



# RESEARCH GUIDES

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## World of 1898: International Perspectives on the Spanish American War

This presentation provides resources and documents about the Spanish-American War, the period before the war, and some of the fascinating people who participated in the fighting or commented about it.

### Introduction

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## Introduction

*The war of the United States with Spain was very brief. Its results were many, startling, and of world-wide meaning.*  
--Henry Cabot Lodge

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On April 25, 1898

the United States

declared war on *Photographic history of the war with Spain*, pg. 36.

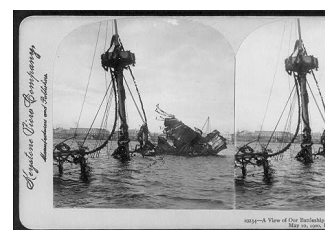
Spain following

the sinking of the Battleship Maine in Havana harbor on February 15, 1898. The war ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. As a result, Spain lost its control over the remains of its overseas empire -- Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines Islands, Guam, and other islands.

Beginning in 1492, Spain was the first European nation to sail westward across the Atlantic Ocean, explore, and colonize the Amerindian nations of the Western Hemisphere. At its greatest extent, the empire that resulted from this exploration extended from Virginia on the eastern coast of the United States south to Tierra del Fuego at the tip of South America excluding Brazil and westward to California and Alaska. Across the Pacific, it included the Philippines and other island groups. By 1825 much of this empire had fallen into other hands and in that year, Spain acknowledged the independence of its possessions in the present-day United States (then under Mexican control) and south to the tip of South America. The only remnants that remained in the empire in the Western Hemisphere were Cuba and Puerto Rico and across the Pacific in Philippines Islands, and the Carolina, Marshall, and Mariana Islands (including Guam) in Micronesia.



Kurz & Allison. *Destruction of the U.S. battleship Maine in Havana Harbor Feb'y 15th.* Havana, Cuba, ca. 1898. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.



*A view of our battleship MAI appears today.* Havana Harb 1900. Library of Congress Pr Photographs Division.

## Caribbean, Iberian & Latin American Studies

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## The War

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Following its declaration of war against Spain issued on April 25, 1898, the United States added the Teller Amendment asserting that it would not attempt to exercise hegemony over Cuba. Two days later Commodore George Dewey sailed from Hong Kong with Emilio Aguinaldo on board. Fighting began in the Phillipines Islands at the Battle of Manila Bay on May 1 where Commodore George Dewey reportedly exclaimed, "You may fire when ready, Gridley," and the Spanish fleet under Rear Admiral Patricio Montojo was destroyed. However, Dewey did not have enough manpower to capture Manila so Aguinaldo's guerrillas maintained their operations until 15,000 U.S. troops arrived at the end of July. On the way, the cruiser Charleston stopped at Guam and accepted its surrender from its Spanish governor who was unaware his nation was at war. Although a peace protocol was signed by the two belligerents on August 12, Commodore Dewey and Maj. Gen. Wesley Merritt, leader of the army troops, assaulted Manila the very next day, unaware that peace had been declared.

In late April, Andrew Summers Rowan made contact with Cuban General Calixto García who supplied him with maps, intelligence, and a core of rebel officers to coordinate U.S. efforts on the island. The U.S. North Atlantic Squadron left Key West for Cuba on April 22 following the frightening news that the Spanish home fleet commanded by Admiral Pascual Cervera had left Cadiz and entered Santiago, having slipped by U.S. ships commanded by William T. Sampson and Winfield Scott Schley. They arrived in Cuba in late May.

War actually began for the U.S. in Cuba in June when the Marines captured Guantánamo Bay and 17,000 troops landed at Siboney and Daiquirí, east of Santiago de Cuba, the second largest city on the island. At that time Spanish troops stationed on the island included 150,000 regulars and 40,000 irregulars and volunteers while rebels inside Cuba numbered as many as 50,000. Total U.S. army strength at the time totalled 26,000, requiring the passage of the Mobilization Act of April 22 that allowed for an army of at first 125,000 volunteers (later increased to 200,000) and a regular army of 65,000. On June 22, U.S. troops landed at Daiquiri where they were joined by Calixto García and about 5,000 revolutionaries.

U.S. troops attacked the San Juan heights on July 1, 1898. Dismounted troopers, including the African-American Ninth and Tenth cavalries and the Rough Riders commanded by Lt. Col. Theodore Roosevelt went up against Kettle Hill while the forces led by Brigadier General Jacob Kent charged up San Juan Hill and pushed Spanish troops further inland while inflicting 1,700 casualties. While U.S. commanders were deciding on a further course of action, Admiral Cervera left port only to be defeated by Schley. On July 16, the Spaniards agreed to the unconditional surrender of the 23,500 troops around the city. A few days later, Major General Nelson Miles sailed from Guantánamo to Puerto Rico. His forces landed near Ponce and marched to San Juan with virtually no opposition.

Representatives of Spain and the United States signed a peace treaty in Paris on December 10, 1898, which established the independence of Cuba, ceded Puerto

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December 10, 1898, which established the independence of Cuba, ceded Puerto Rico and Guam to the United States, and allowed the victorious power to purchase the Philippines Islands from Spain for \$20 million. The war had cost the United States \$250 million and 3,000 lives, of whom 90% had perished from infectious diseases.

## What's included in this guide

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This presentation provides resources and documents about the Spanish-American War, the period before the war, and some of the fascinating people who participated in the fighting or commented about it. Information about Cuba, Guam, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Spain, and the United States is provided in chronologies, bibliographies, and a variety of pictorial and textual material from bilingual sources, supplemented by an overview essay about the war and the period. Among the participants and authors featured are such well-known figures as Presidents Grover Cleveland, William McKinley, and Theodore Roosevelt, as well as Admiral George Dewey and author Mark Twain (United States), together with other important figures such as Antonio Maceo and José Martí (Cuba), Román Baldorioty de Castro and Lola Rodríguez de Tió (Puerto Rico), José Rizal and Emilio Aguinaldo (Philippines), and Antonio Cánovas del Castillo and Ramón Blanco (Spain).

## Spanish-American War: A Resource Guide

**Subjects:** American History, Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies, Asian Studies, Early American History, Geography, Hispanic American Studies, Hispanic Studies, History, Indigenous studies, Language and Literature, Latin American Studies, Military History

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