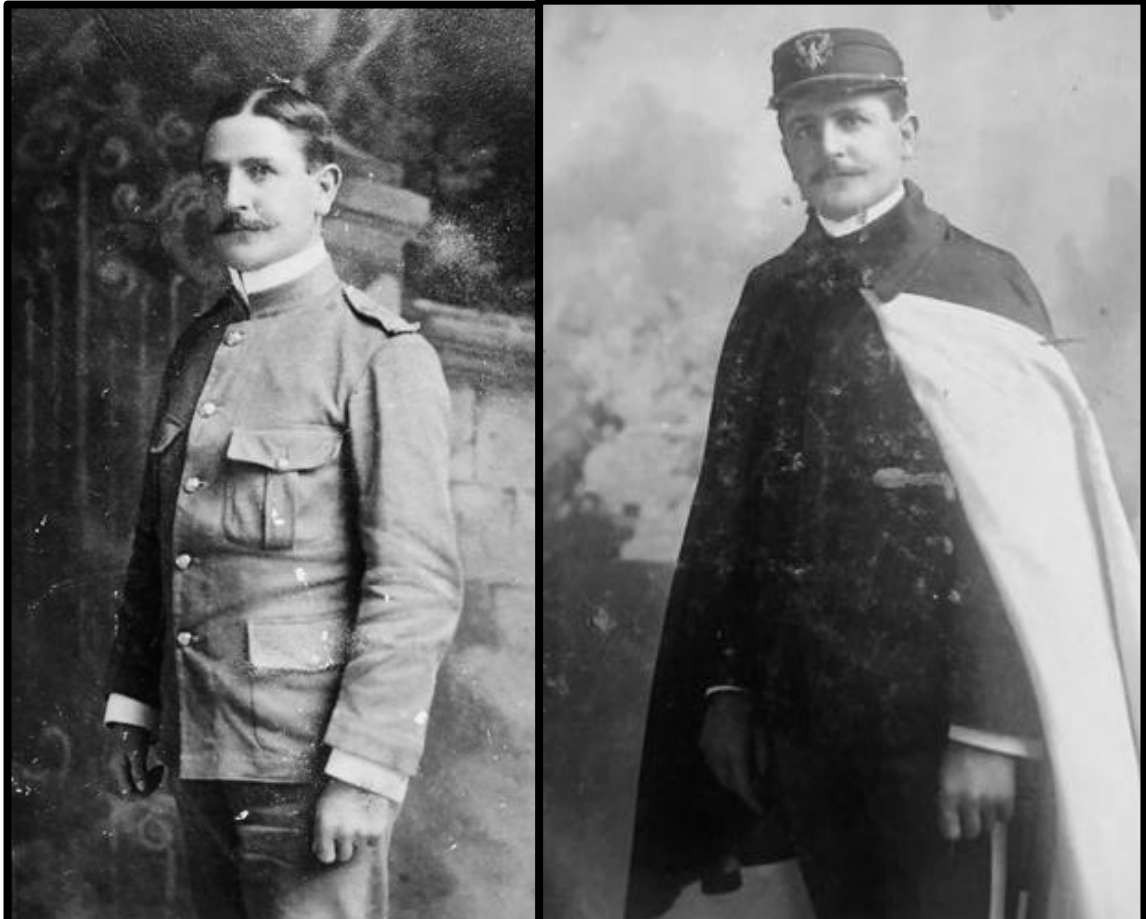




The National Son

The newsletter of the Sons of Spanish-American War Veterans

Volume 2025 No. 1



SERGEANT MAJOR JOE SMITH -Enlisted in the 1st Washington (State) Regiment with service from May 13 to December 9, 1898. He served in the Philippines and was discharged to accept a 2nd Lieutenant's commission serving in 'M' Company. A journalist by trade sent letters of the unit's activities to the *Spokane Chronicle* and *Leslie's Weekly*. Photos contributed by grandson and SSWAV member Tim Prater.

In this issue...

- ***Italian Americans at War: Maj. Onorio Moretti and Seaman Irmo Martelli***
- ***'Lost' Rough Rider Recognized by O'Neill Camp: Bill Brito, Yaqui Indian***
- ***Spanish-American War Nurse: Lettie Powell Putman***
- ***Research Sources: The 'Return of Casualties'***

From the National President ‘Tim’ Mabee

In this issue of *The National Son*, you will find a news item on a new book recently released by Major Pete Belmonte, a regular contributor to the National Son.

Pete’s new book is entitled *Italian-Americans in the U.S. Military, 1898-1902*, Volume 1 and it is available through various online bookstores. He’s also contributed two articles in this issue on Italian-Americans in the war and obtained copies of rare photographs from their family members that we’re able to share and help preserve by publishing for our membership. Thanks Pete! And ‘kudos’!



The Buckey O’Neill Camp has been extremely busy since the last issue having orchestrated and coordinated the dedication of the Rough Rider Frank Brito Plaque, a Pearl Harbor Day remembrance, Wreaths Across America and initiating erecting a small memorial marker to Spanish-American War era Nurse Lettie Powell Putman whose grave had been unmarked and forgotten. Excellent work by our own Arizona ‘Rough Riders’!

Greg Eanes also provides an article on an often overlooked research source, the ‘Return of Casualties.’ These forms document a unit’s killed, wounded and missing following a combat action or expedition and can provide details a person not normally found in newspaper reports or obituaries.

Also, annual dues of \$15 are due by 30 June. Please forward a check to our Treasurer: **Kenneth D. Roach, 44 Broadleaf Circle, Windsor, CT 06095-1633** before that date.

Finally, let me draw your attention to several advertisements from our very own Quartermaster. We have images and prices and directions on how to obtain these SSAWV items. For members only!

Enjoy this issue and be sure to do some ‘shopping’ with the Quartermaster. Tell your wives these will be great birthday gifts!

-Tim

---From Cavalry Trumpeter to Artillery Officer---
Major Onorio Moretti

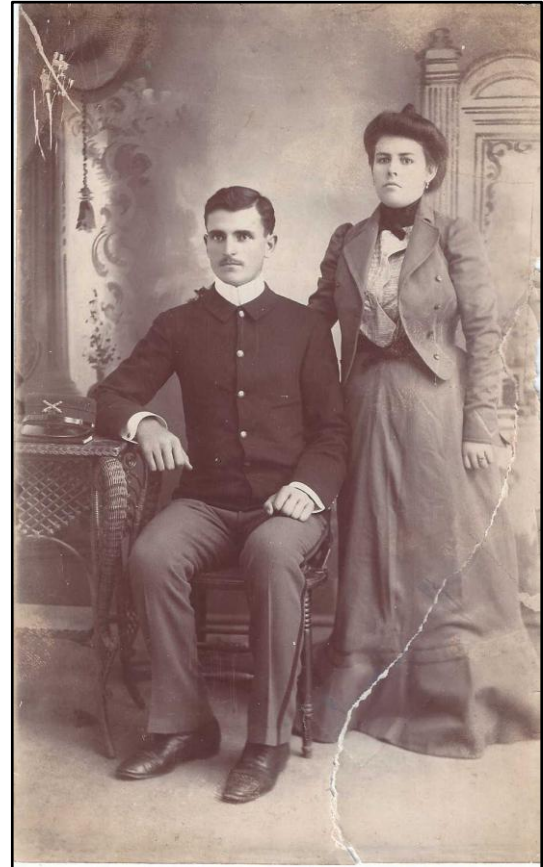
By Peter Belmonte
 Major, USAF (Retired)¹

Onorio Moretti was born in Monticelli di Esperia, Caserta, Lazio, Italy, on April 20, 1881, and came to the U.S. in April 1896. Moretti worked “as a day laborer digging ditches and doing other menial tasks” until he became disillusioned at the notion that wealth was easily acquired in America.

In order to master the English language, Moretti enlisted in the Army on April 7, 1899. He served as a private, trumpeter, and corporal in Troop B, 7th Cavalry Regiment, until his discharge on April 6, 1902.

Moretti re-enlisted in the Army on July 5, 1902; he served as a private, corporal, and sergeant in the Coast Artillery Corps. He spent some time in the 23rd and 24th Companies, Coast Artillery Corps, in Havana, Cuba. While there, he met Norberta Maria Luisa Monseu, a young native of Havana. The two married in 1904.

Moretti continued to serve in the artillery at such places as Fort McKinley, on Great Diamond Island, Maine; Fort DuPont, Delaware; Fort Riley, Kansas; and Fort Sill, Oklahoma. In addition to the units previously mentioned, Moretti served in the 6th Field Artillery Regiment. Onorio Moretti also served a tour in the Coast Artillery Corps with his brother, Marcus Moretti.



Onorio and Maria Luisa Moretti, date unknown (Courtesy of Sara Cappello).

¹Note: Most of this article appears in Major Belmonte’s book, “*That War Was a Great Adventure*”: *Italian-Americans in the U.S. Military, 1898-1902, Volume 1* (Independently published, 2024). Photographic credits and thanks go to Onorio Moretti’s great-granddaughter, Sara Cappello, for allowing their use. Naturalization, birth, census, Army enlistment registers, military birth records, yearbooks, and other military records are found on Ancestry.com and Fold3.com. Old newspaper articles were available on Newspapers.com; quotations are taken from “Book by Onorio Moretti on a New ‘Financial Gospel’ Thought Provoking in its Startling Economic Program,” *Fort Collins Express-Courier*, Fort Collins, Colorado, April 21, 1933, Newspapers.com.

Before World War I, Onorio Moretti attained the ranks of sergeant, first sergeant, sergeant major, battalion sergeant major, and master signal electrician. From 1913 to 1916 he was an instructor at the school of fire at Fort Sill. In 1916, Moretti was temporarily promoted to captain and given command of the Yale Battery of the Connecticut National Guard.

During World War I, Moretti was appointed a temporary captain in the Field Artillery on July 17, 1918, and was promoted to major on August 23, 1918.

He served in various training units including the 8th Field Artillery Replacement Depot at Camp Jackson, South Carolina, as well as the 85th Field Artillery Regiment and 1st Field Artillery Regiment. Moretti was a recognized expert in all things connected with the art and science of artillery.

Accordingly, he co-authored a textbook for the use of men pouring into the expanded artillery branch of the Army during World War I. Co-authored with Captain Robert M.

Danford, the book, *Notes on Training Field Artillery Details* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1917) was printing in forty thousand copies.

Moretti was discharged as an officer on October 30, 1919. By this time, Moretti was “weary with things warlike” and decided to return to civilian life. He was commissioned a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserve, but he resigned that commission in 1920. For the next seven years, Moretti worked as a laborer with the intention of “studying business and industry from the laborer’s viewpoint.”



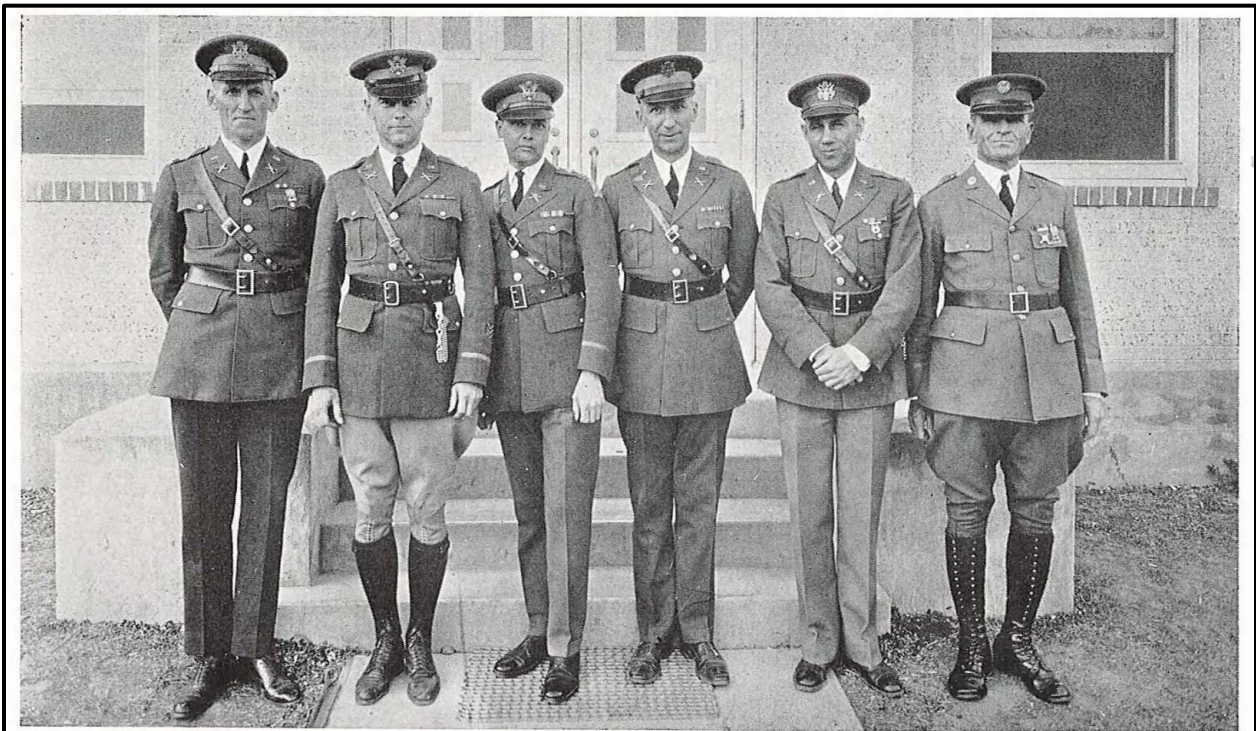
BROTHERS IN ARMS - Onorio Moretti (left) with his brother Marcus, circa 1906 (Courtesy of Sara Cappello).



A religious man, he also became a Methodist minister before re-enlisting in the Army on December 29, 1927. For the next nine years, Moretti served as a Reserve Officer Training Corps instructor until his retirement as a master sergeant on August 31, 1936. He became known for his views on building character and tying that into economic principles. Onorio Moretti died on October 21, 1939, in Fort Collins, Colorado.

Unfortunately, not much is known about Moretti's early service in the 7th Cavalry Regiment from 1899 to 1902. His expertise as a soldier and artilleryman is well-evidenced by his promotions and service as an officer during World War I and by his authorship of an important book on artillery tactics.

**Capt. Onorio Moretti, date unknown
(Courtesy of Sara Cappello).**



Major Hoskins, Major Vesely, Capt. Skerry, Capt. Jedlicka, Lt. E. J. Roxbury, Staff Sgt. O. Moretti
Staff Sergeant Onorio Moretti, far right, Colorado Agricultural College, 1932 (Ancestry.com).

Italian-Americans in the U.S. Military, 1898-1902, Vol. 1

Peter L. Belmonte, a frequent contributor to the *National Son*, has just released a larger work entitled *Italian-Americans in the U.S. Military, 1898-1902, Vol. 1*, now available with online booksellers.

Pete retired from the US Air Force after twenty years service, first as an enlisted man and then as an officer. A veteran of Operation DESERT STORM, he holds a master's degree in history from California State University-Stanislaus, and a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Purdue University.

He has published articles, book chapters, reviews, and papers about immigration and military history and has been a college adjunct instructor of history.

Pete has written several books pertaining to Italian-Americans in American military culture to include:

Italian Americans in World War II (2001);

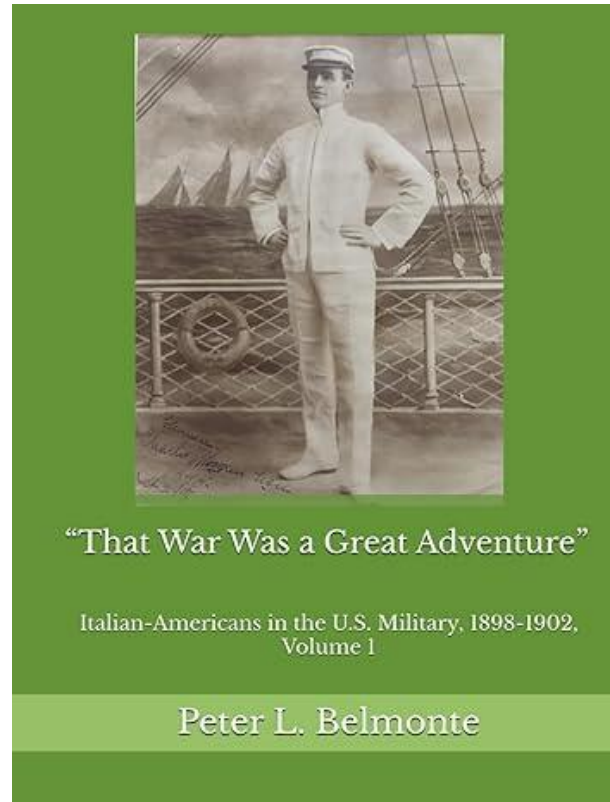
Calabrian-Americans in the US Military During World War I, Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (2017-2019);

Forgotten Soldiers of World War I: America's Immigrant Doughboys (with Alexander F. Barnes, 2018);

Chicago-Area Italians in World War I: A Case Study of Calabrians (Fonthill Media, 2019).

He's also authored other military studies of interest: *Days of Perfect Hell: The U.S. 26th Infantry Regiment in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, October-November 1918* (2015); *Play Ball: Doughboys and Baseball during the Great War* (w/Alexander F. Barnes and Sam Barnes, 2019), and *United States Army Depot Brigades in World War I* (w/Alexander F. Barnes, 2021).

Readers can visit his website: www.doughboypublishing.weebly.com for more information. He currently works for the U.S. government and lives with his wife and children in Illinois. You may contact Pete at belmontep@att.net.





PEARL HARBOR DAY REMEMBERED - The Buckey O'Neill Camp #175 presented a wreath on the 83rd anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day held at the Wesley Bolin Plaza Capitol Mall. Members of the Camp presented the wreath which reflects the flag of Arizona at the base of the USS Arizona anchor. No WWII veterans were present during the ceremony, but members of the original Rosie Riveters were present as well as a fly over of WWII bi-planes from Falcon Field which served as a WWII training field for British and American flight crews. Pictured from left to right are Camp Members L-R: Daniel Griffin, Tyler Oliver, Avery Frantz, and Tim Prater.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA - Brothers of the Buckey O'Neill Camp No. 175, Sons of Spanish-American War Veterans sponsored a name specific wreath for Nathan Cook the Last Spanish American War Veteran and Last United Spanish War Veteran member. Brothers laid the wreath on December 4, 2024, during the Wreaths Across America ceremony held at the Arizona National Memorial Cemetery in Phoenix. Nathan Cook died in 1992 and was a veteran of the Spanish American War, Mexican Border War, WWI, and WWII. He served in the Navy. Seen over the grave of Nathan Cook is President Avery Frantz and Brother M. Ryan Taylor.



Show the Flag!

The SSAWV offers several items appropriate for wear at meetings and special events such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day. They also make great gift ideas for your loved ones seeking a gift for SSAWV members on birthdays and Christmas. It is a great way to ‘Show the Flag’ of the SSAWV!



Pricing:

\$60.00 Large Medal

\$45.00 Small Medal

\$25.00 Patch

Plus \$5.50 Flat Rate Shipping

How to Place an Order

Contact our National Supply Officer Charles “Chuck” Hand by e-mail at chuckhand.ssawv175@yahoo.com and indicate the items you wish to purchase. He will respond and calculate your shipping and handling charges, please add \$5.50 for shipping.

Our Supply Officer can be contacted at:

Charles “Chuck” Hand, National Supply Officer
Email: chuckhand.ssawv175@yahoo.com

--- Native American 'Rough Rider' --- **Frank Brito Recognized**

By Avery Frantz
President, Buckey O'Neill Camp

The Buckey O'Neill Camp No. 175 - AZ, Sons of Spanish American War Veterans, dedicated a commemorative plaque to honor Francisco Carlos 'Frank' Brito (1877-1973), the second-to-last surviving Rough Rider of the Spanish-American War, whose name was missing from the Rough Riders Plaque affixed to the Rough Riders/Buckey O'Neill Monument in Prescott, Arizona.

Upon reviewing the names on the existing plaque, it was discovered that while Frank Brito's brother, Jose Brito, was listed, Frank's name was absent. To address this omission, the Buckey O'Neill Camp commissioned a new plaque inscribed:

"Dedicated To, Frank Brito, A Yaqui Native of Company H & I, Whose Name is Missing on This Monument, August 24, 2023, Buckey O'Neill Camp 175, Sons of Spanish American War Veterans."

The Yavapai County Facilities team installed the plaque with the assistance of Beth Goettsch, Administrative Assistant II. Although the plaque was originally placed in August 2023, it was formally unveiled and memorialized for the Camp's membership on November 29, 2024.

Frank Brito and his brother Jose enlisted in the Territorial Rough Riders from the New Mexico Territory. As Yaqui natives, they harbored resentment toward the Spanish for their mistreatment of the Yaqui people and were determined to fight against them. However, on the day of departure, Frank was left behind in Florida due to limited space on his transport ship. Jose continued on and later died during the Philippine Insurrection Campaign.

After returning to New Mexico, Frank Brito served as a jailer, deputy sheriff, and game warden in Doña Ana County. He passed away in 1975, earning the distinction of being the second-to-last surviving Rough Rider.



FRANK BRITO - Photo courtesy of City of Las Vegas Museum. Photo was taken at the 1963 Rough Riders Reunion.



Figure 1 – HONORING YAQUI ROUGH RIDER – Among the Buckey O’Neill Camp members honoring the memory of Yaqui Indian Rough Rider Frank Brito were, from left to right, Brandon Porter, Pres Avery Frantz, Tyler Oliver, Sr VP David Williamson. The Camp observed Brito’s name was left off the original memorial plaque and initiated a correction and dedication of a new plaque recognizing Brito. (O’Neill Camp Photo)

---1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry, Troop I---

Frank Brito of the 'Rough Riders'

(1877 - 1973)

By Frank Brito (Grandson)

Note: The following article by Frank Brito's grandson is taken from The Spanish-American War Centennial website edited by Patrick McSherry (<https://www.spanamwar.com/Brito.html>). The site contains largest public data base of historical information on the War and the men who served and was profiled in Vol. 2024-1 of *The National Son*.

One April 1898 morning found Frank C. Brito out tending cattle with his older brother Jose for the Circle Bar Ranch near Silver City, New Mexico. He was making \$1 a day working as a 20-year-old cowboy. He and Jose received a message from their father to return home immediately to Pinos Altos, a small mining town at the edge of the Gila Wilderness in southwestern New Mexico. Their father was Santiago Brito, a Yaqui Indian mine owner and stage coach operator originally from Janos, Mexico.

Frank was born on August 24, 1877, in Pinos Altos, still a killing ground between citizens and the bands of Apaches under Geronimo, Victorio, Juh and Nana. He studied at the local grammar school and became a printer's apprentice, then a miner. The average employee made no more than \$30 a month and worked long hours, usually at hard labor in the mines, ore mills or outdoors.

After a long ride home and listening to their father, Frank and Jose did as they were told and were enlisted as volunteer privates at Santa Fé, New Mexico on May 6, 1898. Frank was three months short of age 21 and his occupation listed as "miner." Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt and Col. Leonard Wood, as commander, formed the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry, also known as the "Rough Riders", to fight in the Spanish-American War. They chose cowboys, miners and college athletes as their soldiers of choice. The Brito brothers were assigned to Troop H captained by George Curry, a future New Mexico territorial governor. Curry and Frank Brito were to remain lifelong friends. Shortly thereafter they were transferred to Troop I captained by Schuyler McGinnis. Here, Frank had as his bunkmate, Numa Frenger, later a District Judge in Las Cruces, New Mexico.



FRANK BRITO - A young Frank Brito in his 'Rough Riders' uniform in 1905.

They were shipped to San Antonio, Texas where the men were drilled in cavalry basics until the end of May. On the 29th, they were shipped to Tampa, Florida.

Because he was bilingual in speaking, reading, and writing in Spanish, Frank was placed in charge of the stockade established to deal with the potential Spanish prisoners of war. To his pleasure, he met Theodore Roosevelt and was nicknamed "Monte" by him, short for "Montezuma."

The men had some time for enjoyment during the seemingly endless preparations for war. Frank Brito, described an event that occurred in a shooting gallery in Ybor City, Florida while the men were seeking some sort of entertainment to break up the monotony of camp life. The shooting gallery was quite popular among the many troops stationed nearby. Frank Brito stated:

"I went in one time with Tom Darnell [a Sergeant in H Troop from Denver, Colorado who was later killed, according to Mr. Brito, while trying to shoot up the town of Central City, near Santa Rita, New Mexico] and some other troopers and we paid 25 cents to get in. There were bales of cotton behind the moving targets to catch the .22 caliber bullets and the whole place was surrounded with a fence of chicken wire. We told the man we would use our own six-shooters instead of the .22's and when we all started shooting, it scared hell out of everybody and people started jumping over that chicken wire fence. Somebody called the 10th Georgia Cavalry to quiet us down but we took the pins off our hats and nobody knew for a while that we were Rough Riders. The Colonel found out but by then it had all blown over. "

The revolvers used by the Rough Riders were Colt single action artillery models with a 5 ½" barrel and shot the powerful .45 Colt cartridge. The noise would have been deafening!

Unfortunately, Frank never made it to Cuba, remaining in Tampa with the stockade, most of the horses, the men of his troop and three other troops. The reason that Frank did not go to Cuba was that, because of a shortage of space aboard the transport, only eight of the regiment's twelve troops were permitted to board for Cuba. Also, because of the space shortage, those that did go to Cuba went without their horses, which were left behind for Frank's I Troop, joined by C, H, and M Troops, to care for.

The orders splitting the regiment met with protest. Roosevelt noted that "the four [Troops] left behind feel fearfully." Later he added "To the great bulk of them I think it will be a life-long sorrow. I saw more than one, both among the officers and privates, burst into tears..." Partially to assuage them, those remaining behind were told by Colonel Wood that they would shortly be taken to Cuba also. Brito commented "We were too angry to hear him, and if we had, I doubt we would have believed him. We had come a long way together and being left out at the last minute was not something any of us had counted on."

At the war's end, all the Rough Riders were reunited at Camp Wikoff, Montauk Point on Long Island, New York to recover from their wounds and tropical diseases. Frank spent time in a New Jersey hospital recovering from malaria and dysentery prevalent in the Tampa area.

Frank was discharged from the Rough Riders on September 15, 1898. His brother remained in the service, joining another military unit after the Rough Riders were disbanded and was listed as "missing" in the Philippines during the latter phase of the Philippine-American War. Jose never returned and was presumed dead.

Frank returned to mining in Pinos Altos and was involved in a tragedy in September 1900. He returned home during the day and mistakenly killed his wife's sister. He was sentenced to the territorial prison for ten years but served only five. Territorial Governor Miguel Otero granted him a full pardon. In prison, he learned the emerging technology of electricity in operating dynamos and motors. During this time, he was divorced from his first wife.

He worked as a hoisting engineer at various mines, which required a high degree of skill, lowering equipment and men into deep shafts. Leaving Silver City, he moved to Las Cruces and was married a second time. He was also an electrician for the city of Las Cruces after his mining days were over. He later became a deputy sheriff, town constable, city jailor and game warden. Frank C. Brito was praised for a long and useful law enforcement career.

Frank also served in the U. S. Army National Guard and was sent to Columbus, New Mexico with his unit immediately after Pancho Villa's 1916 raid on that border city to guard from further raids. They were released when Villa went deeper into Mexico.

In his first days in Las Cruces, Frank held a part-time job as bartender at various saloons. He worked for John Barncastle's saloon and Dan Read's Cowboy Saloon. At the Cowboy Saloon, he met and became friends with Pat Garrett, the law officer who tracked and killed Billy-the Kid. Frank's seven children went to school with several of Garrett's children.

There were numerous reunions of the Rough Riders, the first taking place at Prescott, Arizona. There is a statue of Buckey O'Neill in the city park with a plaque listing all the Rough Riders. Frank's name is not on this plaque; however, his brother's name is on the plaque. It was probably thought Frank and Jose Brito were the same person. Both brothers' names are listed on



CONSTABLE BRITO -Las Cruces Town Constable Frank Brito, right, with his deputy, Santa Rosa Rico, left. The photo is from about 1917.

all the original regiment records so there is an opportunity for the City of Prescott to correct this oversight.

The later reunions were held at Las Vegas, New Mexico. The Rough Rider Museum was established in Las Vegas to commemorate this patriotic group. Las Vegas is not far from Santa Fé and this museum is worth visiting as it houses many artifacts dealing with this period.

Frank retired and spent his later life enjoying his family, friends, televised baseball, and stray cats. He enjoyed talking about his Spanish American War year and was interviewed many times by magazines, newspapers and historians. He was appointed as a Colonel and Aide-de-Camp to New Mexico Governor David F. Cargo on July 8, 1968 for his longevity as the sole remaining New Mexico Rough Rider and for many years of public service.

Frank C. Brito died on April 22, 1973, the penultimate Rough Rider to endure. He was 96 years old.



CORRECTIVE ACTION – Recognizing it is never too late to correct the record, the Buckey O’Neill Camp No. 175 SSAWV swung into action to initiate a new memorial plaque recognizing Frank Brito as one of the Rough Riders. The plaque was placed at the base of the Buckey O’Neill Memorial in Arizona. (O’Neill Camp Photos)

Irmo Martelli

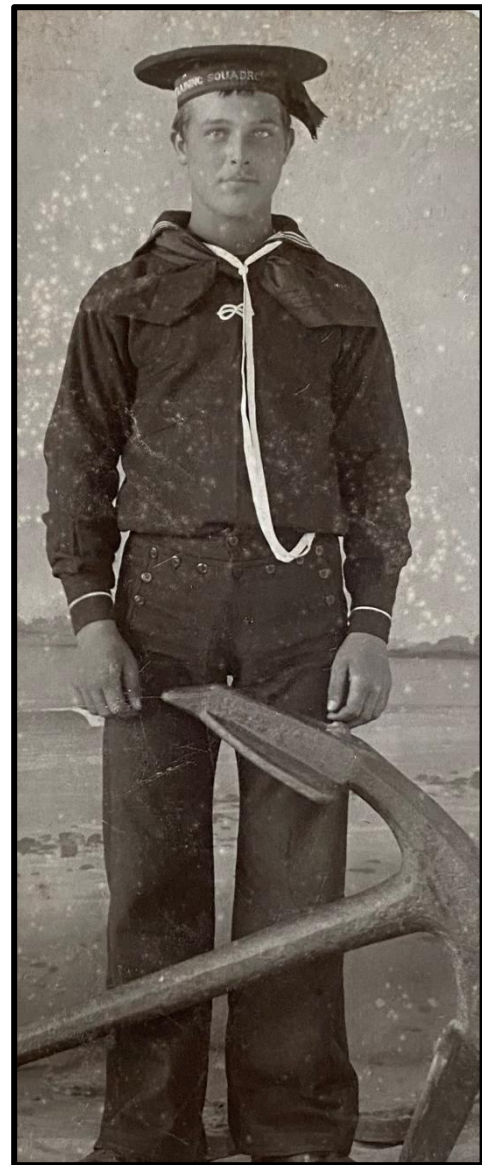
U.S. Navy Apprentice During the Spanish-American War, Philippine War and China Relief Expedition

By Peter L. Belmonte, Major, USAF (Ret.)

The American soldiers and sailors who served during the Spanish-American War and the subsequent Philippine War were a vital part of America's emergence as a world power. This article is an effort to further document the histories of the men who served on land and sea during these crucial years. Many of the men who served in the Army and Navy in the days of American expansionism were immigrants or the sons of immigrants. Presented here is the history of the son of Italian and French immigrants who served in the U.S. Navy's apprentice program.

Irmo Martelli was born on March 12, 1881, in Detroit, Michigan. His father, Paul Frederick Martelli, was from Campertogno, Province of Vercelli, Piemonte, Italy. At the time of Paul's birth, the region of Piemonte was part of the Kingdom of Sardinia. A national "Italian" identity would not take general hold until well after Italy's unification in the early 1860s, and even then, it was tenuous in many cases. Due to economic stresses, Paul Martelli, with his parents, moved to Paris, France, sometime around 1861. Paul Martelli married Catherine Mathey in Paris in 1877; soon thereafter the couple made their way to Liverpool, England, and then to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Martelli family eventually made their way to Detroit where Irmo was born.

The issue of Cuban independence from Spain, long a concern, boiled over into diplomatic wrangling between Spain and the United States in the mid-1890s. The sinking of the USS *Maine* in Havana Harbor in February 1898 proved a major catalyst for war. Following the exchange of diplomatic notes and ultimatums, the U.S. declared war on Spain on April 25, 1898. Irmo Martelli enlisted in the U.S.



IRMO MARTELLI - As an Apprentice Seaman around 1898.

Navy at Detroit on May 10, 1898; he was sent to Newport, Rhode Island, as an apprentice third class.²

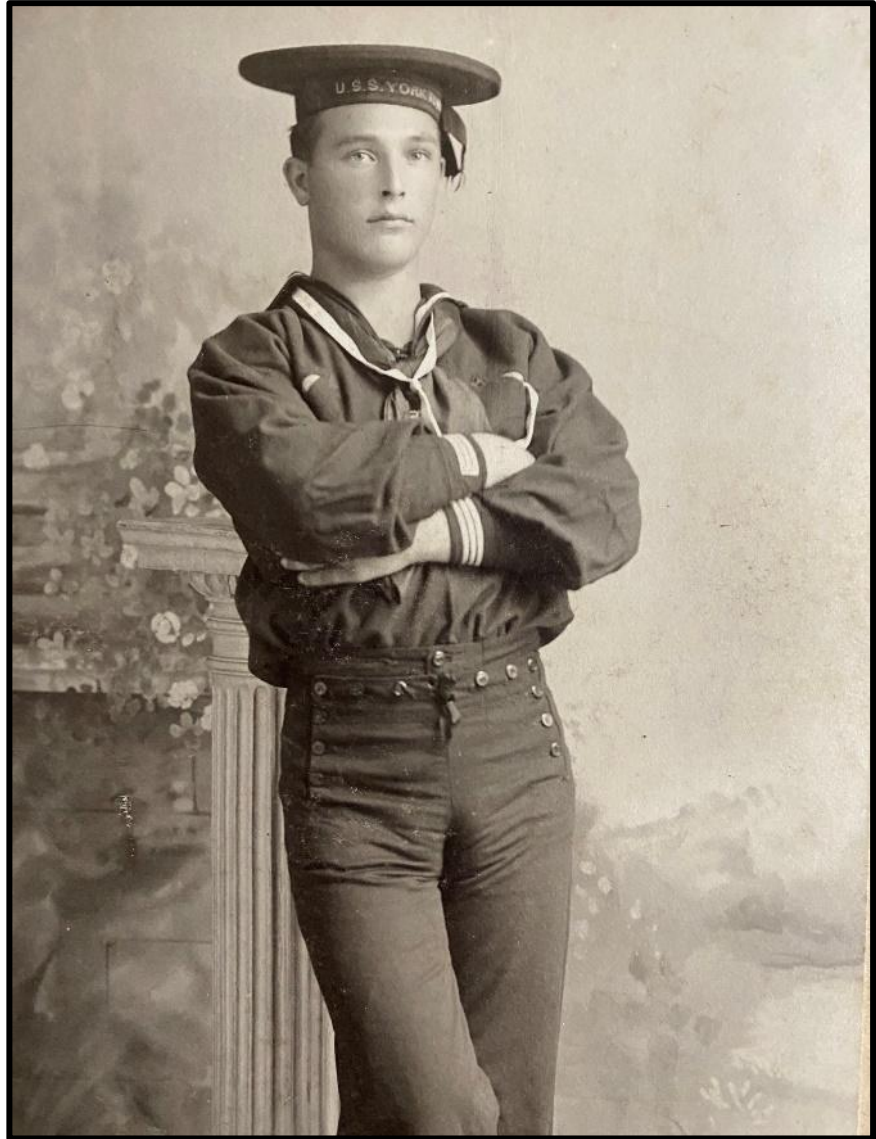
Boys between the ages of fifteen and seventeen were allowed to enlist, with parental approval, in the Navy's apprentice program. They agreed to serve until twenty-one years of age although, after six months' service, they could be allowed to purchase their discharge early. The program was designed to induce promising youth to pursue a naval career and broaden opportunities for advancement beyond those provided for ordinary seamen enlistees.³

According to most records, Martelli's date of birth was March 12, 1881. This would have made him seventeen years, one month, and twenty-eight days old at enlistment, just over the age limit for an apprentice.

Martelli's discharge

certificate, however, gives

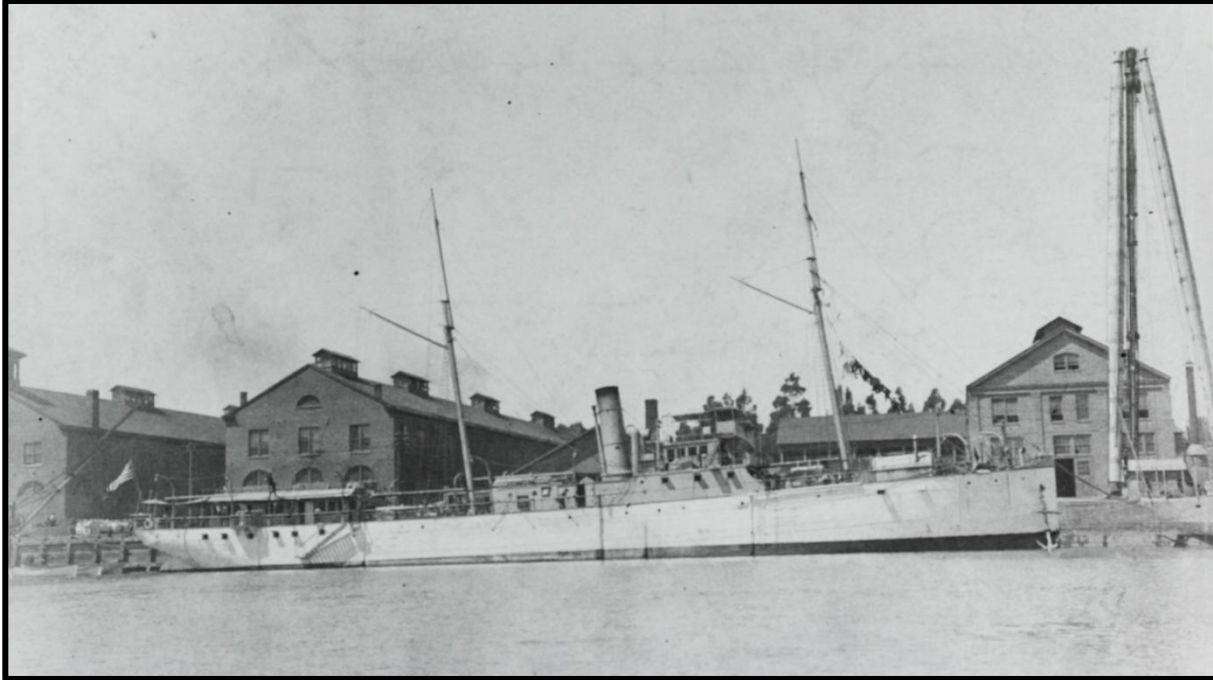
his date of birth as June 1, 1881. Considering this date, he would have been sixteen years, eleven months, and nine days old at enlistment, just under the age limit for an apprentice.



IRMO MARTELLI on the USS YORKTOWN. (1899-1901)

² Unless otherwise stated, military service information for Irmo Martelli comes from the following databases on Ancestry.com U.S., *National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2007. Original data: Historical Register of National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938; (National Archives Microfilm Publication M1749, 282 rolls); Records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Record Group 15; National Archives, Washington, D.C. U.S., *Headstone Applications for Military Veterans, 1861-1985* [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012. *1910, 1920, 1930, 1940 United States Federal Census* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010.

³ For information on the Navy's apprentice program of the 1890s, see Ensign Ryland D. Tisdale, U.S. Navy, "Naval Apprentices, Inducements, Enlisting, and Training, the Seaman Branch of the Navy," *Proceedings of the United States Naval Institute*, April 1896, Vol. 22/2/78, available on U.S. Naval Institute website,



USS YORKTOWN

Martelli trained aboard the USS *Constellation* at Newport. There, apprentices and recruits learned the basics of seamanship and being a crew member of a Navy ship.⁴ The number of apprentices assigned to a ship varied, with larger ships naturally having more apprentices on board. During the Battle of Manila Bay on May 1, 1898, the USS *Olympia* had forty-two apprentices assigned, the *Baltimore* had forty-eight, the *Boston* had twenty-eight, the *Raleigh* had twenty-seven, the *Concord* fifteen, and the *Petrel* had seven.⁵

After his training at Newport, Martelli was assigned to the USS *Yorktown*, a gunboat under command of Commander Charles S. Sperry. The *Yorktown* sailed for the Far East in January 1899. During Martelli's service aboard the *Yorktown* she cruised the region and patrolled the waters of the Philippine Islands in support of Army and Navy operations against Filipinos after the start of the Philippine-American War in February 1899.

In April, a party from the *Yorktown*, in an effort to free Spanish prisoners of war being held by Filipinos, were assaulted and captured. Months later, American troops freed the sailors. The *Yorktown* also cruised Chinese waters in support of international operations there for several months in 1900.⁶ While aboard the *Yorktown*, Martelli used "a manual foot-powered sewing

⁴ I thank Chuck Martelli, Irmo Martelli's grandson, for scans of Martelli and some of his Navy documents, as well as some family and military service information. Thanks also to Bob Summers, Irmo Martelli's great-nephew.

⁵ See rosters in L. S. Young, *The Cruise of the U.S. Flagship "Olympia" from 1895 to 1899 from San Francisco to Manila Bay*. Reprint of the original edition by Doughboy Publishing, 2024.

⁶ For a capsule history of the *Yorktown* during these years, see NavSource Online, <https://www.navsource.org/archives/12/09001d.htm>, accessed November 23, 2024.

6. Email, Chuck Martelli to the author, November 22, 2024.

machine and tailored his own formal Navy dress uniform.”⁷ In June 1900, while the *Yorktown* was off Chefoo, China, Martelli injured his right shoulder during a boat-lowering drill. Martelli described the incident:

[W]e were in Cheefoo [*sic*, Chefoo], China (June 1900) expecting trouble ashore with the Chinese Boxers and we had all the boats ready to lower for “arm and away” and we did lower a boat, more for drill purposes; this boat was on the starboard side, the second cutter if I remember right and when the order was given to lower the cutter I happened to be handy and jumped up on the rail and started to lower the after fall. We were lowering the boat rapidly when the turn jumped off the cleat, I immediately grasped the fall with both hands and hung on until a man came to my aid, who took a turn with the fall and finished lowering the boat. This was the time I injured my right shoulder as it jerked my arm upwards and pulled it out of joint.⁸⁷

Ultimately, this injury caused Martelli to leave the Navy. In early 1902, Martelli returned to the United States aboard the USS *Manila*; he was discharged as an apprentice first class from the *Manila* at Mare Island, California, on June 21, 1902.

Interestingly, Lieutenant Commander W. F. Halsey, commander of the *Manila*, signed Martelli’s discharge certificate. Halsey was the father of future five-star fleet admiral William F. Halsey, Junior.

The reverse side of Martelli’s discharge certificate shows he held ratings as apprentice third, second, and first class, and coxswain. His evaluation grades were respectable (using a 5-point scale): 4.3 for proficiency in rating; 4.4 for seamanship; 4.0 for ordnance; 4.0 for marksmanship, great guns; 4.2 for marksmanship, small arms; 3.9 for signaling; 4.9 for sobriety; and 4.6 for obedience; his overall standing was 4.3 for his enlistment. At the time of his discharge, he was described as twenty-one years of age, five feet, six and one-half inches tall, weighing 164 pounds, with blue eyes, brown hair, and a ruddy complexion.

By 1910, Martelli had moved back to Detroit where he lived with his family and worked as an adding machine assembler. In 1918, Martelli, still in Detroit, was in charge of motor stock for Charleston Motor Sales, a company based in Charleston, South Carolina. In the 1920s and 1930s, Martelli was a manager of a trucking company.

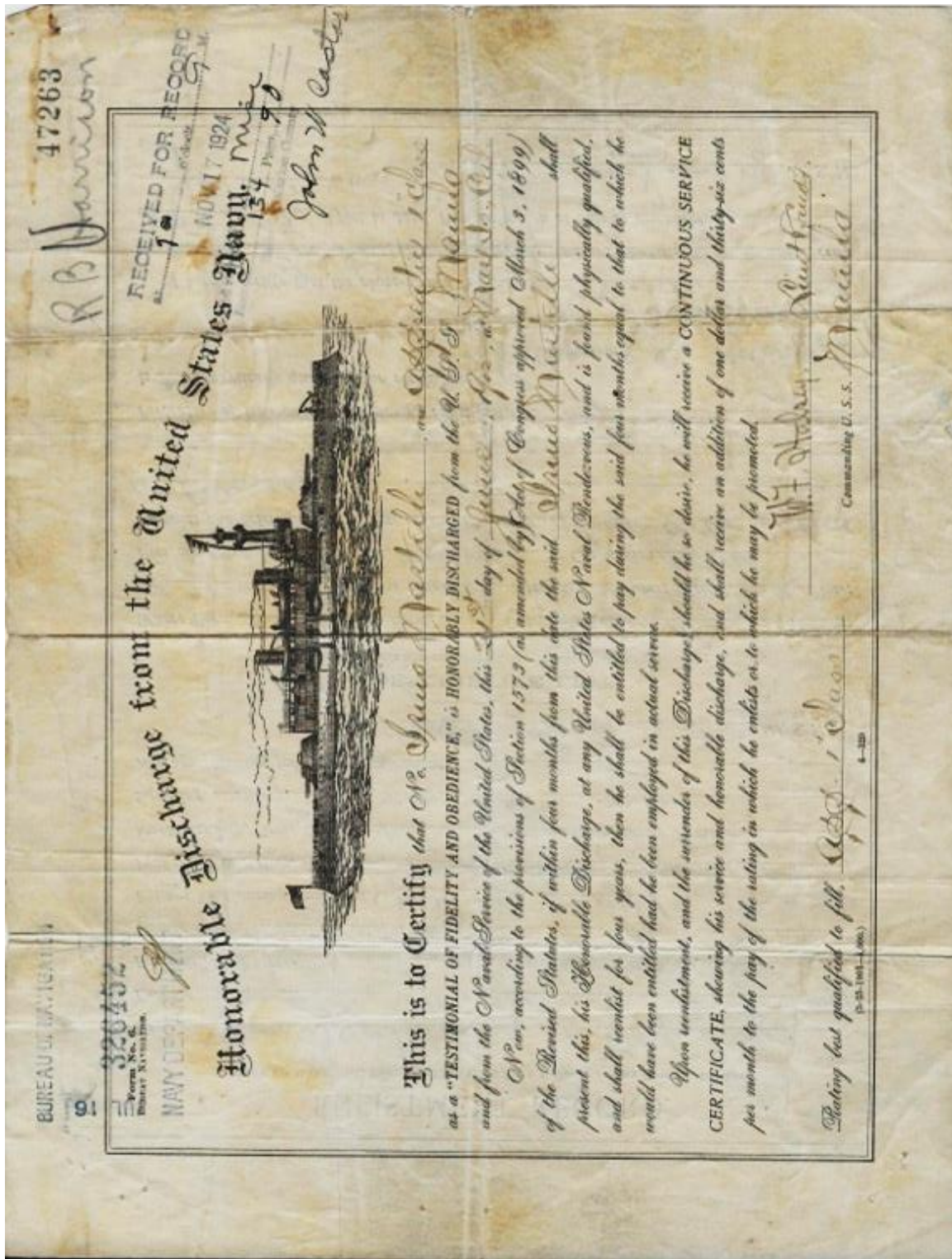
Martelli was awarded a disability pension based upon his military service, and in 1931, suffering from several ailments, he was admitted briefly to a home for disabled veterans in Dayton, Ohio. Active in veterans’ affairs, Martelli was a member of Gen. Henry M. Duffield Camp No. 9 of the United Spanish War Veterans in Michigan as well as the U.S. Naval Ex-Apprentices Association, Harbor of New York.

Martelli died on March 30, 1943, in Michigan.

⁷ Email, Chuck Martelli to the author, November 22, 2024.

⁸ Letter, circa 1918, from Irmo Martelli to Joseph Campbell, a shipmate, courtesy of Chuck Martelli.

Original Discharge of Apprentice Irmo Martelli signed by Captain W.F. Halsey





IRMO MARTELLI'S MEDALS – On the left (front and back) is one from the City of Detroit for service in the Spanish-American War with the name of his ship. The one on the right was presented by the people of the state of Michigan for the same service. (Medal images courtesy of the Martelli Family)



Figure 2 U.S. CAMPAIGN MEDALS – Pictured are the U.S. Navy Campaign Medals awarded to Coxswain Irmo Martelli. From left to right, the Spanish Campaign Medal, the Philippine Insurrection Medal and the China Relief Medal. Martelli is one of those rare veterans of the era that served in three wars in two years.

Lettie Powell Putman: A Pioneer Nurse's Rest in Rolling Hills Cemetery

By Avery Frantz

In the heart of the Arizona landscape, where the vastness of the arid plains meets the sky, lies the silent and nearly forgotten Rolling Hills Cemetery.

This final resting place, created during the challenging times of the Great Depression, stands as a testament to the resilience of those who forged paths through the hardships of the era. Within its undulating grounds, marked by weathered mortuary plaques and unmarked graves, rests the lives that shaped the destiny of the region. Among them, the story of Lettie Putman emerges as a chapter in the annals of Rolling Hills Cemetery.



Born on September 23, 1874, in the pioneer town of Princeville, Oregon, Lettie Powell Putman belonged to a family that braved the frontiers of the American West. At the tender age of 24, she enlisted with the Oregon Emergency Relief Corp "later merged into the Red Cross", becoming a dedicated nurse. During her years of service, Lettie tirelessly cared for the sick, nursing and aiding those affected by the Spanish American War at Camp McKinley in Oregon which housed the Federalized Oregon National Guard, 2nd Oregon Volunteer Infantry. Her commitment to her duty was unwavering, even as her personal life underwent significant changes. Divorced during her nursing years, Lettie faced the challenges of an era where the contributions of volunteers like her were not rewarded with pensions.

Following her service, Lettie embarked on a new chapter of her life. She married a veterinarian named Mr. Putman, and together they relocated to Prescott, Arizona, in the 1920s. The couple made their presence known in the city, with the earliest record of their residency appearing in the 1928 city directory.

Tragedy struck the Putman family on January 17, 1939, when Lettie's husband, David, passed away. His final resting place became Rolling Hills Cemetery, forever connecting his legacy to the undulating landscape of the Depression-era burial ground. In the obituary that memorialized David Putman, Lettie was described as an invalid, a detail that hints at the challenges she faced in her later years.

The passage of time brought its inevitable sorrows, and Lettie Powell Putman joined her husband in the embrace of eternity in 1944.

While her death certificate indicates burial in Prescott, it did not list what cemetery. It was later discovered thanks to the help of the Arizona Pioneer & Cemetery Project that she laid to the right of her husband in the Rolling Hills Cemetery.

The story of Lettie Powell Putman, a pioneer nurse who dedicated her life to serving others, finds its silent conclusion in Rolling Hills Cemetery. In the shadows of unmarked graves and the echoes of history, her legacy persists, a reminder of the selflessness and sacrifice that shaped the destiny of the American West.

As Rolling Hills Cemetery continues to weather the sands of time, Lettie's tale after 80 years of being unmarked is now etched in the rolling hills thanks to the **Buckey O'Neill Camp No. 175 - AZ, Sons of Spanish-American War Veterans** who ordered, paid, placed, and dedicated her headstone on November 29, 2024, as a testament to her enduring spirit that built the foundation of our country and of the region we call home. The work was coordinated with and supported by Joe Baynes, Director of Recreation Services for the City of Prescott.



REMEMBERING NURSE LETTIE – Among those remembering Spanish-American War Nurse Lettie Putman are, from left to right, O’Neill Camp Senior Vice President VP David Williamson, Junior Vice-President Tim Prater, President Avery Frantz, Brother Tyler Oliver, Brother Brandon Porter, Rick Stephens, Commander of US Grant Camp #3 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW), O’Neill Camp Chaplain Jeffrey Steadman, Mr. Steadman (aka "Dad"). (O’Neill Camp Photo)

Pride in Membership!

The SSAWV offers several items appropriate for wear at meetings and special events such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day. They also make great gift ideas for your loved ones seeking a gift for SSAWV members on birthdays and Christmas.



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Contact our National Supply Officer Charles “Chuck” Hand by e-mail at chuckhand.ssawv175@yahoo.com and indicate the items you wish to purchase. He will respond and calculate your shipping and handling charges, please add \$5.00 for shipping.

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Email: chuckhand.ssawv175@yahoo.com



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**Kenneth D. Roach
44 Broadleaf Circle
Windsor, CT
06095-1633**

Your dues support projects in remembrance of the Spanish American War and that perpetuate the memory of our veteran ancestors who fought and served their country.

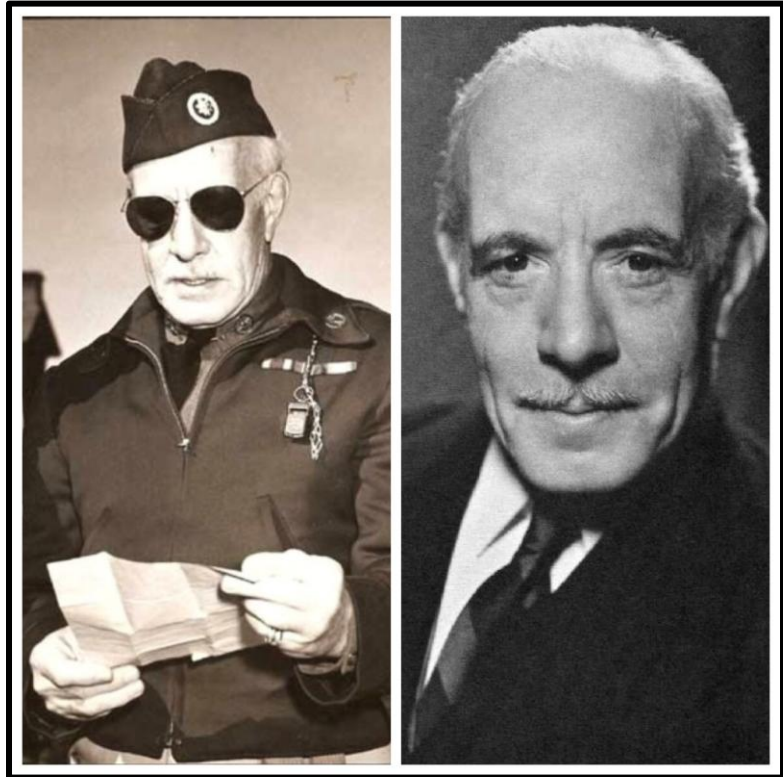
---A Golden Age Actor---

Lewis Stone Served in Cuban Occupation

By Greg Eanes

Among the Hollywood 'Golden Age' actors serving in the Spanish-American War was Lewis Shepard Stone, known professionally as Lewis Stone and recognized more commonly as 'Judge Hardy' of the famous Mickey Rooney 'Andy Hardy' series.

He was born the son of a boot cutter on November 15, 1879, in Worcester, Massachusetts. He completed school and, when the Spanish-American War broke out, he enlisted in New York City as a Private in Company H, 12th New York Volunteer Infantry on May 14, 1898.⁹



THREE WAR VETERAN - Hollywood 'Golden Age' actor Lewis Stone served his country during three wars: the Spanish-American War and both World Wars.

The Twelfth was not his first choice. Stone told Ed Sullivan in 1953 that he wanted action and went to join three different regiments finding out that none were slated for mobilization. He recalled, "Completely disgusted, I was walking past an armory on Park Avenue. There were big banners promising immediate action. So, I went in and joined a fourth regiment, the 12th and that's how I got to Cuba. In fact, we were the only New York regiment that did get to Cuba."¹⁰

The unit was at Camp Townsend at the time of Stone's enlistment and, once organized, was sent to Chickamauga arriving on May 20. It helped set up Camp George H. Thomas where it was trained and equipped for the war. Stone was promoted to Corporal on July 5, while there.

⁹ California Veterans Affairs Master Index for Lewis Shepard Stone. See also "United States, Veterans Administration Master Index, 1917-1940", , *FamilySearch* (<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:W727-TV3Z> : Fri Mar 08 19:20:16 UTC 2024), Entry for Lewis Shepard Stone, 20 April 1899.; History of the Twelfth Regiment (https://museum.dmna.ny.gov/application/files/7917/2589/3358/Inf12thRoster_SpanAm.pdf).

¹⁰ The Boston Globe, 'Ed Sullivan', September 19, 1953, p7

On August 24, 1898, it traveled to Lexington, Kentucky, remaining until November 13. It went from there to Americus, Georgia and established a new camp and prepared for deployment to Cuba. Stone's performance led to his promotion to Sergeant on December 21st just five days before his regiment left Georgia for Cuba. They arrived on January 1, 1899.

Once in Cuba, the Twelfth New York was tasked with garrison duty at Matanzas and Cardenas. On March 20th, 1899, the regiment was sent home to New York City. It arrived on March 27th and was mustered out on April 20th, 1899. Stone was discharged with the unit on that day.¹¹

After the war he tried his hand at writing plays and stage acting, eventually getting into movies. He was considered a "leading man" during his early days and made his first movie in 1916.

Stone evidently continued his service. In World War I he served in Plattsburg New York, reportedly in the cavalry and rising to the rank of Major. During World War II, now 62 years old, he served in the California State Guard as a Lieutenant Colonel.¹²

He moved to Los Angeles in 1920 and in 1924 joined Metro Goldwyn Mayer which had just formed. He remained with the studio until his untimely death on September 12, 1953. He made over 100 movies at the studio and was the longest serving contract player at the studio at the time of his death.



ANDY HARDY SERIES – Spanish-American War veteran Lewis Stone is best known for portraying 'Judge James Hardy' in 14 of the 16 Andy Hardy movies with Micky Rooney in the 1930s and 40s.

¹¹ California Veterans Affairs Index for Lewis Shepard Stone.

¹² The Boston Globe, 'Ed Sullivan', September 19, 1953, p7; Los Angeles Evening Citizen News, December 8, 1941, p8; [Lewis Stone - Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_Stone)

---Research Sources---

The ‘Return of Casualties’

By Gregn Eanes
SSAWV Public Relations Officer

When attempting to research the unit histories, one of the most important documents is the one detailing combat casualties. Called a “Return of Casualties”, it provides basic information on the basic circumstances of death of individuals killed or wounded. And for the lesser known common soldier, such as Arthur W. Chamberlain of Conrad, Iowa, it often provides the most detailed record of what led to his death.

Return of Casualties

According to instructions on the document, the Return was to be made in triplicate “after the close of each action, by post, detachment, independent companies, independent battalion, regimental and district or brigade commanders, account for, by and in figure, for all casualties.”

Returns were to be “consolidated b Division, Corps, and Army or Department commanders in figures only, but each adding to its consolidated return the casualties, in figures and by name, of its own staff or detachment at their respective headquarters.”

It instructed, “one copy (of all commands) to be sent to the immediate superior commander, one to be sent direct to the Adjutant General, U.S.A., and one to be retained.” In this way, the triplicate reporting ensured a record at the various levels of command and could be rechecked in cases of confusion, doubt or for legal purposes when settling estates or pension payments.

The company level return contained the basic unit information, location and date of event. A ‘Recapitulation’ listed by numbers the offices and enlisted that were killed, wounded, injured or missing along the total. To the right was a blank page where one hand wrote ‘Troops Engaged, Record of Events, etc.’ to provide additional details.

RETURN OF CASUALTIES

TROOPS ENGAGED, RECORD OF EVENTS, ETC.

Ca. L. 26th Infantry
Blanca Aurora, Samar, P.I.
December 29, 1901

RECAPITULATION	
	Enlisted
Killed	1 Wounded
Wounded	
Injured	
Missing	
Total	

This Return to be made in triplicate after the close of each action, by post, detachment, independent companies, independent battalions, regimental and district or brigade commanders, accounting for, by name and in figures, for all casualties.

This is to be consolidated by Division, Corps, and Army or Department commanders in figures only, but each adding to its consolidated return the casualties, in figures and by name, of its own staff or detachment at their respective headquarters.

One copy (of all commands) to be sent to the immediate superior commander, one to be sent direct to the Adjutant General, U.S.A., and one to be retained.

1-100

STATION, Blanca Aurora, Samar, P.I.
DATE, December 29, 1901

Murray B. Brown
Captain, 2nd Infantry, Commanding Co.

Adjutant General's OFFICE
FEB 14 1902
RULE DIVISION

On the flip side of the document would number each and casualty by name, rank, company, regiment or corps, nature of casualty (i.e., killed, wounded, etc.), details of the "Action or Engagement", specifically date and place and a column for 'Remarks' which usually contains the most detail.

RETURN of Casualties in <i>Co. L, 26th Infantry action at Blanca Aurora, Samar, P.I. December 22, 1901</i>								
NO.	NAMES.	RANK.	CO.	REGIMENT OR CORPS.	NATURE OF CASUALTY.	ACTION OR ENGAGEMENT.		REMARKS.
						PLACE.	DATE.	
1	<i>Arthur W. Chamberlain</i>	<i>Corporal</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>26th Infantry</i>	<i>Killed</i>	<i>Near San Jose, Samar, P.I.</i>	<i>Dec. 22, 1901</i>	<i>By bolomen between Blanca Aurora and San Jose, Samar, P.I. Was doing guard duty on new trail for pack train under 1st Lieut. Walter G. Penfield, 1st Infantry, A.E.C., 6th Separate Brigade and was absent from camp without permission.</i>

Private Arthur W. Chamberlain

For example, we can ascertain one report that Corporal Arthur W. Chamberlain (misspelled as 'Chamberlin') of Company L, 26th Infantry Regiment was killed near San Jose, Samar in the Philippine Islands. On December 22, 1901. This information is what was transmitted in reports to Washington which, in turn, were reported in the newspapers. Nothing more.

The actual details of how he died are in the 'Remarks' column. The remarks state he was killed,

"By bolomen between Blanca Aurora and San Jose, Samar, P.I. Was during guard duty on new trail for pack train under 1st Lieut. Walter G. Penfield, 1st Infantry, A.E.C., 6th Separate Brigade and was absent from camp without permission."

From this information, it can be clearly inferred Corporal Chamberlain was in the performance of guard duty.

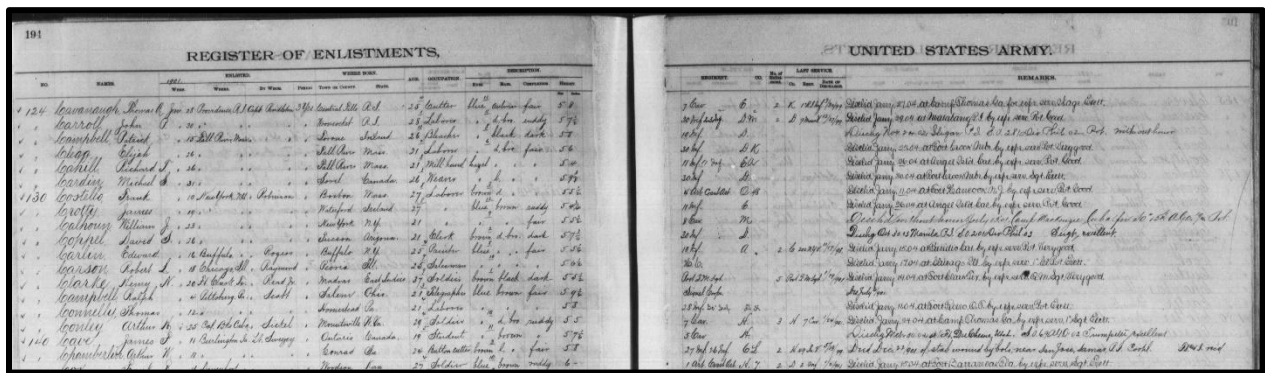
REMARKS.
<i>By bolomen between Blanca Aurora and San Jose, Samar, P.I. Was doing guard duty on new trail for pack train under 1st Lieut. Walter G. Penfield, 1st Infantry, A.E.C., 6th Separate Brigade and was absent from camp without permission.</i>

Was he the Corporal of the Guard responsible for checking posts on the camp perimeter or was he assigned to guard a certain post? As he was “absent from camp without permission”, the report suggests he was outside the established perimeter.

Why was he on the “new trail” for the pack train? Perhaps he stepped off to investigate an observation from his post. Anyone that has performed guard duty knows a realistic scenario is that he likely stepped into the jungle to relieve himself, was ambushed and dragged away before he was killed, and his body left on the trail. Without eyewitness details or letters from people who were there and might have more insight, the details will never be known.

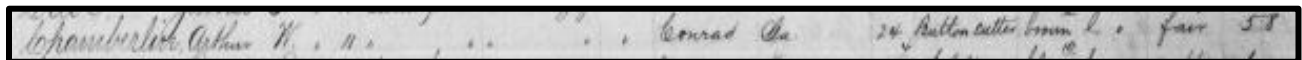
U.S. Army Register of Enlistments

Another source of information on Corporal Chamberlain is the U.S. Army Register of Enlistments. His last name is recorded as “Chamberlin” rather than “Chamberlain”.

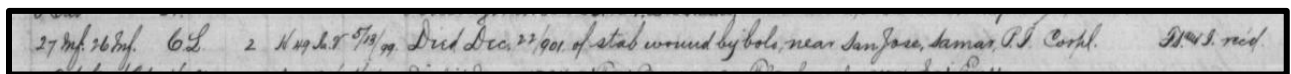


It shows he enlisted on January 11, 1901, in Burlington, Iowa by Lt. Swezey. The record shows Chamberlain was born in Conrad, Iowa. He was then 24 years and 4 months of age so it can be inferred he was born in September or October of 1876. He was a “button cutter” by profession. He stood 5’ 8” inches tall, had brown hair, light brown eyes and fair complexion.

It appears he enlisted for Co. C, 27th Infantry Regiment and was transferred to Co. L, 26th Infantry Regiment. It was his second enlistment, the first being with Co. H, 49th Iowa Volunteers from which he was honorably discharged on May 13, 1899. A newspaper report of the era shows Company H, 49th Iowa Volunteer Infantry was from Marshalltown and did not deploy overseas.¹³



In the remarks section, it states, “Died Dec. 22/1901 of stab wound by bolo, near San Jose, Samar Island, P.I., Corporal. FS. And I. rec’d.” (see below)



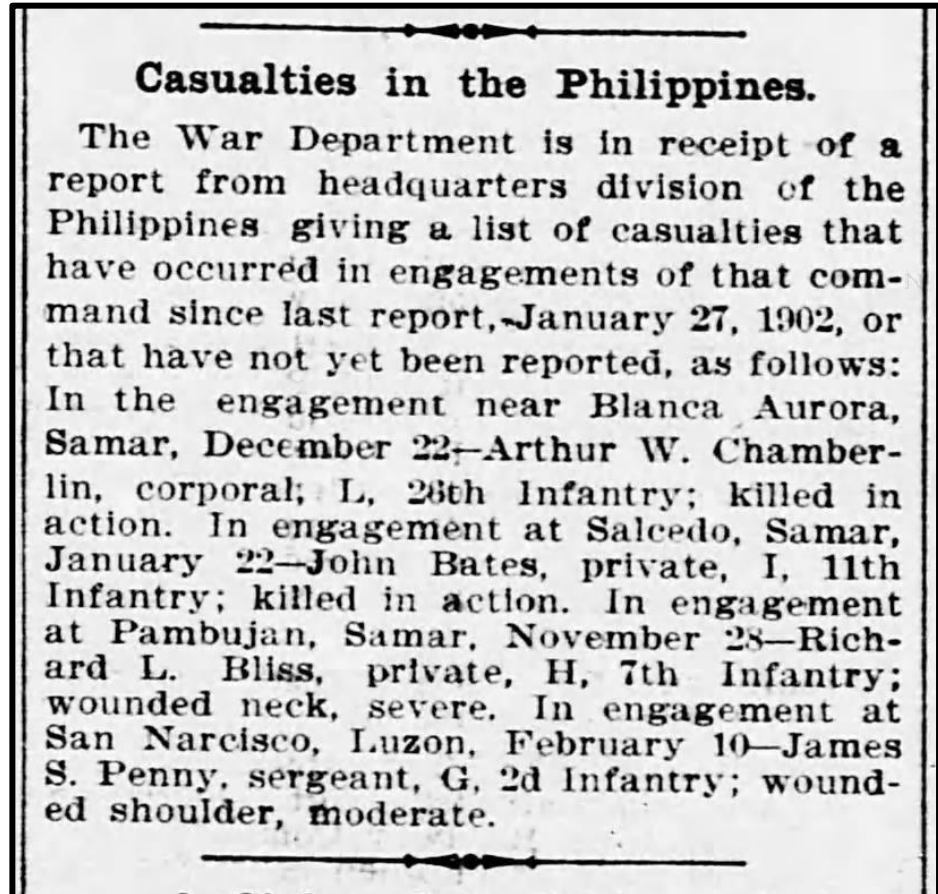
¹³ The (Iowa) Gazette, May 13, 1899, p6, ‘Muster Out Completed’.

Newspaper Reports of Death

A small item in the Washington Evening Star headline ‘Casualties in the Philippines’ reports,

The War Department is in receipt of a report from headquarters division of the Philippines giving a list of casualties that have occurred in engagements of that command since last report. January 27, 1902, or that have not yet been reported, as follows: In the engagement near Blanca Aurora, Samar, December 22 -Arthur W. Chamberlin, Corporal, L, 26th Infantry; killed in action.”¹⁴

A search of various old newspaper venues does not reveal an obituary. A search of Iowa newspapers shows nothing other than accounts of a British Minister named Arthur Chamberlain engaged in a lawsuit against British press and extensive accounts of Britain’s Boer War and its casualty count. It is as if this American boy and his war in the Philippines did not rate as newsworthy.



Genealogical Sources

A search of *Find-A-Grave* shows Arthur W. Chamberlain (‘lain’) was born December 16, 1876, and died on December 22, 1901, at the age of 25.

He was buried in Conrad Cemetery in Conrad, Grundy County, Iowa. Memorial ID 156989445, Based on an 1880 census report, he was the son of John W. and Lucy H. Chamberlain of Marshall County, Iowa. There is no photograph of his grave in Find-A-Grave so it cannot be determined from that source if Chamberlain had a Spanish-American War headstone.

¹⁴ *The (Washington) Evening Star*, April 9, 1902, p2, ‘Casualties in the Philippines’.

Using this information, a search on *Ancestry*'s Public Member Trees shows a photograph of his non-military stone. It notes he was a Corporal in Co. L, 26th U.S. V. Infantry "Killed at San Jose, Samar, P.I." The Ancestry record further shares he was born in Beaman, Grundy County, Iowa.



Remembering Those Killed

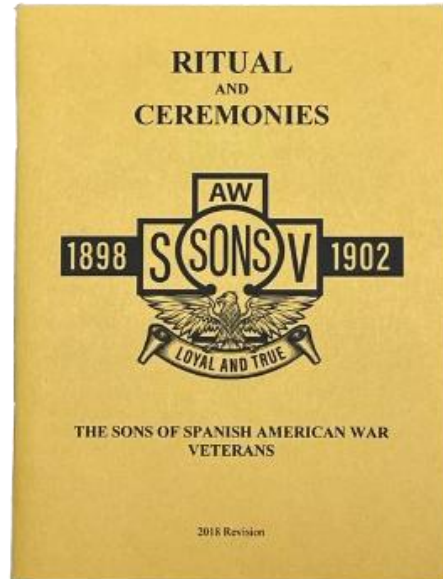
Therein lies the importance of the Sons of Spanish-American War Veterans (SSAWV) and the Daughters of '98. With resident knowledge of the use of genealogical sources, historic newspaper aggregate data bases and access to United States Army unit records to include documents like a unit 'Return of Casualties', organizational members can piece together biographies of the men who fought and died.

Documents that previously could only be accessed by visiting the National Archives and pulling out the files are becoming more accessible online. The days when one had to physically travel to Washington, DC at great expense for access are hopefully ending. The NARA has been quietly working to place much of its holdings online for public access. It's 'Next Gen' Archives search engine is facilitating that. While all the holdings of the Spanish-American War era are not yet loaded, there are some and these provide researchers and family historians 'new access' to documents for research.

As this effort progresses, it will enable the SSAWV and Daughters in their collective efforts to document and memorialize those who served and sacrificed for their country in a forgotten wars. Men like Corporal Arthur W. Chamberlain of Iowa.

Did you lose something?

The SSAWV offers replacement membership certificates for those that have lost them due to moves or fires or perhaps through improper storage leading to damage. Additionally, those needing the current Ritual and Ceremonies manual for Camp or personal use can also obtain these from the Supply Officer.



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Contact our National Supply Officer Charles “Chuck” Hand by e-mail at chuckhand.ssawv175@yahoo.com and indicate the items you wish to purchase. He will respond and calculate your shipping and handling charges, please add \$5.00 for shipping.

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---Spanish-American War Veteran---

The Captain of the ‘Winkie Guard’

Among old Hollywood veterans of the Spanish-American War was the future Captain of the ‘Winkie Guards’ of the Wicked Witch of the West in the 1939 classic ‘The Wizard of Oz.’

Actor and Director J. Lewis Mitchell was a Navy veteran of that war. Born on June 26, 1880, Mitchell served as an Ordnance Seaman who enlisted on March 28, 1898.

His Veterans Administration Index Card shows he was discharged on March 27, 1901. His unit of assignment is not identified.¹⁵

As Captain of the ‘Winkie Guards’, he’s the only one with a speaking role. According to Wikipedia,

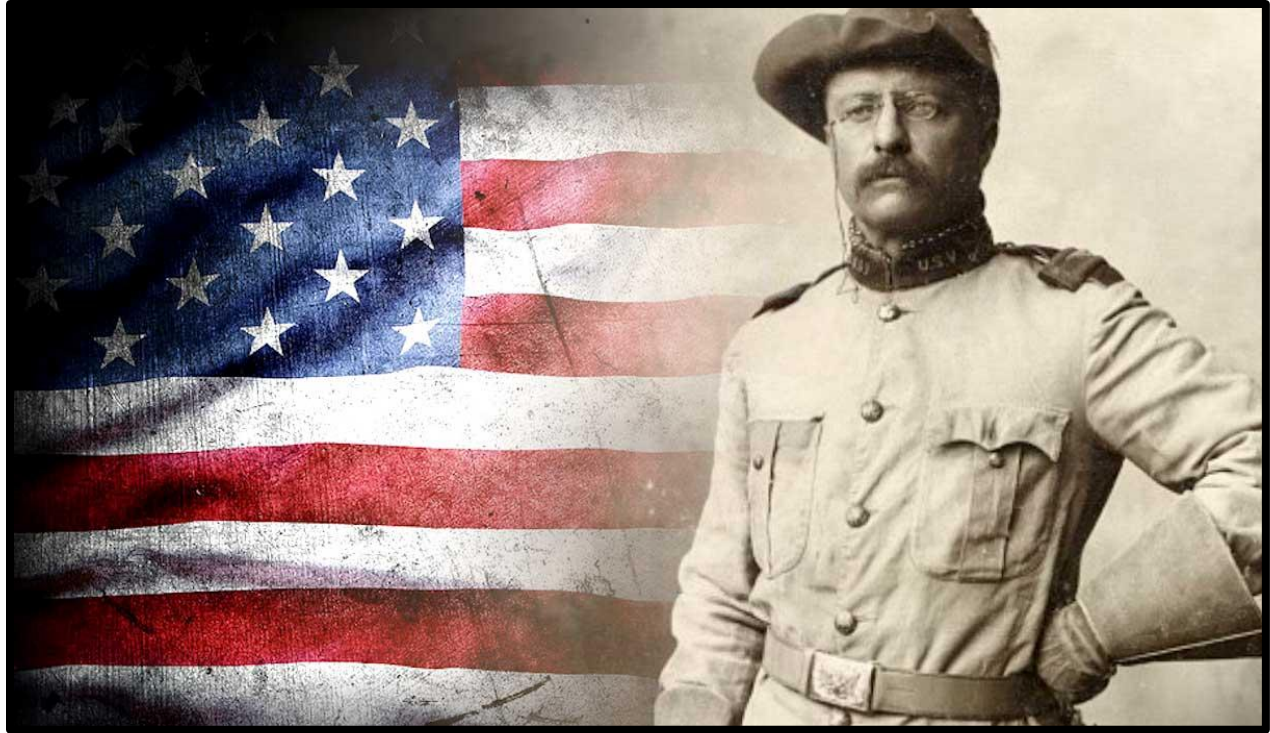
“Although uncredited in *The Wizard of Oz*, he had several lines towards the end of the film, including: *"She's dead. You killed her."* *"Hail to Dorothy! The Wicked Witch is dead!"* and, in response to Dorothy's request for the late witch's broomstick, *"Please! And take it with you!"* “

A stage actor, Mitchell began making silent movies in 1914. He was a ‘working actor’ who was mainly in supporting and uncredited parts.

He died at the age of 76 on August 24, 1956, after making over 175 silent and sound movies.



¹⁵ California Veterans Index VA Card for J. Lewis Mitchell.



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