

Frank Norris Studies

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Frank Norris in Cuba during the Spanish-American War A Previously Unnoted Interview

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On 11 February 1898 via telegram from John S. Phillips, Frank Norris—then in St. Louis en route to New Orleans to cover Mardi Gras for *The Wave*—received a formal offer of employment from the offices of S.S. McClure.¹ In his immediate response to Phillips, Norris accepted the offer; and, suiting action to word, he abandoned his plans to travel to New Orleans, instead proceeding the next week to New York City to join the staff of both the firm's newspaper syndicate and its monthly, *McClure's Magazine*.

Despite his hope of rapidly obtaining national visibility thanks to the nod given by McClure, disappointment soon followed. Norris is known to have seen just one of his short stories placed by the syndicate in newspapers—almost two years later, in late 1899. Only two of his short stories appeared in the magazine; and again many months had passed before they saw print, in December 1898 and March 1899.² The greatest disappointment at this stage of his career as a professional author, though, had to have been the outcome of being assigned by McClure as a correspondent for the magazine during the Spanish-American War, declared by Congress on 25 April 1898. Arriving in Key West in early May, Norris spent the ensuing weeks searching for attention-worthy incidents in a war that, for the longest time, tried its best not to occur in earnest. It was over a month before the American army debarked on the southeastern coast of Cuba and there was finally something of high significance about which to write in an engaging way. As had been the case during his previous journalistic foray, two years earlier in South Africa, Norris's task in Florida and Cuba was not so much to detail events themselves for the insatiable “yellow

press” as it was to fashion reflective, “literary” essays capturing the flavor of the war in such a way as to appeal to *McClure's* relatively sophisticated readers several weeks, if not months, after events had become the stuff of history. Indeed, Norris initially had reason to exult over the possibilities of such an assignment, given the many articles of precisely this kind of thoughtful, impressionistic, and unhurried nature that he had written for *The Wave* beginning in 1896, articles which doubtless had something to do with McClure's having offered him a salaried position in the first place.

How much Norris actually wrote about his experience in covering the war, either while he directly observed it or subsequently, may never be known. Certainly, he believed that some, if not all, of his copy would be printed by his employer. That of the other *McClure's* correspondent, its star reporter Stephen Bonsal, was. But not one word Norris originated made its way into the magazine in 1898 and 1899, and it was just a matter of time before he found a less fickle man for whom to work, Frank N. Doubleday, and decided to place his war articles elsewhere. Ironically, some of what McClure decided not to handle was taken by monthlies of a higher caliber than *McClure's*: “*Comida*” appeared in the *Atlantic*, 83 (March 1899), 343-48, and “With Lawton at El Caney” in *Century*, 58 (June 1899), 304-9. Still, the assignment to Florida and Cuba proved a professional disappointment. These two articles, both of which focused only on his experience at El Caney were the only ones published during his lifetime.

Because present to the northeast at El Caney on 1 July 1898, Norris did not witness the now more famous offensive begun the same day at the San Juan Heights. He was not in the vicinity until the next day. And so, among his unpublished manuscripts or drafts thereof, it is unlikely that he treated the beginning of that protracted action. But, although not in an article, he did share his thoughts on some of the events of 1 July about which he had heard and on what transpired at the Heights over the following days. Known for decades

now is the interview conducted with him after the war when he returned to San Francisco to recuperate from pronounced symptoms of malaria. This was in "Witnessed the Fall of Caney," San Francisco *Chronicle*, 28 August 1898, 8. Unrecorded until now and reprinted here for the first time is another published the next day: "A California Author," Oakland *Enquirer*, 29 August 1898, 4.

A California Author.

The return of Mr. Frank Norris from Cuba has excited much interest not only because of his experiences at the front during the Cuban campaign but also of his success as a California author. He was one of six who were singled out for especial privileges as correspondents, among whom were Richard Harding Davis, Stephen Crane and [Frederic] Remington. There were in all one hundred and sixty-one correspondents who started out, but owing to the hardships of the journey, but ten were present at the surrender and returned home with the troops. Among the ten was Mr. Norris, who bears with him a piece of the flag hauled down at Santiago, and another souvenir of his experiences in the shape of the Cuban malaria, which has told severely on his otherwise robust frame. Were it not for the change in his appearance his friends would hardly realize through what ordeals he had passed, for he quite ignores his personal suffering in his enthusiasm over the American soldier. Mr. Norris is one of the staff of McClure's Magazine, the managers of which, in consideration of his more than loyal services, have presented him with transportation to San Francisco and return, with a leave of absence for the recovery of his health while his place is being held for him. His articles in McClure's will not appear until the holidays, but that they will be of unusual interest goes without saying.

It is not generally known, but his story, Moran of the Lady Letty, which appeared in the Wave, after being syndicated by the New York Sun, is in the press of McClure's and will be published in book form about the middle of September. There is about Mr. Norris' work a virility and intensity of purpose which reminds one of Victor Hugo. He unites an ideality of sentiment with the careful work of a realist and he weaves into his stories an air of mystery which never fails of a dramatic climax. In speaking of the American soldier he says:

"Think of marching all day up trails with seventy pounds on your back; for lunch, hardtack with a little sugar and water, getting drenched to the bone in the afternoon, eating half-raw bacon because the wood was so wet the fire wouldn't burn, coffee that was yellow water, and soaked hardtack, and then turning in to sleep in wet clothes and under wet blankets. We had this sort of continuous performance for seven eternal days between Balquiri [*i.e.*, Daiquiri] and San Juan [Heights], but our hardships were trivial when you think of what the men, the regulars, went through with, or were killed or died trying to go through with, as the case might be.

"At San Juan I saw a whole regiment lying for two days under the Cuban sun, and I never knew what heat could be until I got under that sun—for two days under the sun, lying flat, just under the crest of a hill without food and without water, with not a hand's breadth of shade, every man weighted down with his blanket roll, haversack, canteen, ammunition belt and rifle and hanging on there like bulldogs, never a whine, and doing that rather than abandon the position they had taken to assault, and go back 250 yards, where there was plenty of shade, water and protection from the Mausers. When the rain came they would be drenched to the skin, when the sun was out they would be almost literally roasted, when it was intensely cold (towards three in the morning), they would be chilled to the marrow. For two days those men neither ate nor drank, nor slept, nor even had the satisfaction of walking to stretch their legs. The moment a man raised up he would get a Mauser in the head or neck. Some of them went delirious from the sun and lack of food and water and rest, and got down on their knees and cried like little children and it would have been easy and perfectly safe to retreat. I don't believe the idea of falling back even entered their heads. We would go off for hours on our own business and come back and find them still there. We would cook our lunch, eat it, go up the hill and they would still be there, we would turn in and sleep the night through, wake up in the morning, train our glasses on them, the position, and there the regiment would be, just the same as ever, wet and starving and thirsty, harassed by sharpshooters, but hanging on like the thousand bulldogs they were. You can't whip such men, you know. You can kill them, you can starve them in Andersonville or you can blow them up in Havana harbor but you can't whip them. That's how and why we won this war, the

American soldier did it, not the officers."

Notes

¹Joseph R. McElrath, Jr., and Sal Noto, "An Important Letter in the Career of Frank Norris," *Book Club of California Quarterly News-Letter*, 55 (Summer 1990) 59-61.

²The syndicate distributed the previously published "A Salvation Boom in Matabeleland," and it was reprinted in four American newspapers in November-December 1899. See Charles Johanningsmeier, "'Rediscovering' Frank Norris's 'A Salvation Boom in Matabeleland,'" *Frank Norris Studies*, No. 22 (Autumn 1996), 1-6. A radically rewritten version of the 1897 *Wave* short story, "Miracle Joyeux," appeared in *McClure's*, 12 (December 1898), 154-60. "'This Animal of a Buldy Jones,'" originally published in *The Wave* in 1897, was reprinted in *McClure's*, 12 (March 1899), 438-41.

James A. Herne, Actor and Playwright Interviewed by Frank Norris

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In the 27 February 1897 issue of the *San Francisco Wave*, James A. Herne explained in an interview his practice as both a playwright and actor—as well his aesthetic theory as one of the preeminent proponents of Realism in the arts. The interviewer did not sign the piece, but by 1977 three scholars had attributed it to Frank Norris. This was to no avail, though, since none of the three provided any empirical evidence supporting his decision to do so.¹ Thus, when the present, most authoritative record of Norris's publications was fashioned for 1996 publication, *Frank Norris: A Descriptive Bibliography* relegated the interview to its section entitled "Misattributions and Dubious Attributions."² True, it read as though it *might* be Norris's, especially when the interviewer opined that genuine Realism in literary art necessarily acknowledges the *unexpected* developments that are part and parcel of everyday life, not to mention the truly extraordinary events that also occur with some frequency. Then again, Norris was not the only one who thought so in 1890s America. Further, the author who signed himself "B." in the same issue of *The Wave* when reviewing Herne's *Shore Acres*, then being performed at the Baldwin Theatre, may as easily have been the interviewer.³ Gelett Burgess but more likely John Bonner, who regularly

wrote dramatic columns for *The Wave*, could easily have demonstrated in the interview that he was of a like mind with Norris regarding the status of the unpredictable in representational art. In short, no known evidence external to the text pointed to Norris as the author; and the internal evidence was not compelling enough for an attribution.⁴

A letter written by Herne's daughter Julie, however, puts to end any possible quibbling over the question of the authorship of "Herne, the Unconventional."

The 30 September 1952 letter concerning Norris was addressed to James D. Hart, who had begun developing in earnest the Frank Norris Collection at the Bancroft Library.⁵ In it Julie A. Herne provided perhaps even more important information for the Norris biographer: that Frank's and Jeannette's relationship with the Hernes began in New York City in the autumn of 1901 ("We did not meet until after my father's death" in June); that then there was a collaborative plan afoot for a dramatization of *The Octopus*; that Norris had in hand the galley proof for *The Pit* well before August when he left New York for San Francisco; and that daughter Billy was baptized during the Norrises' stay at the Herne's summer house on Long Island, before their departure for the west coast.

"In the fall of 1901, a few months after my father's death," Julia related, "I read *The Octopus* which had recently been published, and thought it would make a great play. I wrote to Norris and he replied, in the [29 October 1901] letter I gave to [my nephew Montrose Moses, Jr.]. I wrote a second note, asking for an appointment to talk the matter over, and his reply is the [15 November 1901] letter I am enclosing."⁶ She went on, "The dramatization never materialized, but our meeting led to a memorable friendship" with Frank and Jeannette. The Norrises "lived within a few blocks of our home, and during that winter we saw them frequently. They spent nearly all the following summer with us [at Herne Oaks in Southampton township] and my mother was godmother to their little girl, Billy. Frank was writing *The Pit* when we met, and that summer I read galleys aloud to him and Jeannette. He died that fall, just as they were about to take a trip around the world."

As to Norris's relationship with James A. Herne, Julia explained that they had met only once, in 1897. Then, as though to quash speculation to the effect that Herne's

study of the conditions giving rise to divorce, the play *Margaret Fleming* (1890), influenced the composition of *The Pit*, she recalled that "Frank told us that he knew my father's work only by reputation, and he expressed regret that he had never seen any of the Herne plays. He also told us that, as a young reporter on a San Francisco paper he had once interviewed my father, but that was their only meeting."

That singular meeting was commemorated as follows in the only interview of James A. Herne that appeared in *The Wave*.⁷



HERNE, THE UNCONVENTIONAL.

His Theory of Art Opposed to All Theatrical Tradition.

Mr. Herne was writing letters at an absurdly small table when I came in. He got up and took another chair, and ran his fingers through his hair, and remarked resignedly:

"I'm a very bad sort of interview, and generally make a mess of it. What do you want me to say? You'll have to do all the talking."

Just here I was inspired by some happy providence to express interest and curiosity in Mr. Herne's theory of dramatic art. I could not have chosen a more fortunate subject. I did not have to do all the talking—hardly any of it, for that matter. The author of "Shore Acres" at once took the conversation out of my hands—precisely as I wished him to.

"Truth, truth, truth, is what I am after," said Mr. Herne. "My idea and theory of dramatic art is fidelity in the making of a picture of a certain phase of life."

"How about plot?" I remarked. "There is little 'plot' in real life."

"Precisely, and for that very reason there is little plot in 'Shore Acres.' I want to make things happen on the stage as though they were a little segment cut out of life, on the street, in the country, here in this very room. I don't use plots. I don't like the word."

"What then?"

"Themes. I choose a certain theme, very simple, very direct, and work out my play in reference to it."

"But you plan and map out the main idea of the action?"

"No, I don't. When I sit down to write a play, when

I first dip my pen in the inkwell, I have no notion of how it will turn out—more than that, I have no notion how it will begin to run after the first scene. The play works itself out."

"And the characters?"

"The characters, too. How can I interfere with a character? It's independent of me entirely. Certain characters must of absolute necessity die, others must go through a certain amount of affliction; and there are even some who are born, as it were, who suddenly came into existence without my planning it."

"Now isn't that rather unusual, Mr. Herne?"

"Yes, it's an innovation."

"How about the critics at first?"

"They would have none of it. They said that my plays had neither wit nor pathos, nor plot, nor character, nor situation."

"But the public?"

"Ah, that's a very different thing. The public recognized the humanity of it, the truth of it, not the mere fidelity to local color, but the elemental truth, the universal principle. Now this play of 'Shore Acres' is supposed to happen on the Atlantic seaboard of the United States, but only the other day a Scotch gentleman said to me, 'Herne, you know when I heard "Shore Acres" I could just shut my eyes and go right back in memory to the little Scotch village where I was born.' That was one of the most flattering speeches ever addressed to me. You see, I had somehow struck a note of human sympathy that was universal, something the Scotchman recognized at once. It was realism, it was truth. That's the kind of thing I'm after. The papers speak of the steaming kettle and real roast turkey of 'Shore Acres' as though these details were realism. They are nothing but details, mere accessories. The realism of the thing is something higher and subtler than that."

"Then how do you account for the roast turkey, what's the *raison d'être* of the roast turkey?"

"Well, ten years ago a papier mache turkey would have done equally well. But we've got beyond that. Just as we've got beyond gilded wooden goblets and suchlike. I don't use the real turkey merely for the sake of realism, but so that the actor who is to carve it may the better act the part. Suppose he were to carve a papier mache turkey. He would be out of his part at once. Take, for instance, the stage inkstand and the stage quill pen—which nobody thinks of using nowadays. I couldn't

act with them at all. The moment I picked up that absurd goose quill and jabbed it into the absurd empty inkstand and scratched it over the paper very loud, so as to make the gallery hear, I would know they were 'props,' mere shams, and would be 'off my part' in an instant."

"I would assume, then, Mr. Herne, that you do not allow yourself to be hampered by stage traditions."

"I have broken with them all," said he with great emphasis. "One must if one is to adhere to truth and to reality. The ordinary stage manager is continually breaking up his groups by crossings and all that, and is somehow just as artistic notwithstanding. There is no good and sufficient reason for this crossing left and crossing right, and for delivering impressive speeches in the center of the stage. In this room, for instance, if I take up a position on the left-hand side of the table, close to you, is it incumbent on you to 'cross R' and stand in [*sic*] the right-hand corner? Or if I want to be particularly emphatic must I feel that the effect is spoiled if I do not stand directly under the gas fixture?"

From the point of view of his personality one is apt to be surprised at first sight of Mr. Herne. One is always apt to judge a man's appearance according to the character of the work he produces. I confess I had an idea that Herne would be a sort of Denman Thompson, a gentle-mannered, easygoing "down-Easter," with an air of the farm about him. Instead of this, however, you carry away with you the impression of a college-bred man, of highly educated intelligence, a student, a litterateur, and a man of the world. After all, one should expect the unexpected. It is, perhaps, the realism of life that Mr. Herne speaks of.

Notes

¹See Joseph Katz, "The Shorter Publications of Frank Norris," *Proof*, 3 (1973), 155-220; Robert A. Morace, "A Critical and Textual Study of Frank Norris's Writings from the San Francisco *Wave*" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1976); and André Poncet, "Oeuvres de Frank Norris," *Frank Norris (1870-1902)* (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1977), tome 2.

²Joseph R. McElrath, Jr., *Frank Norris: A Descriptive Bibliography* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), 289.

³B., "The Theatres," *The Wave*, 16 (27 February 1897), 10.

⁴Burgess and Bonner were more emphatically identified as the likely authors by McElrath in *Frank Norris and THE WAVE: A Bibliography* (New York: Garland, 1988), 120.

⁵Letters to James D. Hart, James D. Hart Papers, The Bancroft Library.

⁶The two letters to which she refers appear in *Frank Norris: Collected Letters*, ed. Jesse S. Crisler (San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1986), 170 and 172.

⁷"Herne, the Unconventional," *The Wave*, 16 (27 February 1897), 9.

The College Man in South Africa A New Article by Frank Norris

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After a journey of nearly six weeks—by rail across the United States from San Francisco to New York City, by the steamship *Berlin* from New York to Southampton, England, and by ship again, this time the *Norham Castle*, from England to Cape Town, South Africa—Frank Norris finally reached his destination on 4 December 1895 at 10:00 in the evening.¹

Commissioned by the *San Francisco Chronicle* to "write a series of articles on 'The Picturesque Side of African Life,'"² Norris would spend the next several weeks, to 15 January 1896, not only recording his observations while traveling from Cape Town to Kimberley to Johannesburg, and including an account of the infamous, abortive raid led by Dr. Leander Starr Jameson, but also capturing some of the more memorable of those observations in line drawings to illustrate the seven articles he wrote while he was in Africa; subsequently, both articles and accompanying illustrations appeared in the *Chronicle* between 19 January and 15 March, inclusive. One other article he wrote during this time also saw publication, not in the *Chronicle* but in *Harper's Weekly* on 7 March 1896. Besides these eight pieces, Norris's adventurous exploits half a world away from San Francisco yielded even more fruit in the form of another article published in the *Chronicle* in mid-April, three pieces appearing that same month in the *San Francisco Wave* for which Norris had by then become an assistant editor, reporter, and features writer by the beginning of April, and, finally, an article recalling "Christmas in the Transvaal," written for the *San Francisco Sunday Examiner Magazine* over three years later in mid-December 1899.³

Despite having mined his experiences so fully, Norris apparently had other copy concerning this episode in

his young life—and thus the recent discovery of a short piece published anonymously in the *Occident*, a weekly edited by students at the University of California. Like the articles he wrote for the *Chronicle*, this brief sketch he also dispatched by mail rather than by wire service, and the *Occident* ran it in an issue dated 23 January 1896,⁴ by which time Norris was already on his way home from Africa.

Always aware of the demands of audience, Norris knew that the tone he took in his *Chronicle* pieces would hardly be acceptable for a sketch carried in a student weekly. Thus, in "From Cape Town to Kimberley Mine," the second of the *Chronicle* series, he quickly notes that he "left Cape Town on the 10th of December, late at night," devotes a long paragraph to a meticulous description of the vast desert over which his train passed, says nothing about the train ride itself, and concentrates the bulk of his article on the uniqueness of the huge Kimberley diamond mine, all appropriate subject matter for readers of a San Francisco newspaper. On the other hand, in "A South African Railway Experience," the *Occident* piece, Norris rejects more obvious topics, instinctively opting, instead, for the kind of human interest fare to which his success as a student writer at Berkeley had taught him collegians would readily respond: rather than glossing the rail excursion, Norris focuses on his experience as a novice traveler whose singular lack of familiarity with the customs of the country causes him humorous, if completely predictable, distress. The same railroad journey provided raw material for both an article and the *Occident* sketch, but Norris used that material in very different ways. The student piece, interesting as a previously unattributed text by Norris, one of fourteen written about his sojourn in Africa, also fleshes out by way of comical anecdote a brief period in his life which remains relatively unknown.

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A South African Railway Experience. [Extract from A Johannesburg Letter.]

The train leaves Cape Town at 8:30 p.m., and the fertile portion of the Cape Colony extends but about a hundred miles from Cape Town. I saw nothing of it, and next morning, when daylight came, we were in the Great Karoo, which is a region almost exactly like the most desolate parts of Arizona or Nevada, and, in fact,

it was hard to realize that it was not.

They advertise "first-class sleeping cars" and what they mean by that is a very common-looking affair, divided into compartments holding four persons. The seats are covered with leather (which, so far as I can see, is the only difference between the first-class cars and the second.)

After nine o'clock a fellow came in and asked if I desired bedding. I said "of course" and he collected two shillings sixpence and went away. After awhile another pirate looked in and went away, after depositing a canvas bag, which I took to be his, or some other fellow's, baggage. The others in the compartment began to retire, climbing up on some leather-covered shelves which they pulled down from the wall. Covering themselves with their steamer rugs and using their coats for pillows, they were soon enjoying the luxurious rest afforded by these alleged palatial sleeping-cars.

Had I not already paid for "bedding," I too would have soon been asleep, but no one came to make up the "bedding." About nine o'clock we stopped to give the engine a drink and I managed to attract the attention of the conductor or guard. I told him I had paid for a bed and would like to retire; he replied that he would look the matter up. So we jogged along and at the next station the guard or some other fiend stuck his head in and informed me that he had learned that what I said was quite true, (I suppose he had telegraphed to headquarters) and then he disappeared.

Of course I was somewhat refreshed by the information confirming my own impressions, viz.: that I had told the truth about the bed, but still I could not help wondering if it were a practical or only a theoretical bed; whether adapted to the uses of this world or the next. However, I was recalled to material things by the entrance of the aforesaid pirate, who wanted to know "what all this here row was about? For enny'ow, ef yer don't want ter use yer bed, set up!" And he banged the door shut again.

After mature deliberation it occurred to me that possibly that canvas bag was supposed to be a bed and, on examination, my fears appeared to have been well founded, for it contained a couple of gray blankets, to one of which was buttoned a piece of light-colored cloth which afterwards I found is call, in their language, a sheet. There was also a bag of sand or some similar substance, but I was too tired to open it and could not

find out how it was opened. So I rolled myself up in one of the blankets and went to sleep.

Notes

¹"Mail & Shipping Intelligence," *London Times*, 6 December 1895, 6.

²John O'Hara Cosgrave, signing himself The Witness, "Personalities and Politics," *The Wave*, 14 (2 November 1895), 6. See also Jesse S. Crisler, "Norris's Departure for Johannesburg," *Frank Norris Studies*, No. 3 (Spring 1987), 4-5.

³Joseph R. McElrath, Jr., provides full publication information on these and other Norris pieces mentioned below; see *Frank Norris: A Descriptive Bibliography* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), 215-17, 219, 237.

⁴"A South African Railway Experience: [Extract from a Johannesburg Letter]," *Occident*, 30 (23 January 1896), 22-23.

Scenes from the Spanish-American War: Frank Norris's Holograph Draft of an Introduction to "With Lawton at El Caney"

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As with Frank Norris's other Spanish-American War articles, little is known of the composition history of "With Lawton at El Caney," which saw print not in the monthly magazine he represented as a correspondent, *McClure's*, but in *The Century*, 58 (June 1899), 304-9. But that Norris wrote it in at least two stages is made clear by a two-leaf draft of a portion of the article then entitled "From Dawn to Dark—Fighting." This holograph in the Frank Norris Collection at the Bancroft Library, appears not to have been a part of his initial manuscript given mainly to describing what he witnessed on 1 July 1898 when the U.S. Army seized the town of El Caney from the Spanish. It ends with "etc. etc." and a line drawn to the bottom of the second leaf, this indicating that Norris fashioned it as a new opening for the already drafted, main body of the piece. Whatever the exact sequence of events, however, his labors were largely profitless: comparison with the published work reveals that Norris or a *Century* editor cut most of the detail in the Bancroft manuscript.

The verbatim transcription below is worthy of attention not only because it provides an example of a still-rough draft from Norris's hand but because what never made it into print constitutes a source of new autobiographical information. Previously unrecorded are Norris's recollections of the long, slow voyage from Port Tampa along the Cuban coast to Santiago; his sighting of the American squadron blockading the harbor there to prevent the escape of Admiral Cervera's "Phantom Fleet" of warships; the shelling of Daiquiri; and the initial landing of American soldiers.

As important, the holograph confirms Norris's having been present at the most important meeting between the Americans and the Cuban revolutionaries in the early days of the conflict. In his *Frank Norris: A Biography*, Franklin Walker situated Norris among the party, led by General William Shafter and Admiral William Sampson, that landed to the west of Santiago de Cuba at Asseraderos to parlay with the Cuban General Calixto Garcia regarding where the Americans should be put ashore and what role the Cuban nationalists would play in the defeat of the Spanish. Walker did so, however, solely on the word of a not especially reliable witness to Norris's life whom he interviewed in 1930: James F.J. Archibald. No other contemporary or later student of the war ever placed Norris at Asseraderos. Only in Norris's holograph does one find verification of Archibald's claim.



From Dawn to Dark—Fighting.

by
Frank Norris.

There was little of the dramatic in the arrival of the transport fleet, that bore the 5th army corps, off Santiago. It was at first hardly even picturesque and it did not happen at all as one had expected or wished. Instead of "raising" the Cuban coast suddenly in the neighborhood of our destination, we coasted edged along its capes and promontories for days. When we did arrive, there was nothing to indicate in the nature of the land to indicate that we were any nearer Santiago than when we had left Tampa ten days before, and for over a quarter of an hour we had been studying a group

of sombre colored ships, ~~just dist~~ close inshore and just distinguishable against the blurred background of palms ~~and~~ before the conviction ~~began~~ slowly began to force itself upon the mind that ~~these this~~ these must be the blockading squadron.

~~When I remember~~ The events of the next two or three days come back to the ~~minds eye-like~~ imagination without the connecting ~~links~~ links that intervened, without the trivial details that followed after one event and that led up to the other. Only the essentials, the striking pictures, remain, as though one were looking at a kinetoscope in which gaps,—fortunately of no importance—had occurred in the films.

There is the picture of the conference at Asseraderos, ~~Shafte~~ Shafter upon a diminutive donkey riding up into the foothills to meet Garcia, a swarm of Cuban soldiers, ragged beyond words, Sampson in spotless ducks, ~~an~~ Cuban women, sturdy hard featured camp followers, making coffee. There is the picture of the bombardment of Daiquiri, preliminary to the landing, ~~of~~ the green slope of the mountain above the red roofed town, the town itself afire in three places, the iron ore pier, the indigo water, dotted over with boats loaded with soldiers, the warships, the sudden unchaining of a wild hurricane of a thunder and white smoke and a group of foreign attachés on the upper deck of our transport—the Segurança—busy with note book, field glass, and camera. ~~There these~~ There is the picture of the actual debarking of the troops from our own ~~s~~ ship, ~~files~~ lines of soldiers in field equipment, ~~bearing, of~~ ~~haversack, blanket roll and rifle~~ crowding in single file through the dining saloon at breakfast time, ~~where~~ with all the attachés, correspondents and general officers at table, the white jacketed waiters elbowing the soldiers aside as they came and went with their trays. And then there is the picture of the time when we ourselves were allowed to go ashore, weighted down with baggage, scrambling down the companion ladder, falling in a ~~mist~~ formless heap into the bottom of the boat, rowed ashore like so much impedimenta and spilled out at last upon the crazy jetty a bewildered aggregate of ~~of~~ camera cases, field glasses, ~~haves~~ haversacks, ~~of~~ brand new revolvers in brand new belts, blanket rolls, saddles, canteens and riding boots.

Well, we were in Cuba.

The regiment whose fortunes we had elected to ~~share~~ follow, ~~that is to say~~ incidentally, whose rations we had

hoped to share, had gone on ahead the day before. We delayed only long enough in Daiquiri to readjust our packs then pushed on after it. We caught it at Siboney, rolling on the grass and kicking its heels ~~under a~~ under a grove of cocoa nut palms, luxuriating in its freedom after the long days of cramped quarters on shipboard. For ~~upwards of~~ a week or more, nothing extraordinary happened to us. We marched and we countermarched. We broke camp and pitched it ~~we~~ and one morning heard ~~the~~ sounds of firing off in the hills ~~one morning~~ and ten hours later knew that Guasimas had been fought.

Then we moved forward by easy marches to a point on the Santiago road about three miles ~~this side~~ this side of El Paso and sat down and waited for something to happen. For three days we lay here, occupied for the most part in ~~discovering~~ absolutely futile attempts to keep dry and in devising new methods of frying mangoes in bacon grease. Regiment after regiment streamed by us on the road to the "front." Brigades and whole divisions went on ahead of us in such numbers that instead of being in the lead we found ourselves in the rear. Already there were rumors of a surrender and we began to believe that there would be no fighting around Santiago after all.

Then suddenly there was an alert.

"We're going to hike out of here as soon as Capron's battery comes along in about an hour now, and say, joking aside, if anything turns up tomorrow, you know what my address is."

It was a second lieutenant who spoke, but we heard him without surprize. All at once every man in the brigade seemed to understand that tomorrow there was going to be a battle. Where was it to be? Where were we to go? No one ~~knew~~ could tell. But for the first time we heard a new name. Somebody had pronounced the word Caney.

Then the battery did come along and from one end of the ~~brigade~~ camp to the other the bugles began to call. At five in the afternoon the brigade (~~Lawton's it was~~) (Ludlow's it was) moved off in a long column in the battery's wake. Three hours later we were still marching. By the time it was fairly dark, the column had begun to climb the slopes of the foothills that encircle Santiago like a vast horse shoe. It was about half past nine o'clock.

The column went forward through the night etc. etc.