaign of Santiago de Cuba*, 3 vols. (Chicago, 1907), 2: 99–102; Konstam, *San Juan Hill 1898*, pp. 40–41, 57.
53. Ltr, Lawton to "Mame," 6 Jul 1898, pp. 5–7, box 2, Lawton Papers; Konstam, *San Juan Hill 1898*, p. 46; Sargent, *Campaign of Santiago*, 2: 107.
54. Trask, *The War with Spain*, pp. 235–36, 553–54; Uteley, *Frontier Regulars*, pp. 406–07; Heitman, *Historical Register*, 1: 281.
55. *Annual Reports of the War Department for 1898*, vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 169 (quote); Trask, *The War with Spain*, p. 236; Arthur H. Lee, "The Regulars at El Caney," *Scribner's Magazine* 24 (October 1898): 403–13.
56. Konstam, *San Juan Hill*, p. 17; Lee, "The Regulars at El Caney."
57. Walter Millis, *The Martial Spirit: A Study of Our War with Spain* (New York, 1931), p. 287; Trask, *The War with Spain*, pp. 236–37; 240–42; 554 (first quote); Graham A. Cosmas, "San Juan Hill and El Caney," in Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft, eds., *America's First Battles, 1776–1965* (Lawrence, Kans., 1986), pp. 138–43; Ltr, Lawton to "Mame," 6 Jul 1898, p. 18 (second quote).
58. Trask, *The War with Spain*, p. 237; Cosmas, "San Juan Hill," p. 142; Henry Cabot Lodge, "The Spanish-American War," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 98 (May 1899): 842 (first quote); "General Shafter Criticised," *New York Times*, 16 Sep 1898 (second quote).
59. Sargent, *Campaign of Santiago*, 2: 107–08, 3: 224–25; Jerry Keenan, *Encyclopedia of the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (Santa Barbara, Calif., 2001), p. 129; Lodge, "The Spanish-American War," p. 842.
60. Cosmas, "San Juan Hill," pp. 143–45; Sargent, *Campaign of Santiago*, 2: 128–29.
61. McKinley effected on 8 July 1898 all six of the promotions recommended the previous day by Shafter. Among those promoted to major general, Chaffee and Bates had also fought at El Caney. Colonel Wood, whose regiment gained fame at San Juan Hill, became a brigadier general. See teleg, Shafter to Alger, 7 Jul 1898, printed in *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain*, 2 vols. (reprint ed., Washington, D.C., 1993), 1: 104; GO 96, Adjutant General's Office, Headquarters of the Army, 13 Jul 1898, p. 5; *Official Army Register for 1900* (Washington, D.C., 1899), p. 9.
62. Sargent, *Campaign of Santiago*, 3: 37–40; Trask, *The War with Spain*, p. 324.
63. Cosmas, "San Juan Hill," pp. 145–46.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 145; Linn, *The Philippine War*, p. 101.
65. Arthur L. Wagner, *Report of the Santiago Campaign, 1898* (Kansas City, Mo., 1908), pp. 48, 68 (quote); "Arthur L. Wagner: The Man Who Wrote the Book on Intelligence," *Masters of the Intelligence Art*, pp. 10–11, posted on the website of the U.S. Army Intelligence Center, Fort Huachuca, Arizona, at <https://icon.army.mil/anon/content/history/pdfs/mwagner.pdf>. See also T. R. Brereton, "First Lessons in Modern War: Arthur Wagner, the 1898 Santiago Campaign, and U.S. Army Lesson-Learning," *Journal of Military History* 64 (January 2000): 90–92.
66. "The Battle of El Caney," *New York Times*, 14 Aug 1898 (quote); Trask, *The War with Spain*, p. 236; Konstam, *San Juan Hill 1898*, p. 60.
67. Sargent, *Campaign of Santiago*, 2: 107; Trask, *The War with Spain*, p. 335; Department of Defense, "Selected Manpower Statistics, Fiscal Year 2003," p. 75, Table 2-23, posted at <http://siadapp.dior.whs.mil/personnel/M01/fy03/m01fy03.pdf>.
68. GO 118, Adjutant General's Office, Headquarters of the Army, 10 Aug 1898; Graham A. Cosmas, "Securing the Fruits of Victory: The U.S. Army Occupies Cuba, 1898–1899," *Military Affairs*, 38 (October 1974): 85; Lane, *Armed Progressive*, pp. 63–64; Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire: The United States Army in the Spanish-American War* (Columbia, Mo., 1971), pp. 257–58.
69. Lane, *Armed Progressive*, p. 64–65.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 64; Matthews, "Henry W. Lawton," p. 4. In this biographical account published after Lawton's death, Matthews reported that in Cuba Lawton's "health became impaired after the fighting, and he took a rest." With most of the occupation forces in Cuba suffering from various tropical diseases as well as exhaustion, it was a plausible explanation.

71. Spaulding, "Henry Ware Lawton," p. 62.

72. Worcester, "Lawton's Work in the Philippines," p. 31.

73. Matthews, "Henry W. Lawton," p. 4; Stuart Creighton Miller, "Benevolent Assimilation": *The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899–1903* (New Haven, Conn., 1982), p. 70.

74. Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York, 1989), pp. 148–49.

75. Linn, *The Philippine War*, pp. 42–64, 88–90, 95, 101–02.

76. *Ibid.*, pp. 102–04; John F. Bass, "The Philippine Revolt—The Santa Cruz Expedition," *Harper's Weekly*, 24 Jun 1899, p. 616; *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1899*, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1899), vol. 1, pt. 4, pp. 113–14.

77. William Dinwiddie, "General Lawton in the Field," *Harper's Weekly*, 29 Jul 1899, p. 756 (quote); Bass, "The Santa Cruz Expedition," p. 616.

78. Linn, *The Philippine War*, pp. 106–15; Morris, *Heroes of the Army*, pp. 325–26; "Gen. Lawton Killed," *New York Times*, 20 Dec 1899.

79. Linn, *The Philippine War*, pp. 114, 116.

80. "All-Day Battle with Filipinos," *New York Times*, 14 Jun 1899 (quotes); Linn, *Philippine War*, pp. 118–20; *Annual Reports of the War Department for 1899*, vol. 1, pt. 4, pp. 137–38; *ibid.*, pt. 5, pp. 368–69. General Otis termed the Filipino defeat of the Spanish at the Zapote River a "great victory" for that independence

movement and dated the battle to 1896. A modern history of the Philippine War of 1896–98, Andrés Mas Chao, *La Guerra Olvidada de Filipinas, 1896–1898* (Madrid, 1997), p. 118, places the unsuccessful Spanish effort to cross the Zapote River on 9 March 1897 and downplays the battle's military importance. As one of the few Filipino victories against a substantial body of Spanish troops, however, this battle assumed significant moral importance for the insurgents as they resumed their struggle against the Americans.

81. *Annual Reports of the War Department for 1899*, vol. 1, pt. 4, pp. 138–39, quote, p. 138; Linn, *Philippine War*, p. 120.

82. Worcester, "Lawton's Work in the Philippines," pp. 26–28; Linn, *Philippine War*, p. 128. Mas Chao, *Guerra Olvidada*, pp. 117–18, calls Imus the "holy city of the rebellion."

83. Linn, *The Philippine War*, pp. 139–56; *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1900*, 3 vols. (Washington, 1900), vol. 1, pt. 4, pp. 215–86, 311–13, 317–19.

84. Dinwiddie, "General Lawton's Last Fight," pp. 175–76; *Annual Reports of the War Department 1900*, vol. 1, pt. 4, pp. 295, 303–07, 311, 366–67, pt. 5, pp. 155–56; Sargent, "The Action of San Mateo," pp. 49, 53.

85. "Taps Sounds over Gen. Lawton's Grave," *New York Times*, 10 Feb 1900; Howard, "Henry W. Lawton," p. 186.

86. John M. Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags: The United States Army in the Philippines, 1898–1902* (Westport, Conn.,

1973), p. 83.

87. "Funeral of General Lawton," *New York Times*, 31 Dec 1899.

88. "General Lawton's Death," *Outlook*, p. 991.

89. Matthews, "Henry W. Lawton," p. 4; Worcester, "Lawton's Work in the Philippines," p. 22.

90. "Arrival of General Lawton's Body," *Harper's Weekly*, 17 Feb 1900, posted at <http://www.militarymuseum.org/Lawton.html>; "Monument to General Lawton," *New York Times*, 14 Sep 1900; GO 20, Adjutant General's Office, Headquarters of the Army, 19 Feb 1900.

91. Russell K. Brown, *Fallen in Battle: American General Officer Combat Fatalities from 1775* (Westport, Conn., 1988), pp. 79, 179, 218; Heitman, *Historical Register*, 1: 399.

92. "Gen. Lawton Killed," *New York Times*, 20 Dec 1899; "Order to the Army Issued," *New York Times*, 22 Dec 1899; McKinley to Otis, 20 Dec 1899, printed in *Report of the Inspector General 1900*, p. 88.

93. "Gen. Lawton Killed," *New York Times*, 20 Dec 1899. General Licerio Geronimo (1855–1924) was in command of the insurgents' Third Manila Military Zone. The Apache Geronimo would ride in Theodore Roosevelt's 1905 inaugural parade, at the president's invitation, and use the opportunity to visit the graves in Arlington Cemetery of the officers who had fought him. See "Licerio Geronimo," posted at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Licerio_Geronimo; Faulk, *The Geronimo Campaign*, p. 211.

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