

GEORGE CLARKE MUSGRAVE

BRITISH BY BIRTH - AMERICAN BY ADOPTION

FOLKESTONE - THE BEGINNINGS

Family Roots

With a rich and diverse past reaching back in time to around 650 AD, the town of Folkestone probably began as a small settlement of fisherman living along the shore. A Market Charter was granted in 1215 and over the next two hundred years or so, the town flourished to become an important fishing, farming and trading centre. Accompanying its continuing commercial growth through the second half of the 19th century, Folkestone also enjoyed an extensive building programme providing the community with homes, schools, churches, public buildings, a theatre and a number of grand hotels. Enterprise, affluence and refinement were the watchwords of the Folkestone into which I was born and, here, it is appropriate to review some of the important events that influenced the first twenty years or so of my life in the town where my family roots were established.

The Musgraves in Folkestone

In the early 1800s a harbour and a pier for commercial shipping were built. These facilities opened up increased access and trade opportunities but it was the coming of the railways in 1843 that proved to be the main agent of change. With the railway came the tourist trade, and these two industries contributed to Folkestone's prosperity, creating the ideal environment for astute tradesman to invest in new businesses and meet the demands of a growing population. One such enterprise was that created by my father, Joseph John Musgrave who, with commendable forethought, identified the westward expansion of the town and acquired a number of ideally located premises in High Street and in Sandgate Road for his drapery, millinery and mantle making business. By the 1870s the name of Musgrave had become inextricably linked with Folkestone's Drapery and Fashion industry, which was soon to become a cornerstone of the town's success.

Early Years

By any reasonable measure, my early years in Folkestone should have been amongst the happiest of my life. My parents were hard-working and successful and the comfortable lifestyle that my family enjoyed was a credit to their industry - but there was always something missing. My childhood memories are a little sparse but I do recall that on my thirteenth birthday, my father called me to his study and told me that he now considered me sufficiently mature to take a formal position as an assistant in the family Drapery business. Starting a career in this way was a common route to adulthood for many of my age, so this announcement came as no great surprise. In truth, though, this imposed formalisation of my future at such an early stage of my life filled me with what I can only describe as a mixture of resentment and trepidation. I had no real idea of what I wanted to do but I knew that I was not destined to be a Draper's Assistant. In the event, however, family loyalties, respect for my father and a lack of other options kept me in place for the next three years or so - but this was a place made tenable only because I could escape to the life that I really longed for through a rolling kaleidoscope of pictures that I was able to paint in my mind.

The Army

My pictures grew and took form from my insatiable scouring of the London Illustrated News, a journal delivered to my father each week by courier. He said that this should be read by all established and aspiring businessmen because it covered the world's political, social and domestic issues better than any other. For me, though, it was the stories of heroes and battles and glorious victories; it was the mystery of far-off exotic lands; it was Empire; it was Britain; it was the Army. I had not a shred of doubt that this was where I belonged but, still short of the minimum age for full enlistment, my only other option was to join the ranks of the volunteer reserve and to proudly play the role of soldier. It took many family debates, much reasoned argument and a great deal of obstinacy on my part before I eventually wore down my parents' resistance. To say I had their blessing would be something of an exaggeration but, at least, there was no great family rift when I left home for Woolwich Barracks and signed as a gunner in No. 2 Field Battery, Royal Artillery. Just six months later, though, it was cruelly, catastrophically over. What had started as a simple enough training exercise for the day of 26th April 1894 turned dramatically from order to chaos with a wildly spooked horse - a runaway gun carriage - and my leg shattered from ankle to thigh. I have since felt the vicious heat of bullet wounds, the debilitating spasms of dysentery and the shivering

ravages of yellow fever. I have known my share of pain - but none so intense as the shattering of my dreams on that fateful day. Over many weeks of recuperation and physiotherapy in the military hospital at Aldershot, the medical staff worked with me and did everything they could to bring me back to full fitness, but to no avail. The subsequent Court of Inquiry took only a few miserable minutes to find me unfit for further service and to decree a medical discharge. Finished. Just a year and 47 days after I believed that my future had opened up in front of me, bitter chance had closed the circle and I was once again in Folkestone.

An Awakening

Despite the tribulations of this sorry year, I still held an unshakeable certainty in the facts that circumstances always change and that a man is the maker of his own destiny. Both of these adages of life were brought into a sharp focus for me as I was woken by the morning sun filtering through the window of my room on 1st May 1895, the day of my 21st birthday. I lay there for some moments, with the dark clouds that had fogged my thoughts for months rapidly clearing to be replaced by a shockingly simple and obvious idea. If I could not serve my country, fight the battles and travel the world as a soldier - then I would walk in the footsteps and write the stories of those who did. It was as though one of my pictures had become a blueprint for action and with this sitting clear and sharp in my mind, it took me less than an hour to dress and walk to Radnor Park where I boarded the train to St Pancras. By 2 o'clock I was in the foyer of the Illustrated London News offices and at six, just before the doors were locked for the day, the editor, Clement King Shorter, agreed to see me. I was not at all sure what sort of response I would receive to my announcement that I was seeking a commission as a foreign correspondent. His two subsequent questions, though, were similarly brief and to the point. He wanted to know only whether I was free to travel and whether I could write. My answer of "Yes" to both was followed by an equally straightforward instruction to submit samples of my work for review. And that was that. Interview over. I did not have my commission but, for me - buoyed with my re-discovered confidence, the process was now underway and it was merely a matter of time.

To Liverpool

It was now in my hands and all that I had to do was demonstrate that my writing was up to the standard required by the Illustrated London News. I was reasonably comfortable with the mechanics of putting pen to paper but my first pieces were something of a challenge because I had no idea

what to write about. I reasoned, though, that with sixteen full size pages to fill each week, quantity of material would be an editorial factor, so I wrote about everything that, to me, seemed even remotely interesting. Each week my packages to London became bigger and heavier, crammed with my local news reports, social sketches of the notaries, the businessmen and the people of Folkestone and comparative essays of five hundred or so words in which I tried to crystallise opposing views on the political and military matters of the day. Each week I received a formal acknowledgement for my submission but not a word of criticism, encouragement or rejection. I was beginning to wonder whether I should enquire about what the next stage would be - but then the letter arrived. Together with a Safe Passage Passport that I had to sign and have witnessed and a money order for £15 to cover the fare, the instructions were clear. In a somewhat terse, almost shorthand, tone (with which I would soon become familiar), I was told that I had just eleven days to prepare and travel to Liverpool, where I was to report to Elder, Dempster & Co. of 14 Castle Street to confirm my passage on the SS Loanda, sailing for West Africa on 30th November. I was also informed that, apart from the funds for the fare to Cape Coast, I was required to meet all other expenses and that I would receive payment for articles only if they were published. Onerous terms, some might say, thrust unkindly upon a novice correspondent - but, even upon reading the letter through for perhaps the fifth or sixth time, such trivialities were of no consequence to me. This was my ticket and I grasped it eagerly - a week later, I was in Liverpool.



TO KUMASSI

From Liverpool to Cape Coast

During the voyage from Liverpool in late November I learned much about the traditions and the customs of the natives that we would soon be meeting; my most abiding memory being that of the Egugu, a secret society whose members use some imaginary charm or ju-ju, in the preparation of which, the heart of a virgin, plucked from the body of a living victim, is indispensable. Happily, now, this horrible rite is seldom, if ever, celebrated, though it is affirmed that girls are still sacrificed occasionally in the depths of the forest, the breast being cut off a living virgin, and the heart plucked out while still pulsating and throbbing in its last throes. With visions such as this burning deep in my mind, it was with some trepidation and excitement that, in the late afternoon of December 18th, after passing

the white walls of the town perched on high ground, the ramparts of Cape Coast Castle became plainly visible. At six o'clock we dropped anchor about three-quarters of a mile from the shore and, before us, the town of Cape Coast, lit up by the last rays of the setting sun, made a scene of striking grandeur. Built on a solid rock is the castle, consisting of battlements and turrets, and with the main building and tower in the centre, while a blue sea rolls in great waves, which rise in crested walls of water as they break on the rock at the base. As the sun set in all its tropical splendour, throwing a crimson tint over the whole, the most prosaic could not fail to be struck with the rare and romantic beauty of the scene that would enrapture an artist and make a spring poet rave.

Forest and Jungle to the Prah

On the road at last from Cape Coast towards Kumassi. For the first few miles after clearing the bazaar of Cape Coast Castle, the road, a hard gravel path, ran through a labyrinth of small bush covered hills until, about fifteen miles from the coast the bush gradually grew in height and density, with the huge bare shafts of the cotton trees towering here and there among the palms, giant ferns, and smaller trees that formed the general mass of foliage. Then we gradually moved into thick forest terrain, from which we would not again emerge till our campaign was over. The big yellow river Prah slowly slithered along between its forest-clad banks, and as we arrived at Prahsu, the rumours there were of encounters between our scouts and those of the enemy, and of blood drawn on both sides. We were told that King Prempeh laughs in scorn at the proposal that he shall come down to meet the Governor in conference. "The King of the Ashantis is the lord of heaven and of earth," is an established Ashanti belief on which the king and his captains are said to be ready to act. Today, too, we heard that the Ashanti plan of campaign is to draw in our force, and then to cut into it at the rear. At any rate, they seem inclined to fight. That they will do so is the great hope of those who toil through the long hot hours in this steaming fetid atmosphere; and one can not easily grudge them the feeling that our side will be victorious.

Arrival at Kumassi

Kumassi at last! The proud and dreaded capital of Ashanti! Major Baden Powell's force had worked its way by different paths through the bush, capturing many armed Ashanti spies on the way. The main road into the town was narrow but fairly good and led through a dense patch of high jungle grass, fringed with medicine heaps. There were also many graves strewn with fetish images, and rotting vultures tied by the neck to the head

posts. Shortly after our arrival, King Prempeh, with his chiefs and hundreds of followers, was seen advancing and when he was eventually seated on his throne, or raised dais, the palaver began with a weird dance of executioners and dwarfs round the throne. Three dancers in long flowing robes twirled and leaped in a mazy serpentine fling, till they dropped thoroughly exhausted, to be followed by others. The chief executioner also gave a solo dance, accompanied by the most diabolical leers and suggestive gestures, as he furiously brandished his huge beheading knife, accompanying each wild flourish with a series of blood curdling whoops and yells. Prempeh himself then approached and a more abject picture of pusillanimity could never be painted than of that despot as he passed, cringing and trembling, down the line. He afterwards advanced and shook hands with Sir Francis Scott who addressed a few dismissive words to him through the interpreter, informing him that Governor Maxwell would arrive the next day and that Prempeh must make his submission to him in native Custom. The palaver over, a start was made for the Palace, and the weird appearance of that barbaric state procession by torchlight, baffles description. The musicians marched first, some of the enormous drums being carried between four slaves and beaten by drummers in rear. Hundreds of torches were lit, while the crowd of nobles, courtiers, captains, citizens, and slaves, went mad with transports of joy, excitement, and rum. The purport of all this enthusiasm was echoed in their cry: "Prempeh! Prempeh! Your fetish has proved too strong for the white man! No power on earth can prevail against thee!" Little did they realise what was to follow.

The Submission of Prempeh

The King had been told to appear at eight o'clock, but after a weary wait, it seemed that Prempeh did not mean to come, so Captain Stewart and the interpreter went to tell him he must come at once, or he would take him by force. After a little further delay the King entered the compound and sat facing Governor Maxwell, Sir Francis Scott, and Colonel Kempster. The Governor said that no article of our last treaty with Ashanti had been kept; they had made no attempt to pay the war indemnity, and it was still owing. However, the British Government had no wish to depose Prempeh if he would agree to the following conditions: He must make his submission in native fashion; and pay an indemnity of 50,000 ounces of gold dust. Prempeh hesitated. It was a terrible blow to the prestige of that haughty despot, to whom "all the princes of the earth bowed down," to thus humiliate himself in the presence of those white men and his own people. He looked sheepish, toying with his fetish ornaments, and ready

to cry with mortification, but then, quietly slipping off his sandals, the King arose, removed his circlet, and, with the Queen Mother at his side, reluctantly walked over to prostrate himself before the Governor, and embrace his feet. A perfect hush fell on the assembled multitude, and even the irrepressible natives were silenced as the King and his royal mother knelt, and tendered their submission; then rose to their feet, thoroughly humiliated and confounded, and returned to their people. Prempeh collected himself, and again rose, exclaiming in a clear voice, "I now claim the protection of the Queen of England". The Governor reminded him that only one of the conditions had been fulfilled and he was now ready to receive the indemnity which had been promised. Prempeh, with a deprecatory gesture, said he would pay in time, to which the Governor rejoined: "On that basis, the King and his retinue will be taken as prisoners to the Coast. Had a thunderbolt burst in their midst, the Ashantis could not have been more amazed. Consternation was depicted on every countenance, and all sat transfixed for a moment, then leaping to their feet, the chiefs begged that Prempeh should not be taken from them; but the denouement was startling and complete.

The Killing Fields of Kumassi

One of the most notorious places in Kumassi was the famous Fetish Grove called Samanpon, or spirit house. In this grove the decapitated bodies were thrown after sacrifice. Kumassi means literally "the place of bloody death," and well its name described it. This horrible Golgotha is piled with the remains of hundreds of miserable creatures, executed simply to please the Ashanti rulers' insatiable lust for human blood. Huge cotton trees had their buttresses piled with bones and skulls; human remains were littered about in every direction, while the whole of that terrible place reeked with pestilential odours. Every step I took in that rank grass revealed hidden human bones mouldering there, while fat, contented-looking vultures, battered and gorged with human carrion, swarmed the trees above in hundreds. In some places the foundations of the old palace were still to be seen. The buildings stood in a large enclosure, surrounded by a fence of tall bamboo, and containing a fetish grove and private place of execution for any person it was thought expedient to decapitate on the quiet. It was here that Prempeh is said to have caused a public execution of four hundred young virgins, their blood being used for the stucco on the Palace walls. Even if the numbers are exaggerated, the information is probably true in the main, as virgin's blood is supposed to contain very sacred properties, and much of the Juju or fetish medicine of the West

Africans must be obtained from different parts of a young girl immediately after slaughter.

Return and Embarkation

After Prempeh's capture, the immense fetish trees were blown up one after another, and the sacred houses and temples set on fire, or razed to the ground. A cry of despair went up from the miserable creatures watching from the surrounding forest. "Our fetish is gone and our gods have deserted us!" In a few hours they had a practical lesson on the fallacy of fetishism that years of patient missionary labour could not have taught them. The day before, they would have declared that no power on earth could prevail against the gods of Ashanti; but when they saw Prempeh, the natural head of fetish, forced to humble himself and afterwards be taken prisoner, when the sacred houses and blood-washed trees, the very abode of the spirits, were destroyed by the white man's powder, and still the gods availed them nothing, their faith was shaken. It was a trial of orthodoxy that even the negro mind could not stand. Ashanti had stood as the great barrier to the development of our West African Colony, and the Expedition had been a brilliant success in fully accomplishing its object. While in Kumassi, however, the number of our sick swelled to rather an alarming extent, and the Medical Officers anxiously looked forward to the day the mud of Ashanti should be shaken off. Every white man, paradoxical as it may seem, was a sickly yellow, for the malaria was upon all in a slight or severe form. At last, we made tracks from this hateful place to Cape Coast; and on February 8th, the sick, numbering nearly 250 officers and men, from the hospital were eventually carried to surf boats and swung on board the "Coromandel." The Headquarters staff then embarked, and quietly the Expeditionary Force left for Old England, having brought to a close the most peaceful, but also the most successful and best managed campaign that has ever graced the annals of English History.



THE CUBAN CRISIS

Arrival in Cuba

The Cuban War of Independence had been ravaging the country for more than two years when I first reached the island in late January 1897 aboard a schooner that I had commissioned from a small bay in the Florida Keys. The winter campaign of 1896 was just closing and Antonia Maceo had been killed but a few days previously. I must confess that I was initially a

warm sympathiser with Spain but my perceptions changed when I began to understand the patriotic struggles of the Cubans, and to witness the iniquities practised upon these gentle people by the impulsive Spanish occupation. I was sent to Cuba with a dual commission from an English newspaper and an American journal, and for two years, I lived and served with the revolutionaries, learned of their cause and experienced their suffering. I met and worked with the insurgent Government of General Garcia and was honoured to be appointed as a Captain on his staff, which added a degree of legitimacy to my clandestine duties of carrying despatches back and to across the lines from the Cubans to the Americans in Havana.

The Rescue of Evangelina Cisneros

The events that culminated in the rescue of Evangelina Cosio y Cisneros go to make up a story little less than wonderful. She was only eighteen years old, cultured, talented and beautiful and the cruel fate that made her case stand out among so many wrongs was that she was being persecuted, not for any part she had taken in rebellion against Spain, but for resisting the insulting advances of a savage Spanish officer whose brutality had brought him the well-earned disgrace of being known across the world as "that beast in uniform". It was he who held the life and liberty of Evangelina's father in his hands, and demanded of her the sacrifice of all a true woman holds dear as the price of her father's safety. Atrocities in Cuba had come to be the most commonplace of news. Every mail from the island brought tidings of murders, burnings and other outrages. Even when the victims were women, so accustomed had the world grown to such tales of horror, that little comment was occasioned. At intervals for a period of over a year through the Cuban news ran the story of one Cuban girl, who for alleged complicity in an uprising in the Isle of Pines had been cast into the foul Recojidas prison for abandoned women in Havana. Evangelina's story was broken to the world by the New York Journal in August 1897 and widely covered by the media over the next few months. She was described as "young, beautiful, cultured and guilty of no crime save that of having in her veins the best blood in Cuba". Her case created international outrage and there were calls from all corners of the world for her release but, embroiled in their battle with the Cuban insurgents, Spain ignored these calls. From the heart of Havana, though, Eugene Bryson, who had first broken the story, together with William McDonald and myself were planning her rescue. We were joined by Karl Decker, a Journal reporter sent to Cuba with a direct brief from Randolph Hearst to do whatever necessary to bring Miss Cisneros back to America. Her dramatic

rescue was effected in the early hours of October 5th and Evangelina arrived in New York on October 13th. Two days later she filed her application for US naturalisation and published in the Journal a Letter to America, which she handed personally to President McKinley.

Arrested, Imprisoned, Deported

I was at Garcia's camp at daybreak on February 17th 1898 and was instructed to carry urgent despatches to the Americans in Santiago City. Garcia and his staff were heavily engaged in a guerrilla war in the countryside and needed assistance. After a tortuous and dangerous journey I reached Santiago where I heard the news that the USS Maine had been blown up in Havana harbour and realised that war between Spain and American was now imminent. It was impossible to return across country to rejoin Garcia and, along with all other foreigners, I attempted to reach Havana to escape from the Island with other correspondents, including Karl Decker. On March 31st, though, I was arrested by the Spanish and imprisoned as a spy. My arrest was widely reported in the British and American press and taken up by many notable figures including Lord Salisbury. The British government was told that I had been expelled from Cuba but, in fact, still a prisoner, I was taken to Spain on the SS Buenos Aries, landing at Cadiz on April 15th. Under continued pressure from the British Government, I was released on April 19th, the day before war was officially declared. The charges of spying against me could not be sustained and were eventually dropped. I was then deported and ordered not to return to Cuba on pain of death. Accompanied by two somewhat disinterested police guards I was taken to Madrid, then crossed the French border at Irun, from where I journeyed alone on to Boulogne, crossed the channel to Folkestone and boarded the first available ship back to New York.

The Spanish-American War

I arrived in Washington on May 1st and immediately volunteered to re-enter Cuba on secret service with the 5th Army Corps, in Tampa, Florida. I was assigned a position with Theodore Roosevelt and members of the First United States Volunteer Cavalry, better known as the Rough Riders, who were bivouacked in The Tampa Bay Hotel, before shipping out for Cuba. After some political confusion, the US force embarked on June 13th and reached Cuba on June 22nd, landing first at Jaragua and moving on to Siboney. Still some distance from their goal of Santiago, the US forces engaged the Spanish in the first battle of the war at Guasmis where, under the Roosevelt's command, the US forces soon established their position

but then, unprepared, ill-equipped and under resourced for the battles in front of them, they came to a halt in the hills surrounding the town. The full embarkation, advance and supply operations lasted a further six days until, on July 1st, after a vicious day-long battle, the US forces took control of San Juan Hill, which gave them a base directly overlooking Santiago. Two weeks of siege followed until the Spanish surrendered the city on July 17th. I was surprised and honoured to be one of only a handful of war correspondents allowed to witness the surrender.

A Difficult Departure

As the Spaniards withdrew and the insurgents disbanded, I travelled through the districts they evacuated. Space forbids the horrible details, but suffice it to say that I realised, as never before, how the Cuban male population had disappeared during the war. The Cubans are often criticised as a mongrel race but, today, the best blood in the Island is soaked in the soil; the backbone of the Island, the white farming class, has disappeared; Cuban women are nursing the offspring they have been forced to bear to their hated oppressors and thousands of the people are so reduced that they can scarcely crawl. After the city had fallen, our sick list increased enormously. Nostalgia, assured by tedious inaction following strenuous exertion, is invariably augmented by fever and on July 24th there were 4122 soldiers on the sick list in Cuba. I joined this sorry number following an impromptu brawl with a Spanish colonel in the suburb village of Matanzas. I was forced into this fight by the local commandante, Captain Carchano and while my opponent was lightly wounded in the leg, I received a musket ball in the chest, which was extracted by a Spanish surgeon who showed me much kindness. In late August I left Cuba with the departing US Military and returned to New York where I spent some time recovering from my fever and wounds, being nursed by Mary Judson Lamson, a wonderful Red Cross volunteer.



RETURN TO AMERICA

Lies and Misconceptions

Despite the pleasures of my recuperation under the Red Cross and the tender ministrations of my lovely volunteer nurse, Mary, I knew that I had to leave my hospital bed and rally again to the cry else all that had been achieved in Cuban fields might be for nought. My book "Under Two Flags

in Cuba" was to have been published in the spring of 1898; but the manuscript, together with three hundred photographs illustrative of Weyler's regime in Cuba, and some historical letters that had passed between the Captain-General and Premier Canovas, were seized in Havana with my effects when I was deported to Spain at the beginning of the war. Thus the circulation of that work was curtailed and now, during my convalescence from a prolonged attack of fever contracted in the campaign, and a chest wound from the pistol of an incensed Spanish officer, I must prepare a new work. Yet even as I write, a number of books on Cuba are being issued from the pens of writers who have never set foot on Cuban soil. In each of these the primary cause of the war is omitted, and frequent criticism of the Cubans, based entirely on misconception, is raising doubts of the justification of American intervention in the Island. With the State elections now just a few short weeks away, these false and sycophantic accounts are being taken up as the clarion call of the Democrats, in their pandering to the post-war, anti-imperialist sway of public opinion.

From Cuba to Campaigning

Returning from Cuba as a war hero, my friend and mentor, Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt, now has the Republican nomination for State Governor of New York. An air of over-confidence has somewhat weakened the Republican resolve, though, and Roosevelt is under pressure from The Democrats, headed by Richard Croker who has backed the nomination of Augustus Van Wyck, brother of Robert, the incumbent puppet Mayor of the consolidated City of New York. It is, of course, well known that, as head of Tammany Hall, Croker receives bribe money from the owners of brothels, saloons and illegal gambling dens; and that within Robert Van Wyck's administration, he completely dominates the government of the city. Even though the "New York Times" has described the Van Wyck administration as one mired in "black ooze and slime", there is much to be done if Roosevelt is to take his rightful position as Governor. So this time, it was at the ballot rather than the battle that we had to be victorious, and it was with some urgency that I sent a note by courier to Jacob Riis of the New York Sun, volunteering my services to Roosevelt's campaign. By return, I received an invitation to a meeting with the "lieutenants"; Timothy Woodruff, Sereno Payne, David Healey, Frank Smith and Buck Rogers, who had pulled me to safety from the sights of a Spanish sniper at San Juan Hill. It was soon decided that under the banner cry of "No Croker Domination", the real record of the war, and of Roosevelt's own heroic and defining action as leader of the Rough Riders, must be told. My role was

to deliver as vividly as I was able, a series of free public lectures laying out in graphic fashion the facts and the truths about the war. Other orators would then pick up the themes of patriotism and support for the national administration, with a special emphasis on the fact that only those men with clear and assured records of action should be considered for office. With venues booked, details circulated to every New York newspaper, and public meetings scheduled for every night through October and up to the day of the elections, support for Roosevelt quickly picked up. Whether or not my lectures helped the cause will never be known; nor does it matter. The elections were held on November 8th. with results that not even the most optimistic could have foretold. Roosevelt was duly elected Mayor, but for the first time in history, the Republican ticket also carried every one of the seven posts in the New York State cabinet office - the ideal platform for "Teddy's" subsequent campaign for the White House.

1899 - a Turbulent Year

Following Roosevelt's victory in the 1898 State elections, his next target was to run for Vice-President on the Republican ticket with McKinley and, for this campaign, he invited me to become a permanent member of his team. "Winning the fight for the White House, " he said, "will be as tough as the fighting at San Juan Hill, and I want you to be part of it". I was proud to accept his offer, even though this meant more time travelling the lecture circuit and more time away from Mary. Through the spring and early summer, I was also busy with the re-writing and updating of my book which is now to be published as "Under Three Flags in Cuba". 1899 was a year of turmoil in New York and tensions were also escalating on the world stage. In Britain, Lord Salisbury's political manoeuvrings and negotiations on the issues of the rights of the uitlanders, control of the gold mining industry, and the British desire to incorporate the Transvaal and the Orange Free State into a federation under British control, were causing chaos within the South African Republic. The Boers recognised that this would eventually result in the loss of ethnic Boer control and, under a blatant display of filibustering, they ensured that the June 1899 negotiations in Bloemfontein failed. In response, Salisbury's Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, formally demanded full rights and representation for every uitlander residing in the Transvaal. This left the Boer with no options and it could now be only a matter of time before war with the British was declared.

October - a Turbulent Month

1899 drew towards its turbulent conclusion during the first few days of October. My book was published on the 1st; and on the 3rd, I received a telegram from the editor of "Black and White Review", informing me that passage to South Africa was booked for me on the SS Assaye, leaving in two days' time. Salisbury's force of 10,000 extra troops landed in Capetown on the 4th, and war with the Boer was now imminent. On top of all this, my head was in even more of a spin because I had fallen hopelessly in love with Mary, my "ministering angel." I could not imagine life without her so, as I was leaving to join my ship on the 5th, I plucked up the courage to propose, and left a much happier man when she accepted.



TO WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

War with the Boer

I have left America and I am now making my way to South Africa where, with luck and a fair wind, I should arrive with the British by mid-month. It is too early, at this date, to record the history of the war that is now inevitable: we live in an age, however, when interest is ephemeral, and, unless one is content to write for reputation alone, a work must be published during the height of public interest to command relevance. Thanks to electricity and newspaper enterprise, the author who has gathered his material in the field, at the risk of life and health, and at personal expenditure of energy and money, is now able to erect very readable works around the slender fabric of cables and brief despatches.

Towards a Library of Truth

As with each of the wars that I have known, the inevitable press falsehoods, distortions and exaggerations are now masquerading as the truth. From their cosy armchairs and offices in London and New York, the architects of our history are already penning the works that will become the school-books for our children. The self-important politicians and entrepreneurs are already forming the versions of reality that will best suit their corporate interests. Now, more than ever before, in this time of increasingly rapid and ever more efficient communications, it falls upon the writers who have travelled to the field, witnessed the battles and felt the pain of those who are dying, to build their library of truth.

Turning the Tide of War

In every war there comes a critical period when the tide turns. This is triggered sometimes by the outcome of a particular battle; sometimes by the unknowing and often uncaring intervention of ignorant politicians; sometimes by the life and death decisions of generals. In our conflict with the Boer, this period came early, just two months from the outset, and was primarily characterised by the arrival of General Sir Redvers Buller as supreme commander. His early successes in the field were soon followed by three crushing defeats, with many hundreds of men lost, killed and captured. This led to Buller's ultimate subordination and demotion but it was his leadership, battle-skills and bravery in the face of these adversities and the way in which he was able to lift the minds of his men that put us back on the path to victory.

A Force to Defeat the Boer

It is too simple and too quick a judgement to cast blame and recrimination for the crushing losses of an entire army on to the shoulders of one man; particularly when that man is the very one that can lift his men from defeat to victory. The British government, though, took the defeats at Stormberg, Magersfontein and Colenso badly and, with Kimberley, Mafeking and Ladysmith still under siege, saw this as the nadir of General Buller's career, sending in Lord Roberts as his replacement, together with yet more troops amounting to some 180000 men with further reinforcements being sought. It is widely reputed that this will be the largest force Britain has ever sent overseas and a number of observers are reporting that, regardless of who is Commander-in Chief, this must be the force that finally defeats the Boer.

Kimberley and Ladysmith Relieved - Majuba Day is revenged

Whether it was the crushing defeats of January that changed the course of the war will, perhaps, never be known. What is certain, though, is that in February every man shared a morale so high that it brought an angel to every shoulder, and a confidence so great that it added the worth of an extra battalion to every conflict. Lord Roberts was rampant in the Orange Free State; General Buller strode the Natal as a giant. In just two weeks of brilliantly planned and heroically fought actions, the siege of Kimberley is broken; Cronje surrenders at Paadeberg; the Tugela Hills are won; Ladysmith is relieved and Botha's army is fleeing to the north. The happy coincidence that these successes synchronised on February 27th with the anniversary of Majuba Hill, wiping out a dishonour of nineteen years' standing felt throughout the British Army, will doubtless feature in the

newspapers of the day more highly than the catalogue of courageous leadership and individual heroism that made them possible.



TO PEKING

The Threat from the Boxers

We had spent a glorious fortnight meandering the lanes and byways of Northern Ireland, and the Tontine Hotel in Glasgow was to be the starting point for the second chapter of our honeymoon. It was far too early for certainty, of course, but I was sure that I had glimpsed a mother-to-be glint in Mary's eye. Our few short weeks of married life had been blissful; but little did I know how quickly this was to change. I took the telegram handed to me by the bell-boy at the reception desk; and when I saw the signatory "Ochs", I knew at once the importance of this message. The owner of the New York Times had deemed this matter of sufficient urgency to contact me directly and instruct me to travel with the utmost haste to China. I had been keeping a journalist's eye on the developing situation, and I was aware of the growing threat from the Boxers, and that the Legations in Peking were in imminent danger of being overrun. I was familiar with the general concerns, but little of specific note had appeared in the British press; and in Ireland it had proved difficult to find news from America. The bell-boy was able to find a two-week old copy of the New York Times and from the words of the Peking Correspondent, it was clear that the situation was, in fact, critical and that I must leave immediately.

The Correspondent at Work

With little but rumours of murder and slaughter to inform us, it was with a terrible sense of foreboding that we arrived at Tientsin. I had barely settled in to my billet when a thundering rattle of my door introduced Bennet Burleigh. It was only a matter of hours since we had disembarked from the USS Solace together but now, almost incoherent with his urgency, I could not recall ever seeing such a dramatic change in any man in so short a time. He insisted that I accompany him immediately to meet the correspondent of the Shanghai Mercury who, Burleigh shouted, ".. knows what has happened". We sprinted across the harbour square to the north wall of the old city, now the base for a swarthy, heavily armed squad of Russian troops. Burleigh's contact was there, squatting against the wall, surrounded by an ugly, threatening crowd driven by what I could only describe as a mix of blood-lust, hatred and terror in their wild-eyed raging.

His camera was focussed on three bloodied bodies that lay at his feet; and it seemed that his journalistic integrity had rendered him completely oblivious to the life-threatening mob around him. Burleigh snatched up his camera while I dragged him to his feet; and we made off down the crumbling steps. Some spirit must have been watching over us because, instead of giving chase as we feared, the mob stayed atop the wall. We raced around the base of the wall, desperately searching for some cover or hiding place; only to hurtle almost headlong into the backs of another crowd, so close that we instantly saw the executioner's blade at the start of its downswing and the collapse of the headless body as it crumpled to the blood-strewn earth. I have witnessed killings in other wars, just as cruel and just as barbarous, but I have never before experienced such revulsion or such terror as on this evil day, in this evil place.

From Tientsin to Peking

The alliance expedition force for Peking numbered some 18,600 men, including 2,500 Americans of the 9th and 14th Infantry regiments, to which force I was assigned. We moved out from the city of Tientsin during the afternoon and night of 4th August. We had a march of 84 miles ahead of us, in difficult country heavily invested by the Boxer rebel, with our final advance on Peking set for 14th August. The plan agreed was that all the armies would be concentrated on the advance line held by the Japanese and that each of the four main national armies would assault a different gate. The Russians were assigned the most northerly gate, the Dongzhi; the Japanese had the next gate south, the Chaoyang; the Americans, the Dongbien; and the British the most southern, the Guangqui. To set the record for those who consider such exactitude important, although General Chaffee's force actually entered the city before any other, it was British troops that arrived first inside the Legation Quarter. First or second into the city meant nothing, though, as we were all greeted by a cheering throng of the besieged foreigners, all decked out in their finery; all wishing to hug us and shake our hands. Inexplicably, however, even though the arrival of the relief force should have restored order and a sense of normality, it seemed as if chaos, confusion and rumour were the orders of the day.

Peking - the Aftermath

It was a misery to walk the city and see its desolation. Peking had twice been looted before, by the Boxers, then by the Imperial soldiers, and now it was being ravaged again by the allies. At each fresh step in this depressing history, the inhabitants had fled to places where they hoped to

find greater peace and safety. Now the place was a ruin, the restoration of which, if even possible, could only be accomplished over a long period of time. The arrival of the alliance forces soon turned into an orgy of looting and violence; but little did I realise that the relief of Peking was about to become a bloodbath of human atrocity in which soldiers, civilians, diplomats, missionaries, and journalists all participated. Within hours, it seemed as though the sense of community that had been succour to the besieged just days earlier, had disappeared and been replaced by a raw, almost animalistic survival instinct. Alongside the hundreds already engaged in their brazen looting of property and person, many of the foreigners packing up and preparing to leave the Legations with their possessions, now began gathering in small parties, arming themselves and rampaging out in search of anything valuable that they could find. Some were bent on robbery and some on revenge, while others sought satisfaction of even baser impulses. Thus, over the next two or three days, a cascade of vile atrocity erupted; on all sides fighting, burning, torture, rape and killing.

Escape from Peking

I had made contact with a number of fellow correspondents: George Lynch, of the London Daily Express, Emile Dillon, Russian correspondent for the Daily Telegraph, and my old friend, Bennet Burleigh, who had been billeted with the British forces. Together, we skulked around the grounds, grim and, for the most part, silent witnesses to an unfolding kaleidoscope of human behaviour more nightmarish and more brutal than any of us could have believed possible. As journalists our natural intent was to report all that we had seen but we knew that this was different. We had all experienced the horrors of war in different, distant arenas, but not one of us had ever known such an assault on the senses; not one of us had ever been exposed to such obscene visions of reality. In our hearts we all knew, but it was Lynch who first voiced our silent understanding and our shared pledge when he whispered, "there are things that we must not write, and that may not be printed for our readers, which show that this Western civilisation of ours is merely a veneer over savagery". That evening, a notice was sent round to collect the names of all those who wished to travel to Tientsin by the first convoy, which was expected to leave the next day, Tuesday 21st. I knew that I was done here and that I had to leave this evil place. Lynch, Dillon and Burleigh understood and, for us, there was no need of a farewell. I walked slowly back to my quarters and spent the next few hours packing the scraps that were left of my kit. At midnight, I made my way to the grounds of the Temple of Heaven, from where the

convoy was to depart at 5.30 in the morning. I was there, ready to leave, at 2 o'clock.

A DECADE OF SILENCE

Back to England

I returned to New Jersey, weakened in spirit if not in body, on 11th September 1900. I had neither the desire nor the intention to return to the field - and I knew that I would not be taking up my pen again any time soon. Mary was now well advanced in her second trimester and would soon find travelling difficult so we arranged a trip to England at the earliest opportunity. We were to sail on 14th October, and on the 10th, I went to New York to visit my friend and mentor, "Teddy" Roosevelt, for what I thought might be the last time. His campaign for the position of Vice-President alongside William McKinley was going well and it seemed likely that both would be victorious in the forthcoming election in November. For some hours we discussed a number of wide-ranging issues and spoke, briefly, about my time in Peking but Roosevelt, too, had witnessed the vicious horrors of war and did not press me for detail. He understood. Our conversation then turned to the invitation that he had given me almost a year ago when he had asked me to become a member of his team. He outlined the role that he had mapped out for me, explaining that this would go far beyond campaigning for the presidential election. He then made sure that the door to his office was firmly closed and told me in a quiet and precise tone that there would be "no record of this conversation", before describing his plans to expand the Secret Service and reorganise their duties and responsibilities. "We are moving into the twentieth century", he said, "but we still have a nineteenth century President. Everything is about to change and that includes our position in the world and the ways in which we can monitor, react to and influence events as they happen - and for this, I want you to be my eyes and ears". Feeling a hint of the familiar tightening in the pit of my stomach, I told Teddy that there was no role that I would rather play but, first, I had to rid myself of my demons - and that I was about to leave for England to regain some sense of order and normality in my life. He understood.

Recovery and Realisation

The SS Minniehaha pulled into Tilbury before midday and we were met by my brother, William, who had arranged the purchase of our house in

Paddington. He had arranged transport and we arrived at our first English "home" a few minutes after 7.00 pm. I felt comfortable; Mary was delighted. We settled in easily and when our son, Edwin, was born on January 12th, any observer would have described us as a happy young family - and, indeed, we were; almost. We visited family, made friends in the area and involved ourselves with local community activities. My three books were selling well and we received handsome royalty payments every month. The spring and early summer of 1901 were happy times but as July drifted into August the underlying tensions that we were both feeling started to break through. Mary missed her family, her social circles and the life that she had known in America; for me, the spectres of Peking that had haunted me for a year had begun to fade and I was becoming restless. Without the need for words we were both moving towards an understanding that something needed to change. Then, on September 6th, the news that McKinley had been shot shook me to the core. He died a week later and Roosevelt took the oath of office as President. His offer that I should join his team now became much more pressing and I immediately raised with Mary the idea that we should return to America; an idea that she happily accepted. Two months later I was in Roosevelt's office.

Preparations

The training that I had to undertake was relatively straightforward and I had no real difficulties in reaching the required standards in world affairs, communication, covert insertion or data analysis and verification. What proved to be rather more of a challenge was establishing an appropriate cover persona. I still held my press credentials, of course, so the role of journalist was an obvious option but, since I had turned down all the commissions that I had been offered for more than two years, we considered this a little thin. Much more feasible was that I should become part of the family firm, John S. Lamson & Bros., importers, exporters and dealers in South American and European products. Lamson Bros was set up in New York in 1862 by Mary's father, John Sawyer Lamson and his brother Edwin, who ran the business when John Sawyer Lamson died in 1883. When Edwin died his obituary stated that he had never married but he was survived by four nephews; Mary's brothers, John Sawyer Lamson Jr., Edwin Ruthven Lamson, William Judson Lamson, and Horace Holden Lamson, the Managing Director. Lamson's was a solid, established company and it was entirely logical that I should be employed there now that Mary and I were back in America. I also had a particularly close relationship with my brother-in-law, Horace who was able to confidently

assure me, Mary, the team "lieutenants"; Timothy Woodruff, Sereno Payne, David Healey, Frank Smith and Buck Rogers, and Roosevelt himself, that Lamson's need for a buyer was genuine. The extension to the brief for this role to include worldwide travel was signed off by Horace under the heading of "expansion plans". My employment started on November 1st, 1902.

Operations

For a dozen years, living in Summit, New Jersey, and ensconced in my role as a buyer for Lamson Brothers, I have, in fact, travelled widely in Europe, the Balkans, Russia, Scandinavia and South America. I was quietly accompanied on each trip by a genuine buyer (another member of the team) so that I could return with goods and products that I had "acquired" in the countries that I visited. Otherwise, I can say nothing of the origin or real purpose of these trips, which is why, since my return from China, I have written nothing other than my personal diaries and letters. But world events have now moved to a different and dangerously complex level. Delegates at the 1913 Congress in Paris agreed that the Balkan crisis is set to explode and I am leaving Paris today for Germany, Austria, Hungary, Serbia and then Sarajevo to follow events and report back to Roosevelt's chief advisor, Albert Beveridge. My first report described the consternation in Sarajevo at the news that Franz Ferdinand's visit will go ahead despite assassination threats from the Black Hand group; my second that, amid a level of security that I have never before seen, every young man in Sarajevo is under suspicion; my third, that Archduke Franz Ferdinand and Duchess Sophie are dead and the killer, Gavrilo Princip, is arrested. Mobs of Croat and Bosnian demonstrators are rioting in the streets, directing their anger at Serb shops, banks and offices. Sarajevo newspapers report that they have ravaged the Hotel Europa and more than thousand houses and shops have been destroyed - my eyes tell me it is more. Sarajevo is now out of control and I fear that this ethnic hatred will sweep across the Balkans and into the very heart of Europe.

The Clouds of War Gather

Through the dark days of July, the London Guardian reported that the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey believes that "a peaceful solution will be reached"; the German Chancellor states that the decision for war or peace is in Austria's hands - but advises that Austria choose the former; Kaiser Wilhelm declares that Austria-Hungary can "count on Germany's full support and should march at once against Serbia" and a report from the French military attache in Berlin states that the German

General Staff would be pleased if war were to come about today. One by one, as falling dominoes, countries are being drawn into the growing conflict by their interlocking treaty obligations. As the calls for war intensify, no Head of State appears able to quell the collective madness of their politicians and generals.



WAR IN FRANCE

The Belgian Prelude

The last days of July, 1914, found the industrious population of Belgium untroubled by rumour of war. The country people were concerned chiefly with plans for their summer holidays when, suddenly, a commotion arose in every town and village. From Brussels came the curt order for the immediate mobilisation of the army. The surprised mayors pasted up the telegrams. Officers hurried into the busy factories demanding that all men: "Report yourselves". The newspapers had told the public that Austria had declared war on far-off Serbia, and they now heard that Germany had sent an ultimatum ordering Russia to demobilise: but what had this to do with prosperous and contented Belgium? Only a few policemen, on the next Sunday night, saw an automobile dash across country, breaking every speed limit, regardless of challenges. A Belgian employed on the railroad had overheard specific train orders in Cologne and historic legend had repeated itself in modern fashion. First by train, then by electric car, and finally by automobile, he had dashed through the night to get the tidings to the capital. That was why on the morning of 3rd August 1914 a party of army engineers came to the banks of the river Meuse at Vise, and drove away the children who had gathered to watch them. German forces of some 750,000 men with General von Kluck in command of the 1st Army were assembling to cross the bridge into Belgium at sunrise, in preparation for an attack on France.

German Super-Strategy

The super-strategy of Germany was based on a plan to extend her frontier straight across France to the mouth of the Seine. Hinged on Metz, her armies were to carry her frontier posts outward across Luxemburg and Belgium and, in an impressive sweep, swing the line south to embrace all of northern France. The French Army was to be overwhelmed in the process, and the capture of Paris would have been the logical result. The operations on the Western front might best be considered as a prolonged

battle with every unit consolidated in the general plan. Everyone has read of definite actions in certain sectors, while brilliant phases, on which the developments of the campaign were based, have frequently been unrecorded. Ypres, Verdun and the Somme are household words, but Nancy, Lassigny, the Ancre Valley, and the Scarpe are among the vital French battles that have escaped general attention. Having had a fortunate opportunity to follow the recession of the German flood from the Aisne northward in successive efforts to flow around the French flank, on the Oise, above the Somme, across south and north Artois, and finally from Lille and Belgium, to reach the coveted coast, I have perhaps been able to find an understanding of the greatest of French efforts when General Joffre met Germany's super-strategy with a battle-plan of simple strategy and super-tactics which modified the invasion and wrecked all chances of a German victory and the bid for world dominance.

The Race to the Sea

The German advances through Belgium and into France were so rapid that attempts to map the progress of the war proved impossible. The term, "The Race to the Sea", was coined to describe the reciprocal attempts by the Franco-British and German armies, to envelop the northern flank of the opposing army through Picardy, Artois and Flanders, rather than an attempt to advance northwards to the sea; it ended on the North Sea coast of Belgium on 19th October, when the last open area from Dixmude to the North Sea was occupied by Belgian troops. On the British right two regiments had just arrived, tired out after forced marches with extra ammunition, and were preparing to bivouac. Other troops were coming to cement the line with the French, when patrols came in to report that heavy columns were moving to strike between the British and the French forces. A rain of shells along the right wing announced an advance from the northeast and spotter aircraft reported that the armies of von Kluck and von Buelow were advancing in force. General von Kluck's right had moved down the Lille roads and turned southeast, with the single battalion of the Black Watch, their two machine guns and one battery, to face this entire wing and keep it from enveloping the British left. Thus the two British army corps were to face the entire First German Army, while the right of the Second Army was aiming at their flank and had moved between them and the French. Under a terrific shelling the newly arrived battalions on the British right, the Royal Irish and the Suffolks, extended, scratched a light trench under fire, and poured volleys into the massed columns of Germans, which advanced as steadily as on parade and came within a few

yards of the British lines before they were broken, and retired. This was the time that the ultimate outcome of the war was set.

The United States Steps In

During the last week of October, 1917, a shot was heard which echoed around the world. American troops had moved up the night before to share the first-line trenches with the French. It was wet and cold, but officers had to order their men to stop singing as they marched through the blackness which develops a sixth sense. When they moved cheerily to the first line, every soldier received a warm greeting from the French soldiers, and then settled himself in the mud for a tiresome vigil, with sentries peering for the first time across the desolation of "No Man's Land" to the enemy's position. There is now little pessimism among any troops at the front. The British army is at the zenith of its power and asks only for fine weather. From Belgian soil, their new guns of enormous range are giving the Germans no winter respite. The French army, with 3,000,000 seasoned fighting men, is resigned, but never despondent. The American Army is eagerly waiting the word to attack, straining at the leash.

Writing of War

In a nascent history of war, well-known episodes must take their place to complete the story; so must the personal observations of those who were there in the field, the bivouacs, the hospitals, and the prisoner convoys, and so must the pictures painted with an eye to the diplomatic reasons behind the plans of war, the great sweep of armies as they manoeuvre for advantage, and the effect of the life and death decisions of Generals on the fighting man and on the civilian population. No one who has seen the horrors of this or any war can pen words to glorify it. Neither can they minimise its great spiritual values. No man can face death or see his comrades go to the Great Unknown and remain unchanged. Splendid lessons of self-sacrifice are learned daily. Everything material in life has an altered value, and new spiritual influences create an idealism over the stern veneer that hardship and lack of comfort create. Acheron has to be crossed, but in the passing there is the call of something higher than self, and a reward that cannot be judged by material standards.



TO CUBA AGAIN

The Family of Nations

The Great War of 1914 - 1918 has taught the world more in geography and history than a century of ordinary education would have imparted. It has destroyed many inherited prejudices and shattered the complacency which was shackling the imagination that built up the British Empire. As peace introduces a new era of international comity which will test the bonds forged between the Allied countries, this seems an opportune time to present some simple facts regarding Cuba, a young member of the family of nations, that has stood solidly with the Allies from the outset, but of whom the British people know so little. We have special interests in the West Indies, and there are sentimental and practical reasons why we should have a cordial understanding with our largest neighbour there, a country nearly the size of England.

The Visionaries

With one or two exceptions the London Press has printed nothing illuminating about the radical changes in Cuba, except during the actual Spanish-American conflict. When the Island was recovering, and its progress was obvious to those who really knew the country and the qualities of the leaders who had guided the people to freedom, the South African war carried public interest onward to the intensely parochial decade in Britain when strikes, old age pensions, and national insurance held the stage. Meanwhile, Americans were gaining our New World markets, and Germany was also developing her mercantile marine at our expense. British policy was being determined by a public that cares nothing about other countries unless pestilence, war, earthquake or lynching gives them a news value, while the American Press, on the other hand, teemed with articles destined to create a wide interest in Cuban affairs and commercial opportunities. A score of important books about the Island had a large sale in the United States and there were standard works in Paris, but no English editions. Driven by the enthusiasm and support of their Government, and particularly Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt, Americans were soon gaining an increasing share in Cuba's rapidly developing infrastructure and trade. Inspired by all these promising signs, it was the vision of men such as: John Findlay Wallace, John Frank Stevens and Lieutenant Colonel George Washington Goethals, that brought life to the President's most ambitious project, to connect the Pacific to the Atlantic through a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. Within just two years of the opening of the Panama Canal in 1915,

thousands of American and Canadian tourists were flocking to the Caribbean Islands, and an increase of more than 400% was recorded for the value of Cuba's seaports.

The Need for British Enterprise

Glancing recently at a small file of a leading New York newspaper, I counted over a hundred columns of general news, conditions, and trade opportunities in Latin America. Nearly one half of these dealt with Cuba. Is it any wonder, therefore, that the United States is getting the lion's share of trade in markets where a few years ago we held a promising place. As one of a small group of Englishmen who from motives of simple patriotism have attempted for several years to create at home a greater knowledge of Cuba, when each month produced fresh evidence of the strides made there by the United States and Germany, some of the statistics now presented seem to be a sad commentary on the lack of interest of the British public in foreign affairs which are closely identified with the welfare of our commerce. An awareness of the benefits that Cuba offers to British business should be stimulated by the Government through the Press, as in America during the past decade. Unfortunately, however, Lloyd George's rag-tag coalition, with Arthur Balfour as Foreign Secretary cares little and does less. Winston Churchill describes Balfour as having "an attitude of convinced superiority which insists in the first place on complete detachment from the enthusiasms of the human race, and in the second place on keeping the vulgar world at arm's length". And with such leaders, what will the average man know or care about Latin America or its opportunities? His ideas of the leading countries there are likely to be based on crude misconceptions gathered from the temporary chaos of one or two retrogressive republics. This is like taking a small unfortunate Balkan State as a standard for European civilization.

A Land of Opportunity

It is no exaggeration to speak of Cuba as the key to the Western Hemisphere. Her strategic position between North and South America, commanding the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea, as well as her rare qualities as a country, entitles her to this definition. Her influence in the cause of Pan-Americanism, her record in the history of the New World, her large commerce, her extraordinary wealth of resources and products, in proportion to area and population, her unique geographical position, support this description. Just as the influence of men does not depend upon their stature, but upon the quality of their minds, so Cuba's place in the family of nations depends not on her area but on what she really is,

has, and does - and upon the business acumen, the intellect and the vision of those who choose to be part of this Land of Opportunity.



AND NOW IT'S DONE

August 4th, 1921. This is an important day; the final day. The USS Henry R Mallory glides into the mouth of the Hudson river and I gaze with a strange fondness as we slide by the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, aware that this will be the last time I see this iconic New York vista. Back from Cuba, my final book drafted, I have no idea what lies ahead, but I do know that it is not to be here. There is nothing left for me now in the country that has given me so much. Roosevelt is gone, taken in his sleep two years ago; the team that he created has been broken up by Taft; most of my friends and press colleagues are now retired and scattered; Lamson Brothers was dissolved a year ago and I have no need of employment elsewhere. In two weeks' time, I am taking Mary and Edwin back to England and then we will travel no more; my days of chasing stories in the field are over; my books are published; my words are written; my pen has run dry - the library is now closed.

