Dr. Richard H. Fuhrmann
1880-1937

Dr. Richard H. Fuhrmann was an eighteen-year old living in his parents’ home at 3221 California Avenue in St. Louis in 1898 when he started his campaign to obtain patriotic envelopes with autographs of approximately 150 military figures who participated in the Spanish American War, including President Theodore Roosevelt and Admiral George Dewey.

Fuhrmann explained in his letter which accompanied each envelope and request:

As I am a philatelist and desire to add a patriotic section to my exceptionally large collection of postage stamps and envelopes, I kindly request of you to inscribe your name, with what Infantry and where stationed at the present time under the word ‘From’ on the enclosed addressed envelope, and see that it is deposited in the mails.

The existence of Fuhrmann’s extraordinary collection of Spanish American War patriotic covers has never been widely known. At one time the entire group belonged to William H. Semsrott, a prominent St. Louis collector, who sold it more than 50 years ago to the late J. Leonard Diamond. In a note to Diamond after selling the Fuhrmann correspondence (except for two relatively minor covers), Semsrott wrote, “Have fun!!—You now have the greatest. I’m sad.”

Each officer’s rank and command are stated as of the date the envelope was signed. Many were subsequently promoted, and some held different ranks in the volunteer and regular armies.
Admiral George Dewey
Commander, Asiatic Squadron

Manila, Philippines, November 14, 1898
San Francisco, December 19, 1898, with “PAQUEBOT” handstamp
Matching portrait and signer
Major General Fitzhugh Lee
Commander, 7th Army Corps

Savannah, Georgia, November 15, 1898

Matching portrait and signer
Rear Admiral William T. Sampson
Commander, North Atlantic Squadron

Tampa, Florida, October 1898
Matching portrait and signer
Commodore John C. Watson
Commander, Eastern Squadron

Mare Island Navy Yard, Vallejo, California, October 3, 1898
Matching portrait and signer
Colonel Theodore Roosevelt
“Rough Riders”

New York City, October 5, 1898
Matching portrait and signer
Major General William R. Shafter
Commander, 5th Army Corps

Sycamore, Illinois, October 17, 1898
Matching portrait and signer
Commander Eugene W. Watson
Special Services Squadron

Honolulu, Hawaii, February 14, 1899

USS Collier *Scindia*
Generalissimo Máximo Gómez y Báez  
Dominican Republic Major General and Cuban Revolutionary Army Commander  

Havana, Cuba, May 9, 1899
Major General Thomas M. Anderson
Commander, 1st Division, 8th Army Corps

Manila, Philippines, January 27, 1899
Brigadier General Abraham K. Arnold  
Cavalry Brigade, 2nd Division, 7th Army Corps  

Huntsville, Alabama, November 19, 1898
Captain John R. Bartlett  
Chief Intelligence Officer, Supt. U.S. Coast Signal Service and  
Chief U.S. Auxiliary Naval Force

Boston, Massachusetts, February 11, 1899  
Returned in separate envelope
Major General John C. Bates
Commander, 1st Division, 1st Army Corps

Macon, Georgia, November 11, 1898
Commander Royal B. Bradford
Chief of Bureau of Equipment, U.S. Navy Department

Washington, D.C., February 9, 1899
Major General Joseph C. Breckinridge
Inspector General, U.S. Army

Washington, D.C., October 30, 1898
Major General John R. Brooke
U.S. Military Governor of Cuba

Havana, Cuba, January 12, 1899
(Late) Colonel William Jennings Bryan
3rd Nebraska Volunteers

Lincoln, Nebraska, June 6, 1900
Bryan was the Democratic Party candidate opposing McKinley in the 1900 election
Rear Admiral Francis M. Bunce
Commandant, U.S. Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York

Brooklyn, New York, January 1, 1899
Brigadier General Andrew S. Burt  
U.S. Volunteers, 25th Infantry U.S. Army

Chicago, Illinois, December 20, 1898
Major General Matthew Calbraith Butler
U.S. Volunteers

Havana, Cuba, December 1898
Postmarked at Tampa, Florida
Brigadier General Gilbert S. Carpenter
Commander, 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 4th Army Corps

Camp Shipp, Anniston, Alabama, December 25, 1898
Brigadier General Louis H. Carpenter
U.S. Military Governor of Puerto Principe

Puerto Principe, Cuba, January 27, 1899
Rear Admiral Silas Casey III
Commandant, U.S. Navy Yard, League Island, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, September 1, 1899
Commander Richardson Clover
Chief Intelligence Officer of the Office of Naval Intelligence and
Commander, USS Bancroft

Washington, D.C., November 15, 1898
Major William A. Collins
52nd Wisconsin Infantry

Chicago, Illinois, February 15, 1900
Brigadier General Richard Comba
4th Army Corps

Huntsville during Spanish American War
Brigadier General Richard Comba
4th Army Corps

Camp Albert G. Forse, Huntsville, Alabama, February 3, 1899

Huntsville during Spanish American War
Captain Francis A. Cook
Commander, USS Brooklyn

Brooklyn, New York, November 15, 1898
Lieutenant Vincendon L. Cottman
(Late) Commander, USS Collier Brutus

Manila, Philippines, February 26, 1899
Lieutenant Cottman (misspelled “Coppman” by Fuhrmann) refuses autograph in enclosed letter

San Francisco, California, April 4, 1899
Lieutenant Cottman signs envelope despite his earlier refusal
Brigadier General Henry C. Corbin
Adjutant General, U.S. Army

Washington, D.C., December 19, 1898
Major General John J. Coppinger (Retired)
4th Army Corps

Washington, D.C., November 14, 1898
Rear Admiral Arent S. Crowninshield
Chief of Bureau of Navigation, U.S. Navy Department
and (Late) Commander of the USS Maine

Washington, D.C., December 31, 1898

Captain Crowninshield in command of the USS Maine
Brigadier General Aaron S. Daggett
U.S. Volunteers

February 7, 1899 (postmark origin illegible)
Captain Charles H. Davis, Jr.
Superintendent, U.S. Naval Observatory, (Late) Commander USS Dixie

Returned in separate envelope, Washington, D.C., December 16, 1898

Crewmen cleaning gun on USS Dixie
Havana, Cuba, January 7, 1899
Brigadier General Henry M. Duffield
Commander, Separate Brigade, 2nd Army Corps

Detroit, Michigan, December 7, 1898
Rear Admiral Nehemiah M. Dyer
Captain, USS Baltimore, and Commandant, U.S. Navy Yard, Boston

U.S. Navy Yard, Boston, February 19, 1900
Rear Admiral Joseph G. Eaton
Commander, USS Resolute

Rear Admiral Norman von Heldreich Farquhar
Commandant, U.S. Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia

U.S. Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia, October 31, 1898
Brigadier General Daniel W. Flagler
Chief of Ordnance Department

Washington, D.C., November 26, 1898
Camp Shipp, Anniston, Alabama, October 27, 1898
Colonel Alfred S. Frost
Commander, 1st South Dakota Volunteer Infantry

Manila, Philippines, March 26, 1899
Commander William C. Gibson
U.S. Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York

U.S. Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York, December 18, 1898

U.S. Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York, circa 1898
Brigadier General John C. Gilmore  
Headquarters of the Army, Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C., November 15, 1898
Governors Island, New York, January 31, 1899
Commander Walton Goodwin
Commander, USS Southery

U.S. Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia, February 3, 1899

USS Southery
Brigadier General William W. Gordon II
Commander, 22nd Brigade, 1st Division, 1st Army Corps
and U.S. Representative to Puerto Rico Peace Commission

Macon, Georgia, December 27, 1898
Brigadier General Frederick Dent Grant
Commander, 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, 8th Army Corps
Son of President Ulysses S. Grant

San Juan, Puerto Rico, December 10, 1898
New York City, January 16, 1899
Colonel Francis L. Guenther
Commander, Washington Barracks, D.C., (Late) Brigadier General U.S.V.,
Commanding Camp Russell A. Alger and 1st and 3rd Divisions, 2nd Army Corps

Washington, D.C., December 16, 1898
(Late) Brigadier General Peter C. Hains
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Baltimore, Maryland, January 31, 1899
Brigadier General Robert H. Hall
Commander, 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 4th Army Corps

Returned in a separate envelope, Fuhrmann’s notation “Ft. Sheridan Ill.”
Second Lieutenant Alston Hamilton
Light Battery E, 1st Artillery

Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, October 26, 1898
Major Charles A. P. Hatfield
8th U.S. Cavalry

Signed at Nuevitas, Cuba, postmarked at Chester, Pennsylvania, January 30, 1899

Nuevitas, Cuba, circa 1900
Commander Joseph N. Hemphill
Commander, USS Buffalo

Signed and returned in separate envelope, Brooklyn, New York, December 2, 1898
Major William H. Hamner
Paymaster

Omaha, Nebraska, January 19, 1899
Captain Purnell F. Harrington
Commandant, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire
(Late) Commander, USS *Puritan*,

Portsmouth, New Hampshire, November 5, 1898
Brigadier General Henry C. Hasbrouck
Commander, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, 7th Army Corps
(Late) Lieutenant Colonel, 4th Artillery, Commandant, Fort Monroe, Virginia

Savannah, Georgia, November 3, 1898
West Point, New York, November 16, 1898
Brigadier General Guy V. Henry
Commander of “Provisional Division” in Puerto Rico

San Juan, Puerto Rico, December 1, 1898
General Henry was appointed Military Governor of Puerto Rico on December 6, 1898
Captain Charles L. Hodges
25th Infantry, U.S. Army

Fort Logan, Colorado, February 10, 1899
Addressed to Joe Barthelnass, a friend of Richard Fuhrmann

Group of army recruits at Fort Logan, circa April 1898
Rear Admiral John A. Howell  
President, Naval Retiring Board, Washington, D.C.  
(Late) Commander, USS San Francisco, European Station

Washington, D.C., November 2, 1898

Cleaning 6-inch guns aboard USS San Francisco
Rear Admiral Albert Kautz
Commander, Pacific Squadron
U.S. Flagship Philadelphia

Mare Island Navy Yard, postmarked San Francisco, November 6, 1898
Rear Admiral Albert Kautz
Commander, Pacific Squadron
U.S. Flagship Philadelphia

Mare Island Navy Yard, Vallejo, California, November 7, 1898
Major General Joseph Warren Keifer
Commander, 7th Army Corps

Savannah, Georgia, November 17, 1898
Additional autographed card enclosed
Lieutenant Colonel Edgar R. Kellogg
6th U.S. Infantry
(Late) Commander, 10th U.S. Infantry

Norwalk, Ohio, December 29, 1898

10th Infantry leaving for Cuba, May 20, 1898, from film footage in Library of Congress
Brigadier General Jacob Ford Kent
(Late) Commander, 1st Division, 5th Army Corps

Signed and returned in separate envelope, Troy, New York, November 26, 1898
Major John Brown Kerr
10th U.S. Cavalry
Commanding 2nd Squadron, 6th U.S. Cavalry, in Battle of San Juan Hill

Mailed from Paris, France, March 16, 1899, with 25 centimes Peace & Commerce stamp
U.S. stamps cancelled at St. Louis, Missouri, March 29, 1899
Colonel Harry C. Kessler
Commander, 1st Montana Volunteer Infantry

Manila, Philippines, March 23, 1899
Brigadier General Charles King
Commander, 1st Wyoming, 1st California, 1st Washington and 1st Idaho Infantry
during the Battle of Santa Ana of the Philippines Insurrection of 1899

Manila, Philippines, January 2, 1899
Brigadier General Jacob Kline  
21st U.S. Infantry  
Commander, 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 2nd Army Corps

Greenville, South Carolina, November 22, 1898
Captain Benjamin P. Lamberton
Chief of Staff and Commander, US Flagship *Olympia*

Dated by Capt. Lamberton “Manila May 1st” (Battle of Manila Bay) “and Aug 13” (Battle of Manila)
Postmarked Washington, D.C., February 28, 1900
Major General Henry W. Lawton
Commander, 2nd Division, 5th Army Corps
and Military Governor of Santiago de Cuba

Dated at Santiago de Cuba
Received at St. Louis, Missouri, November 13, 1898 (postmarks on stamps unclear)
Captain Albert W. Lilienthal
7th Infantry, U.S. Volunteers

Dated Camp Hamilton (Weil's Farm), Lexington, Kentucky, September 29, 1898

Camp Hamilton, Weil Farm, Lexington, Kentucky, 1898
Captain Albert W. Lilienthal
7th Infantry, U.S. Volunteers

Dated Camp Hamilton (Weil's Farm), Lexington, Kentucky, September 29, 1898

Camp Hamilton, Weil Farm, Lexington, Kentucky, 1898
Brigadier General James Rush Lincoln
Commander, 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, 2nd Army Corps

Greenville, South Carolina, December 22, 1898
Colonel John C. Loper
Commander, 51st Iowa Volunteer Infantry

Cavite, Philippines, March 23, 1899
Captain Nicoll Ludlow
Commander, USS Terror

U.S. Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York, November 15, 1898
Brigadier General William Ludlow  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
(Late) Military Governor of Santiago and Commandant, Department of Havana

New York City, November 1, 1898
Commander Bowman Hendry McCalla
USS Marblehead

U.S. Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia, postmarked Portsmouth, November 28, 1898
Manila, Philippines, January 28, 1899
Captain Hugh J. McGrath
2nd Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry

Manila, Philippines, October 2, 1899
Died November 7, 1899, of wounds received October 8, 1899, in action at Noveleta, Philippines
Rear Admiral Frederick V. McNair
Superintendent of U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland

Tompkinsville, New York, November 3, 1898
December 7, 1898, note from Lieutenant John H. Shipley conveying Captain Cooper’s refusal to sign envelope (refers to Admiral McNair’s autograph)
Major General Henry C. Merriam
Commander, Departments of California and Columbia (including Hawaii)

San Francisco, California, November 1, 1898
New York City, December 23, 1898
Rear Admiral Joseph N. Miller
(Late) Commander, Pacific Station

East Orange, New Jersey, May 17, 1899
Commander James M. Miller
Commander, USS Badger

U.S. Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia, December 28, 1898

USS Badger
Brigadier General William C. Oates  
U.S. Volunteers  
(Late) Governor of Alabama

Postmarked by Monroe & Atlanta RPO, November 25, 1898
Colonel Edward P. Pearson  
Commander, 10th U.S. Infantry  
Commanded 2nd Brigade in Battle of San Juan Hill

Havana, Cuba, January 12, 1899
Captain Edwin C. Pendleton
Superintendent, Naval Gun Factory

US. Navy Yard, Washington, D.C., October 31, 1898
Postmarked Washington Street Car RPO

Naval Gun Factory, Washington, D.C., 1898
Brigadier General Alexander Cummings McWhorter Pennington, Jr.
U.S. Volunteers

Atlanta, Georgia, November 19, 1898
Brigadier General Alexander Cummings McWhorter Pennington, Jr.
U.S. Volunteers

Atlanta, Georgia, February 1, 1899
Commodore John W. Philip
Commander, 2nd Squadron, North Atlantic Fleet, USS *New York*

Tompkinsville, New York, November 2, 1898
Portland, Maine, January 14, 1899

Admiral Picking’s shoulder boards, hat and 1861 issued sword
Lieutenant Commander John E. Pillsbury
(Late) Commander, USS Vesuvius

Boston, Massachusetts, October 31, 1898
The cruiser Vesuvius was fitted with dynamite guns
Major David Frank Powell
7th Infantry, U.S. Volunteers

Camp Miles (Weil Farm), Lexington, Kentucky, September 25, 1898
Dr. David Frank Powell was a pharmacist, physician, field surgeon, maker of patent medicines and sometime politician, associated with Buffalo Bill Cody
Major David Frank Powell
7th Infantry, U.S. Volunteers

Camp Miles (Weil Farm), Lexington, Kentucky, September 25, 1898
Dr. David Frank Powell was a pharmacist, physician, field surgeon, maker of patent medicines and sometime politician, associated with Buffalo Bill Cody
Major David Frank Powell
7th Infantry, U.S. Volunteers

Camp Miles (Weil Farm), Lexington, Kentucky, September 25, 1898
Dr. David Frank Powell was a pharmacist, physician, field surgeon, maker of patent medicines and sometime politician, associated with Buffalo Bill Cody
Brigadier General Wallace F. Randolph
Commander of Light Brigades

Signed and returned in a separate envelope—no date, origin noted as Washington, D.C.
Captain John J. Read  
Commander, U.S. Receiving Ship *Richmond*


USS *Richmond*, a wooden steam sloop from Civil War which served as receiving ship in 1898
Brigadier General Charles McCormick Reeve
(Late) Colonel, Commander, 13th Minnesota Regiment, U.S. Volunteers

Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 7, 1899
Commodore George C. Remey
Commander, USFS Lancaster, and Commandant, U.S. Naval Base, Key West, Florida
(Late) Commandant, U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire

U.S. Navy Yard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, November 7, 1898
Captain Frederick W. Rodgers  
(Late) Captain USS *Puritan*  
President, U.S. Naval Board of Inspection and Survey

Washington, D.C., November 14, 1898
Manila, Philippines, March 23, 1899
Brigadier General James F. Smith
(Late) Colonel, Commander, 1st California Infantry Regiment, U.S. Volunteers
(Late) Commander, 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 8th Army Corps
Commandant, Military Sub-District of Island of Negros

Registered mail, Iloilo (Military Station No. 3), Philippines, April 24, 1899
On this day Smith was promoted to Brigadier General
Brigadier General Simon Snyder
U.S. Volunteers

Camp Poland, Knoxville, Tennessee, November 19, 1898 (year inverted)
E. G. Spaulding
(Late) Customs Collector, Port Huron, Michigan

Port Huron, Michigan, February 14, 1900
E. G. Spaulding (no relation to famous “Greenback” supporter, Elbridge G. Spaulding) was an insurance company executive and former customs collector—no military record located

View of Port Huron, 1894
Brigadier General George M. Sternberg
U.S. Army Surgeon General

Washington, D.C., December 15, 1898
Commander Edward D. Taussig
Commander, USS *Bennington*

Manila, Philippines, February 27, 1899
Commander Richard Wainwright
Commander, USS Gloucester (refitted from J. P. Morgan’s yacht Corsair II)
Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland (1900-1902)

Annapolis, Maryland, November 29, 1898
Captain Asa Walker
(Late) Commander, USS Concord

U.S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, February 21, 1900
Commander Clifford H. West
USS Princeton

Brooklyn, New York, December 16, 1898

USS Princeton
Brigadier General Loyd Wheaton
Commander, 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 8th Army Corps

Manila, Philippines, October 3, 1899
Major General Joseph Wheeler  
Commander, 4th Army Corps  
Camp Albert G. Forse (formerly Camp Wheeler), Huntsville, Alabama  

Camp Albert G. Forse, Huntsville, Alabama, November 3, 1898 
General Wheeler was between his command in Cuba and Philippines  

General Wheeler (left and front) in Cuba  
with Colonel Theodore Roosevelt (at right)
Brigadier General William M. Wherry
U.S. Regular Army

Cincinnati, Ohio, January 13, 1899
General Wherry was promoted to Brigadier General in U.S. Regular Army on January 7, 1899, and retired from service on January 18, 1899, just days after signing this envelope.
Captain Edwin White
Commander, USS Philadelphia

U.S. Navy Yard, Mare Island, San Francisco, California, January 20, 1899

USS Philadelphia
Captain William H. Whiting
Commander, USS Monadnock

Cavite, Philippines, December 8, 1898

USS Monadnock at sea en route to Manila
Captain Frank S. Wildes
Commandant, U.S. Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York

U.S. Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York, February 20, 1900
Brigadier General John A. Wiley
Commander, 2nd Division, 1st Army Corps

Columbus, Georgia, November 20, 1898
In this case the envelope was addressed by General Wiley
Brigadier General Edward B. Williston
Commander, 1st Division, 7th Army Corps

General Williston’s indicating Savannah, Georgia, no postmarks, sent in a separate envelope
Major General James H. Wilson
Commander, 1st Army Corps

Dated December 10, 1898, no postmarks, sent in a separate envelope
At this date General Wilson was in camp at Macon, Georgia, with 1st Army Corps
Brigadier General John M., Wilson
Chief of Engineers

Washington, D.C., December 4, 1898
Captain William C. Wise
Commander, U.S. Receiving Ship Franklin

U.S. Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia, December 17, 1898
Major General Leonard Wood
Military Governor of Cuba

Santiago de Cuba, December 30, 1898

General Wood in Cuba (second from right), standing between
General Joseph Wheeler and Colonel Theodore Roosevelt
Major General Samuel Baldwin Marks Young
Commander, 2nd Army Corps

Camp Young (Camp MacKenzie), Augusta, Georgia,
November 22, 1898

With autographed enclosure on "Headquarters, Second Army Corps" letterhead
Major Richard W. Young
Commander, Utah Light Artillery Battalion

Salt Lake City, Utah, September 9, 1899