Art of War Papers

A Legacy of Ashes:

The US Army and the Destruction of San Francisco

Erik C. Alfsen, Chaplain (Major), US Army

US Army Command and General Staff College Press
US Army Combined Arms Center
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

The cover photo is courtesy of wikimedia commons. *Soldiers in San Francisco 1906 ruins*. Soldiers from the Presidio stand amid the rubble of fallen buildings after the earthquake. The Hall of Records (dome) is in the background (right). On 18 April 1906 at 5:15 AM a quake of 8.25 on the Richter scale hit San Francisco. Greater destruction came from the fires afterwards. The city burned for three days. The combination destroyed 490 city blocks and 25,000 buildings, leaving 250,000 homeless and killing between 450 and 700. Estimated damages, over $350 million. DA-SN-03-00962, 18 April 1906, Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Soldiers_in_San_Francisco_1906_ruins_DA-SN-03-00962.JPEG.

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A US Army Command and General Staff College Press Book
Published by the Army University Press

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Alfsen, Erik C., author. | U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Press, issuing body.
Title: A legacy of ashes : the US Army and the destruction of San Francisco / Erik C. Alfsen.
Other titles: US Army and the destruction of San Francisco | Art of war papers.
Description: [Fort Leavenworth, Kan.] : Army University Press, [2021] | Series: [Art of war papers] | "A US Army Command and General Staff College Press book." | Includes bibliographical references.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021034732 | ISBN 9781940804125 (paperback)
Subjects: LCSH: San Francisco Earthquake and Fire, Calif., 1906. | Disaster relief--California--San Francisco--History--20th century. | Crisis management--California--San Francisco--History--20th century. | Assistance in emergencies--California--San Francisco--History--20th century. | United States. Army--Civic action--History--20th century. | Civil-military relations--California--San Francisco--History--20th century.
Classification: LCC HV600 1906 .A54 2021 | DDC 355.3/40979461--dc23 | SUDOCD 110.18:SA 5
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021034732

September 2021

Edited by
Elizabeth J. Brown

Program Description

The Command and General Staff College (CGSC) Art of War Scholar's program offers a small number of competitively select officers a chance to participate in intensive, graduate level seminars and in-depth personal research that focuses primarily on understanding strategy and operational art through modern military history. The purpose of the program is to produce officers with critical thinking skills and an advanced understanding of the art of warfighting. These abilities sare honed by reading, researching, thinking, debating and writing about complex issues across the full spectrum of modern warfare, from the lessons of the Russo-Japanese war through continuing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, while looking ahead to the twenty-first century evolution of the art of war.

Abstract

In the early morning of 18 April 1906, a massive earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay Area. The initial tremor was estimated at a 7.9 moment magnitude, leading to a conflagration that destroyed thousands of buildings, hundreds of millions of dollars of property, and led to the deaths of an estimated 3,000 individuals. In the hours following the earthquake a joint military force led by Brigadier General Frederick Funston of the US Army Department of California mobilized to provide security, firefighting, and disaster relief. The Army's actions during the crisis were fraught with legal and practical problems, ultimately leading to the unnecessary destruction of tens of millions of dollars of property and untold civilian casualties. This study proposes that military leadership in firefighting and security efforts were culpable for the unnecessary loss of property and human life during the crisis, while the humanitarian and medical relief efforts were critical in the recovery of the city following the conflagration. The manuscript attempts to close the gap between civilian and military scholarship on this event and concludes with implications for Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA) missions in the modern era.

Acknowledgments

I would like to first thank my wife for her love and support as I pursued this project. I would also like to thank my coach and mentor Dr. Phillip Kramer for encouraging me to pursue the MMAS, and my history instructor, Dr. John Hosler for his guidance and direction in historical methodology and archival research.

Additionally, I am very grateful to the members of my thesis committee for their assistance with this project; Dr. Mark Hull, Dr. David Mills, and Mr. Stephen Tennant for their patience and assistance along the way. Lastly, I owe a debt of gratitude to my peers in the Art of War Scholars Program, as well as the Ike Skelton Chair, Dr. Dean Nowowiejski for his support and mentorship.

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Chapter 1
Great Harm Was Done

A massive earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay Area in the early morning of 18 April 1906. The quake left the city crumbling and on fire and many dead. Responding to the crisis, Brigadier General Frederick Funston of the United States (US) Army Department of California brought soldiers into the city to secure federal property. Funston then communicated with the Mayor, Eugene Schmitz, who appealed to Funston to assist in protecting the city from looting and disorder, as well as aid in firefighting efforts through the use of explosives. With Major General Adolphus Greely, Funston's supervisor, out of town, Funston moved forward with forming a joint military task force to provide security and aid in the demolition efforts.

Civilian scholars have historically criticized the military's involvement during the crisis; The Army's actions were fraught with legal and practical problems, ultimately leading to the unnecessary destruction of property and civilian casualties. Downplayed are the leadership and logistical successes by the military—especially during the city's recovery. As critical as civilian historians have been, military historians have been noticeably and questionably more generous. There is a wide gap between civilian and military accounting that, at times, even conflict with eyewitness testimony. This manuscript purposes to close this gap by reviewing established scholarship—both civilian and military, examining original sources, investigating the key decision-makers and re-evaluating the history, actions and events surrounding the military's involvement in the 1906 crisis.

I believe that the military leadership in firefighting and security efforts were culpable for the unnecessary loss of property and human life during the crisis, while the humanitarian and medical relief efforts were critical to the city's recovery. But these are broad statements and the evidence lies in the details. Decisions are not made in a vacuum and actions must be considered in the contexts in which they occurred, beginning with the fateful earthquake that April morning.

It was 5:12 a.m. when the earthquake struck the San Francisco Bay Area on the morning of 18 April 1906. The San Andreas Fault released a powerful burst of force estimated at a moment magnitude of 7.9, an equivalent explosion of roughly 7 million tons of trinitrotoluene (TNT).[1] The violent shaking lasted from 45 to 60 seconds and was felt as far away

as Oregon and Los Angeles. Throughout the city buildings shook furiously, facades fell into the street, homes slid off their foundations, and some structures collapsed entirely. Water mains across the peninsula sheared in half, leaving fire hydrants dry.

While the earthquake was significant, the initial damage would have been manageable were it not for the fires, fires which devastated San Francisco over the next three days, despite the lack of wind to spread the flames. Firefighters rushed to extinguish the flames, but with no running water in the city, their steam engines were of little use, and their chemical engines were too small to meet the scale and volume of the growing conflagration. The slow-burning fire claimed the city's financial and residential districts block after block, while many citizens stood helplessly in the streets watching the flames approach their homes and businesses.

As smoke rose in the early morning hours, Funston, the Deputy Commander of the Army's Pacific Division, headquartered in San Francisco, made a fateful decision to send federal troops into the city. His initial intent was limited to securing government property, such as the military storehouses in the city, the United States (US) Mint, Federal Courthouse, and US Customs House. He likely would have argued that protecting federal and military property was within his authority and served a legitimate military purpose. However, at the request of Schmitz, a corrupt politician and union boss, Funston made a decision to use soldiers, sailors, and marines to police the civilian population, shoot suspected looters on sight, and aid in the demolition of buildings in hopes of creating a fire break.[2] Later, in coordination with municipal authorities, the Army followed orders to seize and dispose of liquor (originating from the fear that citizens in working-class neighborhoods would become inebriated in the face of the coming flames). The sight of soldiers with bayonets policing the city and imposing strict discipline on the citizenry led many inside and outside San Francisco to believe that "martial law" was in effect, and that the Army was in control.[3] Some newspapers even falsely reported that President Theodore Roosevelt himself had given the order.[4] After the flames subsided, many challenges remained. With hundreds of thousands now homeless, and much of the city destroyed, there was a pressing need for housing, sustenance, and assurance of health and welfare for those left in San Francisco. Possessing the logistical and administrative capacity to assist in this area, the military involvement in the relief operations continued in full force into July of that year.

The most common problem, haggled over by scholars studying the military response during the fire, was that from the very beginning of the

emergency, the ad hoc joint task force that occupied the city had no legal grounds to do so. The Insurrection Act of 1807 authorized the use of federal forces, at the request of a governor or state legislature, by executive authority of the president of the United States, with the purpose of suppressing lawlessness and rebellion. It was the president's prerogative to approve or deny that request.

Such was the case in San Francisco during the 1856 Vigilance Committee Crisis 50 years before the earthquake. In that precedent-setting crisis, armed vigilantes had taken control of law and order in this very same city and refused to comply with court orders. Governor J. Neely Johnson appealed to the commanding general of the Pacific Division (one of Greely's forerunners), Brigadier General John E. Wool. Wool refused to intervene and referred the governor to the president. Support from the president was necessary to invoke the Insurrection Act and allow for a legal intervention by federal forces. President Franklin Pierce declined to intervene, believing the "good citizens" of San Francisco could work it out on their own. The governor appealed once more to the naval commander at Mare Island, the famed David G. Farragut, then a captain, who also refused, citing the need for presidential authorization.[5]

The same situation existed during the 1906 disaster. While the state authorities had grounds to request federal assistance, the employment of those forces, and the scope of their duties, required the approval of the president. And yet, no approval was sought until after the flames were extinguished. Any invocation of the insurrection act to maintain order would have placed the independent military force, not at the subordination of the civil authority, but "enforcing something like martial law, if not engaging in all-out war."[6] With no presidential authority, or even request, the military action cannot be defended by the Insurrection Act. The military explicitly denied they were executing laws on their own and instead insisted that they were working under the auspices of the local authorities, "in the nature of posse comitatus for the maintenance of public order."[7] This defense is just as troubling.

While the US Army had a long history of functioning in law enforcement roles following crises (such as the Chicago Fire of 1871), the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 created further legal constraints on the use of the military for domestic policing:

> From and after the passage of this act it shall not be lawful to employ any part of the Army of the United States as a posse comitatus or otherwise under the pretext or for the purpose of

> executing the laws, except in such cases and under such circumstances as such employment of said forces may be expressly authorized by act of Congress; and no money appropriated by this act shall be used to pay any of the expenses incurred in the employment of any troops in violation of this section; and any person violating the provisions of the this section shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine not exceeding $10,000 or imprisonment not exceeding two years, or both such fine and imprisonment.[8]

Not surprisingly, the interpretation of both the Insurrection Act and Posse Comitatus Acts are diverse, and case law tends to err on the side of civic order and public safety. However, even in the most liberal interpretation, the use of military force for domestic policing and enforcement of public law required the approval of congress, and the use of an independent military force for restoring order in a crisis or rebellion was only at the discretion of the president.

Neither branches of government were consulted when the order to police the city was given—a clear violation of federal law was committed on the morning of 18 April 1906. On 28 April, just ten days after troops had entered San Francisco, Governor George Pardee requested that federal forces remain in the city.[9] The emergency funding authorization enacted by congress, along with the president's approval of Pardee's request was viewed by the Army as retroactive approval for the earlier employment of forces under the Posse Comitatus Act. However, this interpretation assumes much and dismisses too quickly Funston's actions during the fire. Even if one was to assume Funston deployed his troops under proper authority, his orders to shoot those suspected of petty crimes were not lawful. The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 only allows for the use of troops to enforce public law, not for the enactment of "martial law." Schmitz had no authority under municipal, state, or federal law to order the executions of suspected criminals. The order was illegal in California and unconstitutional in federal juris prudence. Even if Funston had been granted approval under posse comitatus, he could not justly carry out an order from a municipal official, an order that violates the law.

In the days and years following the fire, municipal, state, and federal authorities insisted that "martial law" had never actually been declared, but that the military was supporting the legal enforcement of criminal and civil law. No mention of the suspension of civil rights, or invocation of the Insurrection Act of 1807 was included in the official reports. Officials were

correct in acknowledging that at the start of the crisis military intervention was not approved by Congress or President Roosevelt, nor was federal assistance requested during the crisis by Pardee. While "martial law" was not formally declared, it certainly existed.

The right to life, liberty, and property are paramount to the American legal system. While the term "martial law" has no precise legal meaning, it is often associated with the suspension of Habeas Corpus.[10] Under such a writ, the authority must present someone held captive to a court, thus ensuring the lawfulness of the detention. The term often represents the basic tenants of due process. "Martial law" is also typically connected to the suspension of civil liberties like the right to free speech, freedom of movement, and freedom from unwarranted search and seizure. While also highly debated, even the most liberal interpretation limits this authority, under the above-mentioned laws, to the president and Congress. The state may opt to provide this authority to the governor in its constitution. In the case of San Francisco in 1906, the military commander accepted on face value the authority of the mayor of a municipality to suspend the basic rights of citizens. Funston's acceptance of requests to police the city and shoot looters is problematic.

Policing the city received the brunt of criticism toward soldiers in the post-quake emergency, but the military's efforts in firefighting had just as much cause for criticism. While not illegal, the technique of combating the conflagration through demolishing buildings as firebreaks caused more damage and started more fires than the fires fought by hand with buckets, shovels, and mops. Once the initial supply of dynamite was expended, the Army officers aiding with the demolition turned to the next explosive material they had readily at hand: giant powder and gun powder from the many coastal artillery batteries lining the California coast. The report published by the San Francisco Fire Department admitted, "Great harm was done during the first days of the fire by the indiscriminate use of black powder, it developed that when black powder was exploded it threw off a combustion that ignited all woodwork with which it came in contact, thus starting additional fires. Giant powder, made of nitroglycerine was also used with same results."[11] Unfortunately, when the gun powder ignited, it shot flames and burning debris into the air, reaching nearby structures and spreading fires in new directions and across broad streets that would have acted as natural firebreaks.

The Army's firefighting effort also failed to take advantage of the human capital motivated to save their homes and businesses. Instead of allowing private citizens to fight the fires on their own property, soldiers

forced people to evacuate at the point of a bayonet. Sentries restricted movement across busy thoroughfares and prohibited people crossing into burning sections of the city to retrieve property or fight fires. In many cases where private citizens did stay and fight fires, they were able to accomplish a lot of good.

Another questionable practice during the crisis response was the widespread confiscation of private property by military members for "official use," as well as looting by service members themselves. The most commonly procured commodity was transportation. Hundreds of horses, wagons, and automobiles were taken or impressed. Many citizens were willing to lend their resources to help, but many complaints were lodged, leaving a paper trail demonstrating the size and scope of the seizures.

Another bureaucratic decision was made to confiscate and destroy copious amounts of alcohol. Soldiers and marines were witnessed breaking into liquor stores, groceries, and saloons across the city, destroying liquor by the barrel—but not before enjoying some themselves. Operating under often misunderstood orders from Funston and Schmitz, subordinate units scoured the city, breaking into liquor stores and saloons, destroying liquor by the barrel; but not without partaking of course. Litigation and claims against the government for destroyed liquor continued for years after the fire. Not only was personal property seized, but so were persons. One of the most common complaints by working age males remaining in San Francisco after the fire was their impressment for work parties and debris clearing teams. Between confiscation of property, ineffective firefighting techniques, the enforcement of order by force, and the impressment of labor, many unlawful decisions were made that had no warrant and violated the rights of the citizens already imperiled by the earthquake and fires.

Following the disaster, Greely, the actual commander of the Pacific Division—who was on leave during the first days of the catastrophe—produced a report of the military's involvement. Military history writers have used this report to laud the noble efforts of the joint force and its commanders, and it helped to create a self-congratulatory narrative of the events of 1906. However, the accuracy and transparency of the report should be viewed with skepticism. Greely found no wrongdoing in Funston's actions, and minimized the shooting of civilians and alleged illegal acts by service members. He also estimated low casualty numbers stemming from the disaster.[12] Analysis using primary sources will show that the Army's report glosses over the facts, omits data available to investigators, ignores the poor choices of leaders, and portrays a brighter depiction than what actually occurred. Early written accounts of reputable eyewitnesses,

government correspondence, official reports produced by other organizations, interviews in the later twentieth century with survivors, and photographic evidence paint a troubling picture of the military support to civil authorities in 1906. All these sources and more were available to Greely and his inspectors general during their investigation, yet their accounts were not included in the report to the secretary of war.

The troubling actions of the military during the initial crisis response are not the whole story; they did plenty of which to be proud. For example, the actions of Navy Lieutenant Frederick Freeman, who at the time was in command of Torpedo Boat Destroyer *USS Prebble,* should be credited for his valiant efforts to save the city's waterfront. By rigging up a system of pumps and hoses from tug boats and other vessels, Freeman and his contingent of sailors, marines, attached soldiers, and civilians managed to fight off the flames from the docks and storehouses.[13] Maps of the burnt districts show a two-block safe zone which they managed to protect. These docks were needed for the evacuation of up to 250,000 people from the city, and would be critical in delivering supplies and aid to the imperiled city in the weeks following the fire.[14]

The greatest successes of the military disaster relief efforts came after the flames were extinguished. In an era that predated the Federal Emergency Management Agency by 73 years, and nearly a century before the Department of Homeland Security would be envisioned, there were no federal organizations prepared to give assistance to civil authorities facing catastrophe. In past disasters, Congress had provided financial aid and tax relief, but had no means to physically offer assistance. By 1905, the American Red Cross had received a congressional charter to fill this vacuum, and Secretary of War William Howard Taft served as chairman of the executive board.[15] The Red Cross, relying heavily on local volunteers already impacted by the disaster, did not have the capacity to provide physical support and organization to the stricken city by the bay. Supplies and food began to pour in to California, creating a need for a distribution strategy. Money and materiel were not the problem, logistics was.

There was one organization who had the manpower and experience to deliver the needed resources: the US Army. Under Funston and Greely's leadership, and with the help of the Army bureaus in Washington, the military used its expertise to appropriately alleviate suffering and ensure the survival of the refugees. Ultimately, the military's quick delivery and distribution of humanitarian aid, the provision of shelter for displaced persons, and the delivery of medical aid saved countless lives. While certainly a national endeavor, no other federal, state, or local agency had the ability

to marshal and deploy food, tents, field hospitals, and manpower like the military. An estimated 350,000 people were left homeless or in need of basic support, yet with the help of the Army, there are no accounts of malnutrition, starvation, or deaths from exposure.[16]

With so many displaced people living in close concentration, a lack of sanitation, and the verified presence of communicable diseases, the conditions were ripe for epidemic. The Army's role in providing preventive medicine protecting those at risk is underplayed in current research, and is worthy of recognition. The camps run by the Army were strictly run but provided far better conditions to its residents than those under civilian control. Additionally, the civilian leadership of the recovery was marred by corruption and personal agenda, with certain classes of San Franciscans receiving less than equitable aid. The military tended to be more generous to those on the margins of society, sometimes to the chagrin of elite San Franciscans. While the local officials serving on the powerful relief committees were men of industry and business, with political and financial agendas, the military, as a whole, had no ulterior motives in their support. In the days, weeks, and months following the fire, the joint force provided care, in varying degrees to all who sought it, with less attention paid to ethnicity and creed than one might expect from that day.

Another success by the Army during the disaster response was their assistance in designing and producing "earthquake cottages" as a solution to the long-term housing crisis that faced those living in the relief camps. Displaced persons could stay in them for an extended period. If they so desired, after repaying the $50 it cost to construct the cottage, they were allowed to transport it to a new home site. Dozens of these homes still exist, often having been added on to over the years. This program was perhaps one of the first federal housing initiatives and made the possibility of homeownership a reality for impoverished families recovering from the disaster.

While the lessons of 1906 certainly are still applicable today in planning for Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA), the story of the San Francisco earthquake and fire must be contextualized in its place in history. When faced with adversity and stress, soldiers tend to revert to their training. This is the case in San Francisco in 1906. The military response of the first three days resembled stability operations in the occupation of a foreign city, while the relief mission of the later weeks and months was focused on sustainment and the delivery of supplies, services, and facilities. When given appropriate support functions to operate within, the military employed its expertise to aid in transportation, communications, public

works, medical treatment, housing, logistics, public health, and planning. The investigation following the military's transition of control back to local authorities offered an opportunity for honest assessment. Instead of learning from the experience, addressing the short comings in leadership, and identifying the true successes of the recovery, the military chose to sterilize the reporting, nullifying much of its value for future disasters, and worse, breaking faith with the American public it was sworn to serve.

While the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906 is a worthy case study for the Defense Support of Civil Authorites, the first goal must be to simply understand what happened and why it happened. The gap in civilian and military scholarship must be closed, and this manuscript seeks to offer an honest appraisal of the success and failures of the military response.

Notes

1. W. L. Ellsworth, "Earthquake History, 1769-1989," in *The San Andreas Fault System, California,* ed. Robert E. Wallace (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1990), 152-187.

2. San Francisco, Mayor E. E. Schmitz, *Proclamation by the Mayor Date-dregarding Earthquake* (San Francisco: Library of Congress, 1906), Portfolio 2, folio 25, Broadsides, leaflets, and pamphlets from America and Europe, accessed 3 April 2019, https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.00202500/.

3. "Martial Law Is Declared," *San Francisco Examiner*, 19 April 1906, 4.

4. "Earthquake and Fire: San Francisco in Ruins," *The Call-Chronicle-Examiner,* 19 April 1906, 1. (The three largest papers in the city worked together after the earthquake to publish a joint newspaper).

5. "The San Francisco Vigilance Committee," *Sacramento Daily Union,* 8 September 1865.

6. Jennifer K. Elsea, Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, Rep. No. R42659, The Posse Comitatus Act and Related Matters: The Use of Military to Execute Civilian Law (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 6 November 2018), 22.

7. Adolphus W. Greely, *Earthquake in California, April 18, 1906* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1906), 95. Hereafter cited as Greely Report.

8. US Congress, *Congressional Record,* 45th Cong., 2nd sess., vol. 15, no. 263, 1878.

9. Telegram request to Roosevelt from Pardee for continued presence of federal forces, George Pardee Papers, MSS C-B 400, Box 112, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA.

10 Duncan v. Kahanamoku, 327 US 304, 66 S. Ct. 606, 90 L. Ed. 688 [1946].

11. San Francisco Fire Department, *Reports of Fire Officers of the San Francisco Fire Department on the Fire of 1906* (Copies of Reports in Possession of Batallion Chief Fred J. Bowlen, 1906), 3e. Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA, BANC MSS C-R 68: Volume 7.

12. Greely estimated 498 killed by earthquake and fire, Greely Report, 95. Modern estimates place the estimated casualties closer to 3,000.

13. Department of the Navy, "Report of Lieutenant Frederick N. Freeman Commanding USTBD Perry on His Unit's Activities during the Earthquake and Fire in San Francisco April 18-23, 1906," National Archives Catalog, accessed 12 August 2018, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/296766.

14. Greely Report, 112-13.

15. Marian Moser Jones, *The American Red Cross from Clara Barton to the New Deal* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 117, 137.

16. Greely Report, 78.

Chapter 2
Understanding the Disaster

There is a deep well of material covering the crisis, undoubtedly due to the scale of the destruction, the number of people displaced, and the sensational headlines carried in print media across the country. Never had any other earthquake wrought such destruction on an American city. The devastation was second only to the Galveston hurricane of 1900 which killed more than 8,000 people. Records were compiled by dozens of committees, agencies, and government organizations, as well as private citizens. There are thousands of pages of correspondence and reports that provide historical and scientific context. The most notable compendium on the geology and seismology of the disaster is "The Lawson Report," a two-volume chronicle compiled by the California State Earthquake Investigation Commission in 1906.[1] The largest and most complete appraisal of the post-fire relief efforts available to researchers today is "The San Francisco Relief Survey: The Organization and Methods of Relief Used After the Earthquake and Fire of April 18, 1906."[2] It offers a comprehensive analysis of the efforts of the joint, interagency, and nongovernmental agencies involved in the relief efforts following the disaster, as well as follow-up data collected months and years later detailing the long-term social and economic progress of the recovery. Sadly, perhaps the most comprehensive collection of historical information compiled by an investigative body about the earthquake and fire disappeared sometime in the early twentieth century. The often-mentioned missing report assembled by the Subcommittee on History sought to separate fact from fiction, and contained thousands of eyewitness accounts, committee records, military records, and city reports.[3] The disappearance of this collection creates many gaps in our understanding of the disaster itself and is further lamented by every noteworthy historian.

For the purpose of this manuscript in examining the involvement of the US military in the disaster, the largest source of information is Major General Adolphus Greely's report to Secretary of War William Howard Taft, entitled "Relief Operations Conducted by the Military Authorities of the United States at San Francisco and Other Points," which contained within it dozens of other reports from subordinates and members of the General Staff in Washington. This critical report was delivered in its entirety to Congress in the 1906 Annual Report of the War Department.[4] Although not present for the initial three days of the disaster, as commander of the Army's Pacific Division, Greely returned to San Francisco at the

end of the fire and launched an investigation into the actions of the military. His task was enormous, as there were thousands of troops in the city at the height of the intervention. While a review of dispatches, personal accounts, and newspapers reveals that Funston, and subsequently Greely, maintained a unity of command over a joint force of soldiers, sailors, and marines in the city (as well as attachments from the Revenue Cutter Service, the precursor to the US Coast Guard); Greely's report leaves out the sister services entirely.

Although Greely seemed to publicly back the decisions of Funston, minimizing questionable actions taken by him and the civil authorities, Greely's personal correspondence, his own autobiography, and in places throughout the report he appeared troubled by what he had returned to on 22 April. He rescinded directives given by Funston, expressed his desire to withdrawal troops from the city, and made quick changes to operations in law enforcement—recognizing the dilemma in which the War Department had been placed. While Greely's report provides the most thorough period analysis of the Army's actions, many of his facts are at odds with other records of the time (such as his claims of low casualty numbers, denial of shootings by the regular army troops, and denial of looting by soldiers). Another helpful report which focused on military action was a 1907 article in the *Infantry Journal* by Major Carroll Devol, an eyewitness to the events that unfolded, and a contributor to the Greely Report. Devol offers a chronology and list of units involved, as well as illustrations and maps that aided in this project.[5]

Devol's article, along with many newspaper articles from the days after the fire, offer invaluable insights into the unfolding of the disaster and the way it was perceived by the city's inhabitants and the nation. However, it should be understood that print journalism alone could easily lead the researcher astray. Much as the topic of "fake news" has been of concern in 21st century politics, so it was in the early 20th century. News outlets focused on selling papers often reported less than accurate accounts, and the rush to get a story out often came at the expense of the facts. Many of those early stories contain conglomerations of disaster-related urban legends that mirror the headlines of earlier catastrophes in Baltimore, Galveston, and Chicago; stories of ghouls cutting fingers from the hands of the dead to steal rings are recycled in 1906. Articles decrying "mercy killings" by the authorities, and mass shootings of mobs by the military and police were widespread. One such article about the authorities killing patients at a mental hospital drew the ire of Pardee, who called the journalist "a liar and a fool."[6] It is also notable that the further away from the disaster

the stories appeared (such as New York or Chicago), the more sensational the headlines. With so many telegraph lines down, accurate reporting was limited on the details of the situation. What facts the media lacked they often made up to fill their articles.[7] The "muckrakers" of the early twentieth century are not always reliable and should be reviewed with that in mind.

Local papers reporting on the fire manifest a different type of bias. Many of the Bay Area news outlets, controlled by an elite class of San Franciscans, were actively involved in underplaying the effects of the earthquake and branding the disaster as "The Great Fire." Earthquakes are unpredictable, and could strike again at any moment, scaring off potential investors as the city's elite class of oligarchs sought to generate capital to rebuild the city. Many of the property insurance policies of the time did not include earthquake coverage, whereas total loss from a fire would be covered. Nonetheless, many newspapers worked to provide accurate reporting from reliable sources and do offer corroborating information of value to this research, particularly in understanding public perception.

Additionally, there are mountains of personal correspondence, dispatches, journals, personal accounts, and oral histories of the eyewitnesses of the fires that exist in archives around the country. Hundreds of these records, such as those held by the Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkley, and those in the California Historical Society archives; provide powerful eyewitness accounts of the devastation of the disaster, the actions of soldiers in the city, and the recovery efforts in the weeks and months following. The records of the War Department held by the National Archives and Records Administration were invaluable in this research, as well as the many letters, journals, recordings, and video interviews with survivors carried out in the latter half of the 20th century which aided in observing patterns in the actions of the military during the disaster.

Other helpful sources are the thousands of images taken directly following the earthquake and during the fire. Many volumes of pictures help tell the story of the military's involvement, largely due to the advent of new technology. By 1906, the Eastman Kodak Camera Company was selling mass-produced $2 cameras that required no expert skills or costly equipment. Popular advertisements for the Brownie camera highlighted to potential buyers that anyone could use it; "you press the button, we do the rest."[8] This readily available and easy-to use technology led to over 20,000 photographs being taken (more than any other disaster in history to that point).[9] Analysis of the vast collections in the National Archives in San Bruno, California, the Bancroft Library in Berkley, and the city's collection in the San Francisco Library help to convey the full scope of the

catastrophe and are critical in gaining a clear understanding of the military response to the crisis.

While over one hundred books have been written on the earthquake and fire, many of them were for popular consumption, often sensationalizing events, and have limited value for this project. Admittedly, the book that first interested me in this Manuscriptwas Dennis Smith's *San Francisco is Burning: The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and Fires.*[10] Smith, a career firefighter with the New York City Fire Department weaves a riveting and well-researched tale but uses some artistic license and lacks citations. Smith also levies weighty allegations against Funston without displaying a full awareness of their significance from a military perspective.

Of the scholarly authors who laid a foundation for this project, perhaps the most important is Gladys Hansen. Hansen served for many decades as the head archivist for the city of San Francisco and dedicated her life to the study of the earthquake and fire. It was Hanson's archival work that led to the widely accepted death toll calculation of 3,000 from the catastrophe.[11] Additionally, Hansen was one of the first to rediscover the contributions of Navy Lieutenant Frederick Freeman and the crew of the USS Prebble as being responsible for saving the city's waterfront. Hanson spent thousands of hours digitizing primary sources such as correspondence, dispatches, and reports that aided in this project. Having written or co-authored at least five separate books, Hansen's discoveries paved the way for the many researchers who followed.

Several later scholarly works offered helpful background information. Philip Fradkin's book, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* was the most valuable secondary resource for this project.[12] Fradkin has offered an incredibly detailed account of the events of the earthquake and fire while also examining the politics of the recovery. Andrea Rees Davies, professor of humanities at Stanford University, has provided a helpful analysis of the recovery, and the experience of poor and minority classes in her book, *Saving San Francisco: Relief and Recovery After the 1906 Disaster.*[13] Another more recent work that offered beneficial perspective on the social, cultural, and political underpinnings of the disaster was Joanna Dyl's *Seismic City: An Environmental History of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake.*[14] A professor of history, Dyl has drawn from her dissertation research to explain the ecology of the disaster, seismic analysis, and the economic impact of the recovery from the lens of gender, race, and social class.

In the last decade there has been new interest in the earthquake and fire in relation to social justice. Steven Kroll-Smith's recent book typifies this perspective, arguing that the recovery was inherently unequal.[15] This manuscript provides context for the military intervention in San Francisco in terms of the disparity between privileged elites and poor working class. The listed scholars make a compelling case that relief policies in San Francisco "reinscribed normative class and gender hierarchies," and "repackaged the past by reinforcing contemporary social norms."[16] Certainly, there were many decisions made during the recovery that resulted from social biases and perpetuated inequality. While their motivations differed from those of local authorities, military leaders were also not free from personal bias.

Henderson, Fradkin, Davies, Dyl, and Kroll-Smith offer useful broad background on the earthquake and challenges in the recovery. Yet none focus primarily on the military's actions during the fire, or their impact during the recovery. Of the recovery efforts borne by the military, critique is often levied for shortcomings, but little recognition is offered for the complexity of the problems solved.[17] All too often civilian scholars hand wave the logistics miracle that was made possible by military support after the flames were extinguished. This intends to fill in some of these research gaps.

While civilian researchers too often do not give the military its due for the support in the relief; military historians are guilty of ignoring the inconvenient truths of earthquake and fire. To date, the most thorough academic work specifically addressing the disaster from the Army's point of view was a manuscript written by then Major Floyd A. Davis in 1980 for the Command and General Staff College.[18] His research continues to be used at Fort Leavenworth for instruction in disaster relief, and is worthy of greater examination. Davis makes the case that the Army's actions were heroic, vital in saving the city from the calamity, and that no credible evidence of misconduct exists.[19]

His manuscript provides a good reference to units involved and actions taken and offers a thorough retelling of the military relief efforts following the fire. However, one of the only primary sources consulted is Greely's report as presented in the congressional record. He makes only a weak attempt to address accusations of violence by soldiers, the seizure of private property, and the ineffective demolition by the Army of buildings in the fires path. When he acknowledges mistakes such as the forced eviction of residents trying to save their homes, Davis offers quick excuses that, "such incidents couldn't be helped," especially given "the requirement for

discipline."[20] If Greely's report is accurate, and "no serious disorder arose" during the fire, then surely the greatest need was not to enforce order, but rather to stop the fire that was destroying the city.[21]

His main source outside of Greely's reports are news clippings. His handling of newspaper reporting on such abuses is inconsistent; first asserting that they should not be trusted because newspapers of the time were often inaccurate and got the facts wrong.[22] However, when it suits him (or more accurately, when the reporting favored the Army) he changes position. For example, in his conclusion, Davis states that we should believe that the Army did an effective and ethical job handling the disaster because, first, they said they did, and second, several publications said they did.[23] He is quick to accept the answers of the Army's reports and publications, and employs an ad hominem, calling those who doubt the Army's objectivity cynics, noting, "the conversion of cynics is rarely worth the effort that such a task requires."[24] His manuscript accepts the military's narrative at face value and lacks primary sources and scholarly inquiry into the discrepancies of the Greely Report, leaving much room for future contribution.

The only official US Army history of the military involvement comes from the Center for Military History.[25] Their article, entitled, "Thank God for the Soldiers," states that "martial law had not been declared," which was true.[26] However, the article evinces no awareness of the allegations made regarding the improper use of force against civilians or the violation of the Posse Comitatus Act by Funston on the morning of 18 April. And while a legitimate legal authority never authorized the use of deadly force by the military, in reality martial law was enforced by Funston and Schmitz. The Center for Military History article paints a word picture of benevolent soldiers delivering help and aid to the suffering city, while the graphic illustration they chose to use portrays infantrymen bearing rifles and cartridge belts, while the city burns behind them (which is at least closer to the truth). The "Thank God for the Soldiers" article is the worst kind of military history. As the historian Lord John Acton said when describing scholars who conceal the errors of the past, "the strong man with the dagger is followed by the weak man with the sponge."[27] Here exists a great divide between civilian scholarship and military history. Both seem blind to their own biases. A holistic understanding of the military response requires a reconciliation between civilian and military accounting. If nothing else, there is much room for revision in the Army's own account of the 1906 disaster.

We are lucky to have a wide body of primary sources from the earthquake and fire of 1906. Official reports offer detailed information. Individual accounts offer insight into the human dimension of the disaster. Thousands of images provide a window into the harrowing past. There is no shortage of scholarship available on the earthquake, fire, and aftermath. What is missing, and what this manuscript aims to provide, is a scholarly analysis of the military's actions in the disaster and the positive and negative ramifications with regards to the Defense Support of Civilian Authorities.

Notes

1. Andrew Lawson, in Collaboration with the State Earthquake Investigation Commission, *The California Earthquake of April 18, 1906: Report of the State Earthquake Investigation Commission in Two Volumes and Atlas,* vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution, 1908), 434-48. Hereafter referred to as Lawson Report.

2. Charles James O'Connor, Francis H. McLean, Helen Swett, James Marvin Motley, Jessica Peixotto, and Mary Robert Coolidge, *San Francisco Relief Survey; the Organization and Methods of Relief Used after the Earthquake and Fire of April 18, 1906* (New York: Survey Associates, 1913).

3. Philip L. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906: How San Francisco Nearly Destroyed Itself* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006), 248-251.

4. US War Department, *Annual Report of the War Department for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 1906* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1906).

5. Carroll A. Devol, "The Army in the San Francisco Disaster," *Infantry Journal* 4 (1907): 59-97.

6. George Pardee, letter to H. C. Capwell, 16 May 1906, George Pardee Papers, MSS C-B 400, Box 113, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA.

7. Malcolm E. Barker, ed., *Three Fearful Days: San Francisco Memoirs of the 1906 Earthquake and Fire* (San Francisco, CA: Londonborn Publications, 2005), 51.

8. Douglas Collins, *The Story of Kodak* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), 67.

9. This is the author's own conservative estimate based on assessment of images available for study in California alone. Thousands are digitized, while thousands more remain stored for future research.

10. Dennis Smith, *San Francisco Is Burning: The Untold Story of the 1906 Earthquake and Fires* (New York: Plume, 2006).

11. Gladys Hansen and Emmet Condon, *Denial of Disaster: The Untold Story and Photographs of the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906* (San Francisco, CA: Cameron and Company, 1989), 160.

12. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906.*

13. Andrea Rees Davies, *Saving San Francisco: Relief and Recovery after the 1906 Disaster* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2011).

14. Joanna L. Dyl, *Seismic City: An Environmental History of San Francisco's 1906 Earthquake* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2017).

15. Steven Kroll-Smith, *Recovering Inequality: Hurricane Katrina, the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906, and the Aftermath of Disaster* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2018), 2.

16. Davies, *Saving San Francisco,* 61.

17. Dyl, *Seismic City,* 91.

18. Floyd Davis, "Soldiers Amidst the Rubble: The US Army and San Francisco Earthquake of 1906" (Master's thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1980).

19. For example, Davis claims, "Not a single person was killed by a soldier." Davis, "Soldiers Amidst the Rubble," 138.

20. Davis, "Soldiers Amidst the Rubble," 60.

21. Greely Report, 23.

22. Davis, "Soldiers Amidst the Rubble," 60-61.

23. Davis, "Soldiers Amidst the Rubble," 140.

24. Davis, "Soldiers Amidst the Rubble," 141.

25. US Army Center for Military History, "Thank God for the Soldiers," US Army Center for Military History, accessed 11 August 2018, https://history.army.mil/documents/SFEarthquake/thanks.jpg.

26. US Army Center for Military History, "Thank God for the Soldiers."

27. John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton, *Lectures on the French Revolution* (New York: Macmillan, 1910), 92.

Chapter 3
Shortcomings in Leadership Military and Civilian

The earthquake and fire of 1906 is a landmark event in the course of US and world history. To best understand what happened, it is essential to examine those who it happened to and through. Background and biographical data are needed to shed light on these events. Much of the context for the military response can only be understood through examination of the leadership personalities who were involved, with a great attempt not to judge them by modern standards, but instead judge them as products of their time, shaped by the army of their time. A brief history of their careers and analysis of their characters is another layer of the foundation for understanding how the events discussed in subsequent chapters plays out how it did.

Brigadier General Frederick Funston

Fredrick Funston was born in Ohio on 9 November 1865. In 1867 his family moved to Allen County Kansas, with his father later serving as a congressman from that district to the US House of Representatives. Funston was a short man, at just five feet tall, but had a big personality to compensate. Despite his family's political connections, Funston failed admission into the United States Military Academy at West Point. After a few years at the University of Kansas, he sought employment as a newspaper reporter and later as a surveyor, participating in expeditions to Death Valley and Alaska, while always writing of his adventures. His time as a reporter prepared him well for his future and gave him incredible expertise in how to spin a story, particularly his own. Later in his career, Funston regularly sought out reporters, gave public speeches, and submitted editorials to large publications without consulting the Department of the Army.[1] His penchant for publicity explains some of his actions in 1906.

In 1896, Funston was in New York City and happened upon a gathering at Madison Square Garden. There he heard Major General Daniel Sickles, the retired Civil War hero, give a rousing speech on the plight of Cuban rebels fighting for independence from Spain.[2] So moved by the speech, Funston settled his affairs and traveled to Cuba to join the rebel cause, fighting alongside other American expatriates. He agreed to serve as a war correspondent with *Harper's Weekly Magazine,* and throughout his time there, Funston wrote prolifically, sending accounts of the fighting to friends and news outlets for publication. In one dispatch he complained about the slow mail service, causing delays to the articles he had mailed

off to *Harper's* and *Scribner's.*[3] In an interview with the *Iola Evening News,* his father told a reporter "really we don't know much about him," other than what they had read in the news.[4] In a letter to his parents published in that article, Funston expressed his desire to publish stories and admitted, "of course, I don't know anything of war, but neither do they [the Cubans]."[5] He later authored a book about his experience in Cuba and the Philippines.[6]

Despite the hundreds of pages Funston wrote about himself in Cuba, no versions of his actions there exist outside of his own, and there is reason to believe they were inflated. In the fall of 1906, President Roosevelt deployed a constabulary force to Cuba to sort out a feud between warring factions, with Funston as a commander in that mission. Secretary of War Taft was the senior administration representative present for the mission and wrote a private letter back to Roosevelt. In it he confided that Funston was not as popular with the Cubans as they had both assumed. Some viewed Funston as a coward who had abandoned them, casting doubt over the accuracy of Funston's accounts of his earlier Cuban service.[7] Taft enclosed a confidential communication of unknown origin to Roosevelt about the matter of Funston's service in Cuba, but no copy of that document exists. Taft also referenced Funston's inefficiency in the field, and lack of organizational skills.[8]

As far as his early service in Cuba, it is known for certain that Funston was captured by the Spanish at one point and that he contracted malaria, but the Spanish paroled him due to his illness. After his release from captivity, Funston traveled back to the United States to recover from the disease and injuries sustained in combat. He also claimed on separate occasions to have been shot through both lungs, the arm, and had both legs broken by one of the nineteen horses shot out from under him; this was a staggering amount of injuries to have sustained in such a short period—not to mention his miraculous recovery without medical treatment.[9] On all accounts, Funston's tales of Cuban service beg credulity.

Following his return, Funston took to the lecture circuit. A gifted entertainer and public speaker, Funston turned his experience in Cuba into profit through his written accounts and speaking engagements—telling stories of his daring feats in the face of danger.[10] Funston's self-promotion seemed to be motivated by his desire for fame and financial gain.[11]

On the eve of America's entry into the Spanish American War, the states began generating volunteer forces for the looming conflict. Kansas had committed to producing four regiments and the governor approached

Funston, well known at this point, about commanding one of those regiments. Funston agreed. Although not having any military experience outside of his time as a partisan in Cuba, he received a commission as a Colonel of Volunteers, and his regiment, the 20th Kansas Volunteers, began mobilizing by 13 May 1898.[12] Instead of Cuba, the 20th Kansas deployed to the Philippines in November of 1898.

Filipinos, under the leadership of President Emilio Aguinaldo, had sought to overthrow Spanish rule in 1898 in concert with US forces. However, after the treaty of Paris led to the Spanish withdrawal, American President William McKinley sought to maintain a presence in the Philippines and carry out a "benevolent assimilation" of the islands.[13] Not desiring to trade one foreign rule for another, the indigenous Filipinos declared their independence in the form of a Philippine Republic, and so began a bitter insurgency.

The 20th Kansas joined the fight, quickly gaining a reputation for bravery in action, if not brutality. One Kansas paper proudly reported, "The 20th Kansas takes no prisoners."[14] Widely publicized letters home from members of the regiment, such as that of Corporal Robert Maxwell, alleged the unit coldly executed detainees, and were re-published by anti-war advocates.[15] In 1902, hearings by the US Senate collected eyewitness statements that corroborated these allegations.[16] Some of Funston's men confirmed the orders to take no prisoners, and alleged that Funston joked not to shoot "too many" detainees.[17] Major General Ewell Ottis investigated the claims of war crimes and found them to be credible, but not egregious in the context of an insurgency.[18]

In April 1899, Funston was recommended for the Medal of Honor for his actions while establishing a rope bridge across the Bagbag River during an engagement with enemy forces. On 2 March 1900, the award was authorized for "most distinguished gallantry in action" in "crossing the river on a raft," and "skill and daring in enabling the General commanding to clear the enemy's entrenched position."[19]

This event begs the question of any military reader: what exactly was a regimental commander doing building a rope bridge during a battle, and who was commanding his regiment while he was doing so? After redeploying his regiment home in October 1899, the Army promoted Funston to Brigadier General of Volunteers, and he returned to the Philippines in early 1900. Funston's tactics were known to be harsh; he imprisoned village elders, and burned down homes not only of suspected insurgents, but also those simply in the vicinity of insurgent activity. He also omi-

nously stated that other punishments were "discreetly administered" on the population.[20] Funston's willingness to use violence on civilians in the Philippines mirrors his lack of hesitation issuing orders six years later to shoot suspects of petty crimes in San Francisco. In March of 1901, Funston again gained notoriety for almost single-handedly capturing President Aguinaldo and landing a major blow against the Filipino insurgency. In a story that Hollywood might have concocted, Funston and several compatriots disguised themselves as prisoners of war, while members of their indigenous partner force disguised themselves as insurgents. The pseudo-prisoners were then led by their captors into the enemy camp and headquarters. Later that evening, with the help of their partner force, they threw off their bonds and seized President Aguinaldo, taking him aboard a waiting riverboat.[21] Funston wrote extensively on this unbelievable mission, yet, once again, his is the only testimony available. In an interview, one of the key witnesses, President Aguinaldo himself, disputed Funston's account, calling him a "fictionizer."[22]

Headlining in papers across the country, he received congratulatory telegrams and letters from notable national figures, such as newspaper magnate William Randolph Hurst, and then Vice President Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt quipped, "This is no perfunctory or formal letter of congratulations. I take pride in this crowning exploit of a career filled with feats of cool courage."[23] As the war ended and volunteer units disbanded, President McKinley and those in the War Department favoring American expansion decided to capitalize on Funston's notoriety and outspoken support of military presence in the Pacific.[24] Although he had never served a day in uniform prior to the war and at that point had only three years of military experience, Funston was given a commission as a brigadier general in the regular army. This was much to the chagrin of some senior leaders in the Army, and garnered attention in the national press.[25] Even in that era, his promotion was almost unprecedented.

It was then that his commentary on his actions in combat drew the attention of more moderate audiences. After redeploying in 1901, Funston initially issued strong denials to the press over the killing of prisoners, mainly due to spirited US Senate hearings involving allegations of war crimes in the Philippines.[26] However, as weeks went by, Funston felt free to brag about tactics that many defined as immoral. In an infamous speech in Chicago in 1902, Funston boasted openly about the detainees he ordered to be executed. His comments consistently carried distinct racial overtones, asserting that the Filipinos lacked intelligence and were not capable of self-government.[27] Funston omitted tales of execution and de-

nied waterboarding in his personal memoir, but he excused them in theory, stating that as insurgents, the enemy was "not entitled to treatment as prisoners of war."[28]

Many began to criticize Funston for his racist and braggadocios claims. Editorialist Josiah Ohl commented;

> Since his return from the Philippines Funston has done a steady stunt in blatant criticism of everybody who has had the temerity to question the methods of the army or who has inferentially declined to fall down and worship the hero whose appointment to a generalship called from Adjutant General Corbin the criticism that he "was making lieutenants out of better stuff" than Funston every day.[29]

Samuel Clemens (writing under the pen name Mark Twain) wrote a scathing satirical rebuke entitled, "A Defence of General Funston," which criticized the methods used to capture Aguinaldo, as well as the treatment of enemy wounded.[30] Clemens identified Funston's desire for notoriety, but satirically claimed that he could not be held at fault because of an "inborn disposition" and offered that perhaps Funston's "conscience leaked out through one of his pores when he was little."[31] Clemens was not alone in his criticism. Regardless of the veracity or verifiability of Funston's accounts of his military action, it is clear through an examination of his writings and speeches that he had either little awareness or a low regard for the law of armed conflict as it applied in his day.[32]

After several congressmen spoke publicly against Funston's commentary, the general began to verbally attack his opponents in the press, going so far as to call for their execution for treason.[33] Having a general officer weighing into public politics and engaging in shouting matches with sitting senators was more than President Roosevelt or the War Department were willing to trade for his ability to drum up support for expansion in the Pacific. On 21 April 1902, Roosevelt sent a personal memo to Secretary of War Elihu Root, calling Funston's comments "entirely improper," and saying that despite his wartime service, Funston "expressed himself at times in a way that is very unfortunate."[34] He asked Root to silence Funston's public comments and not allow him to give any more public speeches.[35]

Thereafter Funston was limited to roles with less autonomy and more supervision, eventually serving in the US Army's Pacific Division as the Commander of the Department of California. Funston resented these slights, having ingratiated himself to Roosevelt with hopes for quick promotion. Funston, always the prolific writer, wrote an editorial newspaper

article prior to Roosevelt's reelection in 1904, encouraging the voters of the state of Kansas not to vote for Roosevelt due to the slights shown to Kansas' native son, Fred Funston.[36] To publicly weigh in to national politics was extraordinary, and countercultural to the American nonpartisan ideal of generalship in the US Army.

The Pacific Division, headquartered at Fort Mason in San Francisco, was under the command of Greely. On 16 April 1906, Greely left the city to attend his daughter's wedding in New York State. On the morning of the 18th, Funston awoke to the jolt of the earthquake. After taking a walk to survey the city, Funston sent a message to the city's mayor, Eugene Schmitz, to inform him that he had decided to send troops into the city to secure federal property affected by the disaster. Schmitz agreed, but requested that Funston send enough troops to aid in policing of the entire city. Concerned about looters, Schmitz issued the now famous order that anyone caught looting should be shot on sight. It is unclear if Funston knew that the mayor of a local municipality did not have the constitutional authority to suspend due process. Having received no professional military education of any kind, it is doubtful that Funston was aware that complying with such a request violated both the Insurrection Act of 1807 and the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878. Funston worked closely with Schmitz, as well the informal committee which formed in the wake of the earthquake. He turned over control to Greely on 22 April 1906, the day after the flames were extinguished. Throughout his life, Funston's charm, confidence, and ability to spin a story won him favor that opened doors for advancement he may not have deserved and was not adequately prepared for. His poor judgement and previous bad actions make his decisions in 1906 somewhat less surprising.

In the years after the disaster, Funston served as the commandant of the US Army's Command and General Staff College, although he never attended the school himself. Later he commanded the Army's punitive expedition into Mexico in search of General Pancho Villa. It was widely reported that Funston was President Woodrow Wilson's first pick to command the American Expeditionary Force in France. Funston died of a massive heart attack on 19 February 1917, on the eve of America's entry into the Great War. Major Douglas MacArthur was charged with delivering the news to Secretary of War Newton Baker, and found him dining that evening with President Wilson. In his memoir, MacArthur recounted delivering the news, "Had the voice of doom spoken, the result could not have been different." Wilson asked MacArthur who he thought should command the American Expeditionary Force. MacArthur recounts, "'I

cannot, of course, speak for the Army, but for myself the choice would unquestionably be General Pershing.' The President looked at me, a long inquisitive look, and then said quietly, 'It would be a good choice.'"[37] Sure enough, Funston's subordinate, John J. Pershing was officially selected two months later to command the American Expeditionary Force.

Figure 3.1. Major General Frederick Funston.

Source: Commandant's Hall, 4th Floor, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS. Note: Funston while serving as the Commandant of the US Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Major General Adolphus Greely

Major General Adolphus W. Greely complements Funston as one of the more interesting and lesser-known figures in the history of the US Army. His unique experiences and personality also offer insight into the decisions made during the crisis of 1906. Like Funston, Greely's distinc-

tive rise to his position of leadership did not fit the norm for the general officers of his day. He also did not attend West Point, and had no political connections to help him advance through the slow-moving bureaucracy of the Army. Nothing short of a Renaissance man, Greely had experience as an infantryman, cavalryman, signal officer, meteorologist, arctic explorer, and published author. A member of the Royal Geographic Society, Greely was also a founding member and trustee of the US National Geographic Society. At the time of the earthquake in 1906, he was already 62 years old and had served an impressive 45 years in the US Army. His previous assignment as the chief of the US Army's Signal Corps from 1887 to 1906, occurred during a time of unprecedented technological advancement and revolutions in military affairs. Greely is remembered today as a gifted administrator and innovator who: brought the Army's communications capabilities into the twentieth century, lobbied for the introduction of motorized transportation into the force, and was the first advocate for the military employment of fixed wing aviation.[38]

Greely was born in Newburyport, Massachusetts on 27 March 1844. After being rejected twice for military service, he enlisted in the 19th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment on 26 July 1861, at the age of 17. He fought in several major engagements of the Civil War, including Antietam and Fredericksburg, and was wounded in action several times.[39] The boy soldier was shaped by the trauma of those bloody years, and often reminisced of his experience in the Union Army. Over the next two years he moved up the enlisted ranks from private to first sergeant. On 18 March 1863, he was promoted to 2nd lieutenant and assigned to the 81st Colored Infantry Regiment. By the war's end, he had received a promotion to the rank of brevet major.

On 22 March 1867, Greely was mustered out of the volunteer force but due to his consistent performance, given a commission in the regular army as a 2nd lieutenant. Over the next 14 years, he served in infantry and cavalry assignments, primarily in signal roles, but had only achieved the rank of 1st lieutenant. Promotions were slow in the post-Civil War army, but his career progression lacked the upward movement of his more successful peers. Sometimes quiet, and always bookish, Greely gained a vast amount of experience through these years with telegraph systems in the western frontier and Indian campaigns. While not remembered by history as the "father" of the Signal Corps or Weather Service, he certainly should be thought of as an uncle. By 1870, Greely was assigned to the Signal Branch and helped to establish the newly commissioned US Weather Bu-

reau, which at that time was the US Army's responsibility. Completely self-taught, Greely became a subject matter expert in meteorology.[40]

In 1881, Greely volunteered to command the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition into the Canadian Arctic near Greenland. The expedition's purpose was to establish meteorological observation stations and collect polar magnetic data.[41] Greely and his twenty-five-man crew established their base of operations at Fort Conger in the most northern portion of Nunavut Territory, the remains of which may still be seen today.

Despite having no previous arctic experience, he and his team of twenty-five men demonstrated intestinal fortitude over the next three ill-fated years. His party surveyed thousands of miles of unexplored territory and set a record for the farthest point north reached by arctic explorers up until that time. While he achieved mission success, Greely lacked charisma and interpersonal skills. He frequently found himself frustrated by his subordinates, and when faced with interpersonal friction was quick to threaten arrest and court-martial, if not physical violence.[42] Greely's senior enlisted soldier, David L. Brainard, noted the "trivial" quarrels Greely found himself in with multiple team members, particularly with his executive officer, Second Lieutenant Frederick Kislingbury, which "seemed disproportionate to the issues involved."[43] In contrast with Funston, Greely's interpersonal woes did not seem to arise from an inflated ego, but from an inability to understand the motives and needs of those around him.

In August of 1883, after failing to be resupplied for two consecutive seasons due to heavy ice flow, Greely made the controversial decision for him and his team to make their way south to retrieve replenishments that were to have been left in predesignated positions at Cape Sabine. This decision was based on the orders he had received at the start of the expedition. Always an idealist, and being a man of strict discipline with full faith and confidence in the institution of the US Army, he followed the orders to the letter. In September of 1883, after they had finished the treacherous journey 500 miles to the south, the party found almost no supplies left by their rescuers. Instead of attempting the trek back to Fort Conger that late in the season, Greely executed a plan to winter at Cape Sabine.[44]

When rescue vessels finally arrived the following June of 1884, they discovered that 18 of the 25 original members of the party had not survived, largely due to starvation, exposure, and illness. One of the team had been executed for stealing rations. Greely, himself, wrote an execution order and gave it to his men to carry out, yet he remained in his sleeping bag while the execution took place. Another team member died aboard

the rescue ship on the way back to the United States.[45] The American public initially hailed the team as heroes, but allegations of cannibalism that long winter soon tainted their legacy. During an autopsy of the remains of Kislingbury, it was reported that his flesh had been butchered. Although he never denied cannibalism took place, Greely denied any knowledge of it at the time.[46] Unfortunately, the story was sensationalized and hung like a specter over his reputation. Beyond that, Greely had dedicated his life in service to his nation, and in many ways felt a debt of gratitude to the institution that had provided him a path of upward mobility from his humble beginnings. The sensational allegations threatened to potentially damage his career, but perhaps what bothered Greely more was the possibility his expedition had left a stain on the reputation and credibility of the US Army.[47] His desire to protect the institution is a pattern of behavior that carried forward to 1906, and served as a contributing factor during the investigation that followed the earthquake and fire.

In 1886, after 25 years of service, Greely was promoted from the rank of 1st lieutenant to captain. Less than a year later, President Grover Cleveland promoted him to the rank of brigadier general and assigned him as chief of the US Army Signal Corps (see figure 3.2). Despite never having served as a field-grade officer, Greely was well suited for the responsibilities given him. During his tenure, he oversaw the installation of tens of thousands of miles of telegraph cable, reaching across Alaska and the Philippines.[48]

As his biographer and protégé Brigadier General Billy Mitchell pointed out, Greely was a forward-thinking officer, well suited for his role in the Signal Corps, who brought the Army into the twentieth century. Greely was instrumental in implementing wireless telegraphy, the advent of military aviation, and aerial reconnaissance.[49] In recognition of his contributions to the Signal Corps, as well as his service as an arctic explorer, and at the urging of Mitchell, Greely received the Medal of Honor for lifetime achievement in 1935 (only the second of two ever to have been given for service).[50] After being promoted to major general in March of 1906, Greely was assigned as commander of the Army's Pacific Division in San Francisco, replacing Major General Arthur MacArthur.

If Funston had a desire for fame, Greely seemed to revel in quiet service. In his own words, he made "habitual practice of avoiding publicity."[51] Greely was steadfast with a gift for administration. It is easy to imagine that his presence would have been of great value during those

first days of the calamity. Indeed, it seems that Greely held very different views from Funston on the use of the military to police the city, and upon his return quickly rescinded several of Funston's orders that had restricted the personal liberties of victims of the earthquake and fire.[52] Recognizing that the no coordination was being made with state authorities, he set out to work with Pardee, with the clear purpose of retroactively establishing a legal precedence for the Army's involvement.[53] Indeed, multiple scholars have pointed out that this is how the Roosevelt Administration handled the sticky matter of Posse Comitatus. Although state official had not initially requested federal assistance, and no presidential order had been given directing the actions of the military, the governor's request to keep troops in the city after Greely's return was seen in effect to provide justification retroactively. [54]

Figure 3.2. Major General Adolphus W. Greely, Chief of the US Army Signal Corps.
Source: William Mitchell, General Greely: *The Story of a Great American* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1936), 183.

Certainly, as the commander, Greely had a responsibility to deal with the choices made in his absence. With the flames extinguished, a larger problem loomed. Hundreds of thousands of displaced people needed care, and the risk of epidemic, exposure, and starvation were real. He did, however, recognize the need for an account of the military's actions in the emergency and launched an investigation with the purpose of providing a report to the War Department and Congress. While internal investigative documents show a clear understanding of the problems with policing and the seizure of property, in the final version provided to the War Department, Greely denied any evidence of malfeasance in his absence and omitted mountains of data that would have cast a shadow on the intervention.[55] Like many of the city elites, his attention was on the recovery.[56] His failure to address shortcomings transparently may have been a byproduct of his more passive and non-confrontational manner. Even more likely, Greely's desire to protect the institution he loved from public scrutiny played a big part in his decisions.

Mayor Eugene Schmitz

Born in San Francisco on 22 August 1864, Eugene Schmitz was the child of German and Irish immigrants. His father was a career musician, and after dropping out of medical school, Schmitz took up music as a profession and later worked as an orchestra leader at the long since destroyed Columbia Theater on O'Farrell Street. Schmitz rose to prominence on San Francisco's civic landscape as the president of the city's musician's union. Not necessarily a powerhouse of political clout, the musician's union did allow him to rub shoulders with many of the city's decision makers, as well as provided access to other labor unions. One such political operative was attorney Abraham Ruef. Ruef and Schmitz's relationship has been one of consistent debate among state and local historians. The press often portrayed Ruef as an advisor to organized criminal enterprises throughout San Francisco, who ran a political machine in the style of New York's Tammany Hall.[57] "Boss" Ruef, in this interpretation, took a liking to the charismatic Schmitz and backed him for mayor. Ruef established a new political party around the handsome and suave Schmitz, the Union Labor Party and pulled in resources supporting his run for mayor (see figure 3.3). However, much of the press around Ruef was anti-Semitic in nature, and Ruef was an easy "fall guy" for the corruption cases following the earthquake.[58] Fradkin describes Ruef as an "operator" in terms of modern politics, working hand in hand with other lobbyists, but never truly running the enterprise.[59] Nonetheless, Schmitz and Ruef teamed up together and took control of the city.

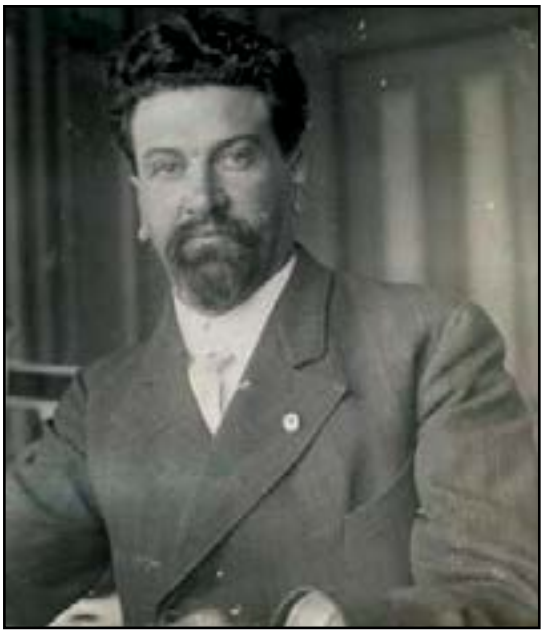


Figure 3.3. Mayor Eugene H. Schmitz.

Source: California State Library, "Mayor Eugene H. Schmitz," Photo Album-Vault: **Fc917.9461 A3, Vol. II, 93, accessed 4 May 2019, https://calisphere.org/item/901ede18f820f61d7d71688bd7d1387b/.

Despite his lack of experience, Schmitz was popular with the voters and in 1901 was elected—surprising many of the papers and political commentators of the time.[60] Unsurprisingly, Schmitz ran an unscrupulous operation over the next four years. Several investigations and high-profile news stories exposed the widespread acceptance of bribes in the administration.[61] San Francisco's City Hall was a monumental structure (completed in 1899), but it is widely commented that the real city hall was a saloon on Market Street where those in need of favors (and able to pay for them) passed their gifts to Schmitz through his agent Ruef. As George Kennan in *McClure's Magazine* put it:

> Schmitz] made a business of selling immunity to gamblers, prize-fight promoters, and keepers of brothels; that the great house of prostitution at 620 Jackson Street was virtually a municipal institution; that the police were giving protection to no-

> torious criminals and taking money therefor; that the municipal boards were blackmailing law-breakers and compelling honest men to pay tribute; that the work of the city was given to dishonest contractors who divided their illegal profits with the officials who permitted them to steal; and that, with the exception of the Board of Supervisors, every branch of the city government was shamelessly and almost defiantly corrupt.[62]

After a fierce re-election campaign in 1905, much of the city was shocked by Schmitz's victory over a reform candidate. By the spring of 1906, Schmitz and Ruef were under a federal investigation for criminal activity, and in the coming months after the earthquake would be indicted and convicted of 27 counts of graft and bribery.[63] Ruef, reviled by the press, would serve the longest prison term of the two. Schmitz served only a short sentence before winning an appeal to have his conviction overturned.[64] He surprisingly re-entered politics in the city, although never again winning the mayor's seat, he did serve on the board of supervisors.[65]

Despite his approaching indictment in 1906, Schmitz retained full power and authority on the morning of 18 April, with Ruef behind the scenes working on his behalf. It is a historically held consensus that Schmitz was far from innocent during the fire and recovery efforts. At every turn, he sought protection of his own interests at the expense of the citizens he was sworn to represent. His decisions lacked legal and moral authority and added greatly to the destruction of property and loss of life. On the other hand, this was a true catastrophe and Schmitz had doubtlessly spent little time preparing for natural disasters or civic emergencies of this scale. During the disaster he sought support by forming a citizens committee of rich and influential San Franciscans to help navigate the crisis. Although these ad hoc committees (e.g. the "Committee of Fifty) had no legal authority to make decisions, they provided the appearance of bipartisan legitimacy for the mayor's response. In some respects, the committees, who took over responsibility for the administration of the city, lightened the burden of responsibility he bore.[66]

At the time, Schmitz was lauded for the bipartisan makeup of this unelected body. One prominent committee member was Schmitz's arch political rival, former mayor, and future US Senator James D. Phelan. Perhaps Schmitz believed including Phelan and his supporters would serve to bury the hatchet. Unfortunately, he was mistaken. Although unelected, the committee held huge sway over the recovery operations, and Phelan consolidated control of the relief funds, thus cementing his political

strength. Schmitz appointed Phelan chairman of the finance committee, and allowed him to appoint his own committee members.[67] When the opportunity was right, Phelan would throw his full weight behind efforts to dethrone Schmitz.

Schmitz is remembered as man of both charisma and corruption. He had charisma in spades, as evidenced by his ability to influence Funston on 18 April 1906. As the *California Law Review* asked, "Is it not an astounding state of affairs that the Mayor of a city should suddenly assume command of a regiment of federal troops by the consent of federal officers, and act independently of the Governor, who is the chief executive of the state?"[68] It is likely that throughout his political career, Schmitz' charisma enabled his corruption, and during the fire and aftermath, enabled him to unduly influence the choices and decisions of US Army officers who should have known better.

Summary

Funston, Greely, and Schmitz were the most influential actors that held sway over the decision making and reporting of the military's involvement in the earthquake and fire of 1906. Funston was a "man of action," with a propensity for the spotlight. Greely was an older, more mature administrator who unfortunately chose to shape the narrative in a way that did not reflect the truth of the disaster, but he did reflect positively on the Army he had dedicated his life to. Schmitz, a charismatic and corrupt politician, was quick to act decisively – if not always legally. Ever the politician, his leadership was supported by committees of oligarchs who offered consensus for his actions. All were certainly products of their time. Their thoughts, words, and actions are a reflection of the movements and ideas that permeated society at the turn of the 20th century; these leaders must be seen first and foremost through this lens.

Notes

1. In one example, Funston sends an apology for an interview he gave in Topeka Kansas, which resulted in a report that the president had approved Funston's controversial remarks at a speech in New York, requesting him to give the same speech in Boston. Letter from Frederick Funston to Henry Clarke Corbin, 1 April 1902, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, Dickinson, ND, accessed 1 October 2018, https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o37421.

2. Frederick Funston, *Memories of Two Wars: Cuban and Philippine Experiences* (New York: C. Sribner's Sons, 1914), 3-4.

3. Letter from Funston to Mr. Scott, 9 November 1896. Frederick Funston Papers, Collection Box 33: 1, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS. Letter presumably addressed to Charles F. Scott, editor of the Iola Register, and later US Congressman.

4. "A Kansas Cuban Soldier," *Iola Evening News,* 15 December 1896.

5. "A Kansas Cuban Soldier," *Iola Evening News.*

6. Funston, *Memories of Two Wars.*

7. Letter from William H. Taft to Theodore Roosevelt, 6 October 1906, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University.

8. Letter from William H. Taft to Theodore Roosevelt, 6 October 1906.

9. "Frederick Funston returns from Cuban War with Wounds," *Evening Star* [Washington, DC], 10 January 1898. Nineteen horses lost is listed in Funston, *Memories of Two Wars,* 33.

10. An example of this are two speaking contracts. "Engagement Contract" with publicist James A. Young, Kansas City, MO, April 1898, Funston papers, Collection Box 33: 1, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

11. "Fred Funston tells of Cuba," *The Kansas Weekly Capital,* 4 March 1898, 5. Recounts a paid speech given by Funston to a large crowd in Topeka.

12. Letter from War Department, Adjutant General to Kansas State Mustering Officer, 8 May 1898, accepting Funston into service as a Colonel of Volunteers, "noting physical defects," Funston Papers, Collection Box 33: 1, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

13. President William McKinley, "Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation," 21 December 1898. Recorded in James H. Blount, *The American Occupation of the Philippines, 1898-1912* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913), 149.

14. "Deeds of Valor by the 20th," *The Beloit Gazette* [Beloit, KS], 27 April 1899, 1.

15. "Soldier's Letters," pamphlet (Anti-Imperialist League, 1899). Reprinted in Philip S. Foner and Richard Winchester, *The Anti-Imperialist Reader: A Documentary History of Anti-Imperialism in the United States,* vol. 1 (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1984), 316-323.

16. US Congress, Senate, Committee on the Philippines, *Hearings on Affairs in Philippine Islands,* 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1902, S. Doc. 331, vol. 2, 1444.

17. US Congress, Senate, Committee on the Philippines, *Hearings on Affairs in Philippine Islands.*

18. US Congress, Senate, Committee on the Philippines, *Hearings on Affairs in Philippine Islands.* Also mentioned Mark C. Carnes, "Little Colonel Funston," *American Heritage Journal* 49, no. 5 (September 1998): 60.

19. United States Army Center for Military History, "Medal of Honor Recipients: Philippine Insurrection," United States Army Center for Military History website, accessed 25 October 2018, https://history.army.mil/moh/philippine.html; Memo Adjutant General, War Department, 2 March 1900, authorizing award of MoH, Funston Papers, Collection Box 33: 2, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

20. Brian M. Linn, "Guerilla Fighter: Frederick Funston in the Philippines, 1900-1901," *Kansas History Journal* (Spring 1987): 10.

21. Funston, Memories of Two Wars, 384-426.

22. O. K. Davis, "The Real Aguinaldo," *Everybody's Magazine* (Spring 1901): 144.

23. Theodore Roosevelt, letter to Funston, 30 March 1901, Funston Papers, Collection Box 33: 1, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

24. Stuart Creighton Miller, *Benevolent Assimilation: The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1903* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 168-169.

25. A popular cartoon in *Puck* magazine shows a young Funston, leapfrogging over a line of elderly and breathless officers of the regular army. Louis Dalyrymple, "Army Leap-Frog/Dalrymple," Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC, accessed 10 April 2019, https://www.loc.gov/item/2010651400/.

26. US Congress, Senate, Committee on the Philippines, *Hearings on Affairs in Philippine Islands,* 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1902, S. Doc. 331, vol. 2.

27. "Funston Will Not Retract," *New York Times,* 14 March 1902.

28. Funston, *Memories of Two Wars,* 373.

29. Josiah Ohl, "President Tells Aguinaldo's Captor to Keep his Mouth Shut about Philippine Affairs and Rebukes him for Criticizing Senators," *Atlanta Constitution,* 24 April 1902, 9.

30. Mark Twain, "A Defence of General Funston," *The North American Review* 174, no. 546 (1902): 613-24.

31. Mark Twain, "A Defence of General Funston," 616, 621.

32. Funston, *Memories of Two Wars,* 373.

33. William F. Zorrnow, "Funston Captures Aguinaldo," *American Heritage Journal* 9, no. 2 (February 1958), accessed 3 May 2019, https://www.americanheritage.com/funston-captures-aguinaldo.

34. Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Elihu Root, Theodore Roosevelt Papers. Library of Congress Manuscript Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University, Dickinson, ND.

35. Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Elihu Root, Theodore Roosevelt Papers.

36. Frederick Funston, undated draft editorial criticizing Roosevelt, Funston Papers, Collection Box 33: 3, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, KS.

37. Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 46.

38. Kathy Coker and Carol Rios, *A Concise History of the US Army Signal Corps* (Fort Gordon, GA: Office of the Command Historian, 1988), 97.

39. William Mitchell, *General Greely: The Story of a Great American* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1936), 26-27.

40. Melissa Ziobro, "Adolphus W. Greely," *On Point* 21, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 18.

41. Adolphus W. Greely, *Three Years of Arctic Service: An Account of The Lady Franklin Bay Expedition of 1881-1884 and the Attainment of the Farthest North* (London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1886), 65.

42. Adolphus W. Greely and Frederick Schwatka, *Report on the Proceedings of the United States Expedition to Lady Franklin Bay, Grinnell Land* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1888), 49, 381, 497.

43. David L. Brainard, *The Outpost of the Lost* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1929), 32.

44. Adolphus W. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927), 147.

45. Handwritten order from Greely to execute Private Henry, 5 June 1884, Lady Franklin Bay Expedition Collection, MSS 64, Box 2, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College Library, Hanover, NH. Mitchell, *General Greely,* 165.

46. "Latest by Telegraph, Greely Cannibalism," *Indianapolis News,* 19 August 1884.

47. Leonard Guttridge, *Ghosts of Cape Sabine: The Harrowing True Story of the Greely Expedition* (New York: Putnam Books, 2000), 294-299, 301.

48. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service,* 198, 207-212.

49. Mitchell, *General Greely,* 199.

50. Medal of Honor Convention, "Major General Adolphus Greely Medal of Honor Citation," Medal of Honor Convention website, accessed 30 March 2019, http://www.mohconvention.com/tn-recipient/138/adolphus-w-greely/.

51. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service,* 245.

52. Letter from Governor Pardee to Greely addressing Greely's request to remove travel restrictions to the city, 25 April 1906, Pardee Papers, MSS C-B 400, Box 112, Folder 4, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA.

53. Widely reported meeting with city leaders and Pardee (multiple papers and report) leading to Pardee's official request for more troops. Also: To President Roosevelt from Pardee, 27 April 1906. Sent from Fort Mason (after the meeting), requesting continued presence of federal forces. "Federal forces have been of inestimable value and their presence is greatly appreciated and desired."

Pardee Papers, MSS C-B 400, Box 112, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, California.

54. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 65.

55. Greely Report, 12.

56. Greely Report, 21.

57. "Intensely Dramatic Scene When Abe Ruef is Denounced," *San Francisco Examiner,* 27 October 1906, 1.

58. James P. Walsh, "Abe Ruef Was No Boss: Machine Politics, Reform, and San Francisco," *California Historical Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (1972): 7.

59. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 305.

60. "Analysis of the Election Shows Mistakes of Political Prophets," *San Francisco Examiner,* 7 November 1901, 2.

61. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 325-326.

62. George Kennan, "The Fight for Reform in San Francisco," *McClure's Magazine,* September 1907, 547, accessed 30 March 2019, http://www.unz.com/print/McClures-1907sep-00547.

63. "Schmitz Sentenced to San Quentin for Five Years," *San Francisco Chronicle,* 9 July 1907, 1.

64. "Beatty Explains the Decision in the Case of Eugene E. Schmitz," *San Francisco Call,* 3 May 1906.

65. "E. E. Schmitz Sworn in as Supervisor," *San Francisco Examiner,* 9 January 1918.

65. Dyl, *Seismic City,* 91.

67. "Supervisors have No Control of Relief Funds," *San Francisco Chronicle,* 16 June 1906, 4.

68. Henry Winthrop Ballantine, "Military Dictatorship in California and West Virginia," *California Legal Review* 1, no. 5 (July 1913): 417.

Chapter 4
Men of Action, But Not of Strategy

Introduction

In the early morning hours of 18 April 1906, with most of the city asleep, a massive earthquake tore through the San Andreas Fault. A colossal shaking broke the peaceful slumber of the city by the bay. There was a loud and unforgettable cacophony of sound, breaking glass, wood beams splitting, bricks falling, walls collapsing, fault lines rupturing, and pipes tearing in two. Sidewalks buckled, cable car tracks were ripped from the ground, and chasms opened in the cobbled streets.[1] The earthquake itself was tragic, but only set the stage for the greater disasters of fire and human error that would follow. This chapter, provides a brief depiction of the crisis leading to military involvement, and a discussion on the use of a joint force to police the city, seize property, employ explosives to fight fires, force evacuations, and impress civilians into service.

Three Tragic Days

The earthquake had varying effects depending on the geology of the terrain. Those neighborhoods constructed on reclaimed marsh land, known as "made land" saw significant destruction. South of Market Street, in the working-class neighborhoods of poor-quality construction, many buildings collapsed on themselves in the forceful quaking. As historian Joanna Dyl put it, the city's main thoroughfare of Market Street marked a "symbolic divide between the working-class residential and mixed-use districts to the south and the upper and middle-class neighborhoods to the north."[2]

Many of these working-class neighborhoods were characterized by multistoried wood framed apartment buildings that were especially susceptible to seismic activity. On 6th Street, three large apartment buildings housing up to 1,000 low-income workers collapsed on to each other and erupted into flames from the wreckage.[3] Other neighborhoods suffered just as badly. The four-story Valencia Street Hotel collapsed into the ground.[4] The earth under the hotel mixed with water and sand, a process known by seismologists as liquefaction, causing the foundation to sink and fall, splitting beams and framing.[5] Three stories collapsed, with only one story visible atop the mass of wreckage. Due to the hotel's occupancy, large numbers of people were thought to be killed here. Unfortunately, the building was later reduced by the fire, making the recovery of human remains all but impossible.[6]

With so many bodies trapped in wreckage that was later consumed by flames across the city, it was difficult to gauge an accurate death toll. While the initial death estimates were accurately placed in the thousands, the numbers published by Greely (498) were not based on those missing, but likely a reflection of the number of dead delivered to the county coroner.[7] Since so many human remains were destroyed by fire, clearly the coroner would not have an accurate number. The fact that many of these victims were in low-income rooming houses, and many had no family in the area, made the task all the more difficult (see figure 4.1.).

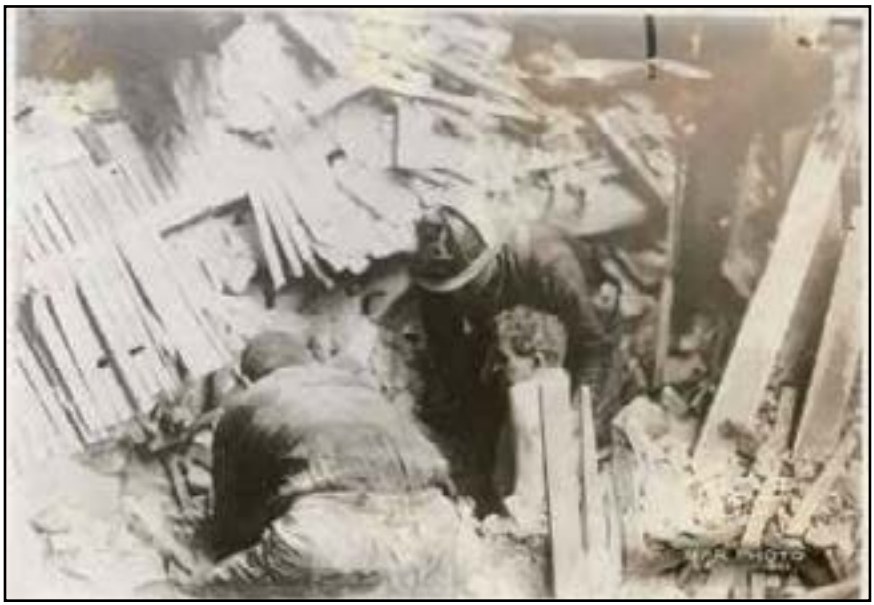


Figure 4.1. A fireman and rescuer pull a survivor from the rubble of Wilcox building at Second and Jessie street.

Source: California State Library, "San Francisco Earthquake and Fire [Photograph Album]" (San Francisco, CA: Bear Photo Company, 1906), accessed 4 May 2019, https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma990014711260205115&context=L&vid=01CSL_INST:CSL&lang=en.

The earthquake caused significant damage to the city's infrastructure. Power lines across San Francisco were pulled from their posts and lay in the streets. Communications and telegraph cables were also damaged,

limiting contact with the outside world. Initially, several telegraph stations opened on the morning of the 18th and sent a few scattered reports to the nation but were shut down by the afternoon due to the encroaching fire. Steel water mains and gas mains throughout the city were snapped like twigs. Dozens of photos show massive iron pipes sheared in two. The National Board of Fire Underwriters conducted a detailed investigation which confirmed the damage to the water supply as a major contributing factor in the disaster.[8] The 44-inch iron conduits which delivered the water from the Spring Valley Water Company to the city's storage reservoirs were completely severed. Of greater immediate consequence, untold numbers of breaks in mains and water pipes across the city reduced water pressure below useful levels and rendered many of the city's fire hydrants unusable.[9] Even after months of repairs, in June 1906, the National Board of Fire Underwriters estimated half of the city's water was still being lost through breaks.[10]

The fire department, which was technologically advanced and well trained by the standards of the time, suffered significant setbacks following the tremor. Many of the companies lost horses, engines, equipment, and even men, during the initial quake. An advanced alarm network and command and control system crisscrossed the city, allowing quick notification of fire fighters and the dispatching of reinforcements when needed. In fact, each San Francisco fireman was required to have an alarm bell installed in his personal residence for quick recall during off-duty hours. Unfortunately, this infrastructure was destroyed and rendered useless by the quake. Coordination over distances and across the city was nearly impossible without sending runners to deliver dispatches.

Perhaps the most notable tragedy of the initial earthquake was the loss of the department's chief engineer, Dennis P. Sullivan (see figure 4.2). An expert in large-scale firefighting and aware of the city's problems, Sullivan had invested a great deal into the modernization of the department, but was mortally wounded on the morning of 18 April. During his tenure the organization had expanded to six engine companies, seven chemical companies, and eight truck companies. Fire alarms were installed throughout the city and the water delivery system was grown to over 4,000 hydrants. Despite these advances, Sullivan remained concerned over possible loss of water from seismic activity and petitioned the city to expand the dilapidating cisterns that held emergency water below the city streets.[11] Despite his pleas, the city failed to address the cistern issue. Sullivan lamented their lack of action and predicted this type of catastrophe years earlier when he said, "This town is in an earthquake belt. One of these fine mornings, we

will get a shake that will put this little water system out, and then we will have a fire. What will we do then?"[12]

Figure 4.2. Dennis T. Sullivan, Chief Engineer of the San Francisco Fire Department.

Source: San Francisco Public Library, "Chief Dennis T. Sullivan of the San Francisco Fire Department [Graphic]," San Francisco Historical Photography Collection, accessed 4 May 2019, http://sflib1.sfpl.org:82/record=b1036550.

Earlier, Sullivan had been a proponent of dynamiting buildings to create firebreaks in large-scale fires. But, after the Baltimore City fire of 1904 the professional consensus had changed. Dynamiting there had been proven ineffective and industry practice moved away from that strategy. Had he survived, Sullivan would have been the best man to direct the firefighting efforts, as well as determine priorities of effort. Sullivan fell through a hole in the third story of his residence above a fire station, and into the basement of the damaged building. He was taken to Letterman Army Hospital at the Presidio and died of his wounds three days later.[13]

His death had a monumentally detrimental impact on the city. This single loss left the leadership of the firefighting efforts over the next three days in the hands of neophytes: the mayor and the military.

An estimated 50 initial fires sprang from the ruins by 8:00 a.m.[14] Causes included broken gas mains, downed electrical wires, overturned stoves, and collapsed chimneys. One of the most well-known chimney fires took place when a family started cooking breakfast in Hays Valley, which became known as the "Ham and Eggs Fire." The fires south of Market Street spread so quickly that they conjoined into one large blaze. Fortunately, the normally blustery city by the bay experienced low winds that day, less than 10 miles per hour.[15]

The city's firefighters martialed all their manpower to rescue victims of the earthquake and fight the many fires. However, when they hooked their fire hoses to the hydrants, they found there was no water pressure. As Sullivan had warned, the emergency water cisterns buried below the streets, had fallen into disrepair. Some were completely dry and none contained enough water to hold back the flames. With axes and shovels, the fireman did all they could, but to little avail. Schmitz and the acting Chief Engineer made the decision to begin demolishing buildings in the fire's path. Hundreds of eyewitnesses recounted the unending explosions that boomed across the city. In multiple known cases, the demolition work had caused new fires, and the flames consolidated and continued to spread. Meanwhile, soldiers of the US Army began to fill the streets, patrolling for looters, forcing people from neighborhoods believed to be in the fire's path, and undertaking demolitions work in hopes of creating firebreaks and halting the flames.[16]

On Thursday, 19 April, the fire, forced evacuations, and blasting continued. The defenders maintained the line at the broad and natural firebreak of Van Ness, a 125-foot-wide thoroughfare. The fire moved towards the Western Addition, but was fought off. The winds shifted and pushed north toward Russian and Telegraph Hills and North Beach. By Friday the fire had started to die off as the winds blew them to sections already burned and left smoldering. The waterfront, with its many docks and wharfs, was largely saved by navy ships, Army tugboats, and several civilian vessels that had rigged together hoses and water pumps from multiple vessels. The wharfs provided key infrastructure for delivering aid to the city and were critical in the recovery. By Saturday morning, a light rain extinguished most of the remaining flames. Over the course of the three days, well over 250,000 people were displaced by the earthquake and fire, although the exact number is not known. Half a billion dollars in property damage was

done to the city (worth an estimated 14.5 billion dollars in 2019, although property values in San Francisco today might triple that number). An estimated 28,188 buildings were burned by the fire in more than 514 city blocks over almost 5 square miles of the city.[17] It is hard to imagine the scale and devastation of the disaster (see figure 4.3.). All who reported from the ruins expressed the uselessness of attempting to describe the destruction with words.

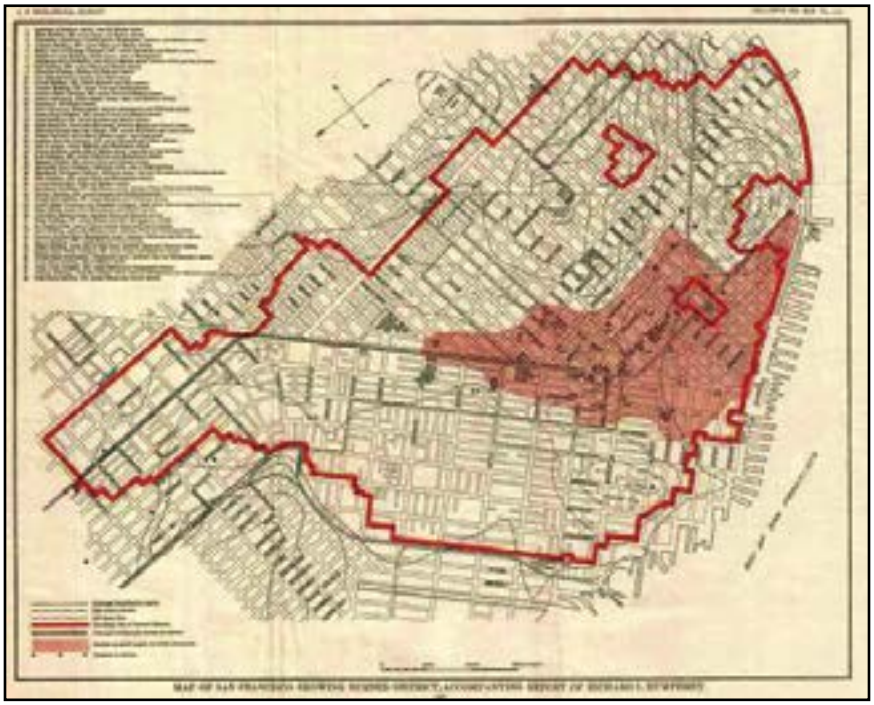


Figure 4.3. Map outlining the 3,400 acres of the city destroyed by fire.

Source: Richard L. Humphrey, The San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of April 18, 1906 US Geological Survey (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1907), LVI.

The great American novelist Jack London and his wife arrived in San Francisco on the first day of the fire to survey the damage. The two roamed the streets and took the chaos in until their feet hurt. His wife, Charmain, recalled later that London said he would never write of what he saw. “What use of trying? One could only string big words together and

curse the futility of them."[18] Despite that promise, London soon penned an article for *Collier's* detailing the scale of the destruction. "Not in history has a modern imperial city been so destroyed. San Francisco is gone."[19]

Military Intervention

Central to the history of this great American tragedy are the actions of the US Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Revenue Cutter Service, and military response was largely shaped by the personalities of the leaders involved. After surveying the results of the earthquake, Brigadier General Frederick Funston, always a man of action, decided to help. "Without warrant of law and without being requested to do so," Funston said, "I marched the troops into the city."[20] In truth, he worked quickly to alert, martial, and deploy federal forces, for the purpose of securing Army and federal property. Although he had no command authority over the sister services, the navy and marine officers were more than willing to aid in the crisis, and moved quickly to bring their resources to bear, within hours deploying ships and medical teams from Mare Island to the city. The California National Guard also mobilized in great numbers. Operating under state authority, the California National Guard forces had not federalized under the Dick Act of 1903, and did not work directly for Funston, but reported to Governor George Pardee.[21] Funston was a man of action, but not necessarily one of strategy, and it is unclear how much legal understanding he had of the relationships between the state guard and the sister services. One would guess not much.

Nonetheless, the relationship between the Pacific Division and the California National Guard was a confusing one, and not as clear cut as later described in Major General Adolphus Greely's report.[22] Funston and later Greely, had no legal authority over the Guard, yet both certainly exerted influence over them, providing them with instructions to carry out (e.g. assigning areas of operations within the city districts). Presumably under general military authority, Greely also assigned investigative duties to the state's Judge Advocate General Corps officers for incidents involving California National Guard troops, and received reports back from them. At times, Greely even served as a conduit of information about the National Guard, back to Pardee.[23] It was a puzzling predicament. It is not always clear who the state guard was working for at any given moment, and provides an opportunity for future research outside the scope of this manuscript. Certainly, Pardee had legal authority over the California National Guard, and was in regular contact with the State's Adjutant General, Brigadier General J. B. Lauck. Pardee had little oversight or information on their actions during the first three days of the crisis.[24]

Greely and Funston later attempted to distance themselves from the national guard troops in reports and the press. This strategy effectively benefited the Army's reputation. Several of the shooting incidents in the city were correctly attributed to the guard, and municipal authorities preferred to partner with the federal forces. One guardsman explained, prior to the earthquake, "The national guard never had a very good name before."[25] The national guard wore similar uniforms as the regular Army troops, making them an easy scapegoat for all manner of complaints against the regular Army soldiers. Nonetheless, there was certainly a coordinating relationship with the national guard, with Funston achieving a unity of effort.[26]

Meanwhile, Army, Navy, Marine, and Revenue Cutter Service forces were truly acting as a joint task force, with Funston filling the role of commander. Later, Greely called it "the largest force-army, marine and navy-that worked together in peace time."[27] Funston later distanced himself from the other branches in his accounts, only taking responsibility for the Army's role. The Greely Report emphasized that the Army bore no responsibility for the sister services, in hopes of avoiding liability for the actions of sailors and marines, particularly one of the well-known shootings ascribed to a marine:

> It should be borne in mind that five separate bodies were maintaining order in San Francisco—the municipal police, the National Guard of the State of California, the United States Navy, citizens' committees, and the Regular Army. These five organizations, all being armed, acted independently under desperate conditions of fire and earthquake where a quarter of a million of people were fleeing for their lives, seeking shelter, or striving to save their property. Such unprecedented conditions might well have caused casualties by the scores.[28]

The reality is that Greely and Funston did exert control over US Navy and US Marine forces. In a telegram to the Military Secretary on 21 April, Funston undisputedly stated that navy and marine forces had been placed under his direct control.[29] He received support from multiple detachments of marines, navy shore parties, and ships. Even three US Revenue Cutters with shore parties were attached to the force, a fact that caused much consternation to Secretary of Commerce Victor H. Metcalf, who shared his frustration with the use of federal forces widely within the halls of government.[30] Although he never acknowledged Lieutenant Freeman by name for contributing to saving the waterfront, Funston claimed responsibility

for this "important work" done by the Navy and Revenue Cutter Service, even stating that "it was done under my direction and control."[31] There is no denying that Funston maintained a truly unified command over federal forces, albeit ad hoc, while struggling to achieve a unity of effort with the national guard.

Despite the quick mobilization, military intervention during the crisis was fraught with problems. Even a cursory scan of the decisions made by Funston and his staff reveal the violation of dozens of laws and regulations. As covered, Funston went straight to work coordinating the deployment of soldiers in the city, without ever seeking guidance from the War Department. Neither the governor nor the president was aware at that point that federal forces, over which Roosevelt served as Commander in Chief, had deployed into the city and were serving as a law enforcement function. Funston later defended his failure to inform the president and governor, claiming the communications infrastructure was damaged by the disaster. It was true, the quake did sever the telegraph lines and the fire forced telegraph offices in the center of town to close by midday on the 18th. However, there were fully operational telegraph offices available to him, as evidenced by communication from Major Carol Devol to the Quartermaster General in Washington on the morning of the 18th describing the loss of Army storehouses.[32] Funston did find working telegraph stations to send messages from the evening of the 18th onward.

Meanwhile, on the morning of the quake, Secretary Taft became impatient at the lack of reporting. "Have been expecting dispatch from you all day. What reliable information you have in respect to it and injury to government property in San Francisco," he wrote to Funston.[33] Later he sent a second message, saying "I am still waiting for particulars as to the exact condition."[34] He also chastised Funston for allegedly limiting the freedom of the press.[35] "It is of exceeding importance that you should, in so far as you are able, allow the country at large to learn what the conditions are in San Francisco."[36] With Funston's failure to report in, and news outlets expanding their reporting, Taft's frustration with Funston's silence and his growing concern over the legality of the military response were palpable in his third telegram that same day: "The Associate Press reports to me that you have charge of San Francisco, Oakland, and the Bay. I wish you would report to me at once what you have done, the measures you have taken, under what authority you are acting, how many people need your assistance and supplies, and that you will give passes to the Associated Press representatives and those of the other press associations. Wire as soon as possible."[37] The fact that he was forced to pull information from Funston

is completely backwards. Funston's judgement to enforce the Mayor's order took place in a vacuum of decision-making. Instead of seeking proper authority from the War Department prior to committing his force, Funston was content to act on the authority of the soon-to-be indicted Eugene Schmitz. His immediate action was celebrated later by many observers as decisiveness and initiative.[38]

When Funston finally returned Taft's messages on Wednesday evening, 16 hours after the initial quake, he insisted "We are doing all possible to aid residents of San Francisco in present terrible calamity. Many thousands homeless. I shall do everything in my power to render assistance and trust to War Department to authorize any action I may have to take."[39] Taft responded, and issued Funston the first federal guidance of the emergency, instructing him to "protect property, people, fight fire, provide aid."[40] He goes on to instruct Funston not to impede the members of the press covering the story. From there forward, Funston reports consistently. Reading Funston's dispatches to Washington gives a sense of the terror of the destruction. "Three hundred thousand people homeless." "Famine Seems Inevitable." "Fire entirely out of control." "The whole city will be destroyed."[41] These are not exactly consistent with the calm, cool, collected image that Funston portrayed in his later accounts.[42]

By 8:00 a.m. on the morning of the 18th, 1,700 military personnel were either en route or had entered the city and begun patrolling the streets. Although every investigative report records there was no wide-spread disorder, Funston believed that the real crisis the Army thwarted was not the earthquake and fire, but the poor and minority classes who would have risen up in drunken rages to steal from and kill the respectable citizens of the city by the bay:

> I have no doubt, and have heard the same opinion expressed by scores of citizens, that had it not been for the prompt arrival of this large force of regular troops, who were acting under orders to shoot all looters, the saloons would have been broken into and then, the crowd, becoming turbulent, would have begun sacking the banks and jewelry stores.[43]

Most of the military missions revolved around keeping law and order in the city. Very little involved fighting the fire. Some soldiers did the fire department man hoses when water was available, and on more than one occasion, individuals or small units took gallant initiative to save property using whatever means they had available. However, no units were tasked directly by Funston with fighting fire, outside of small detachments

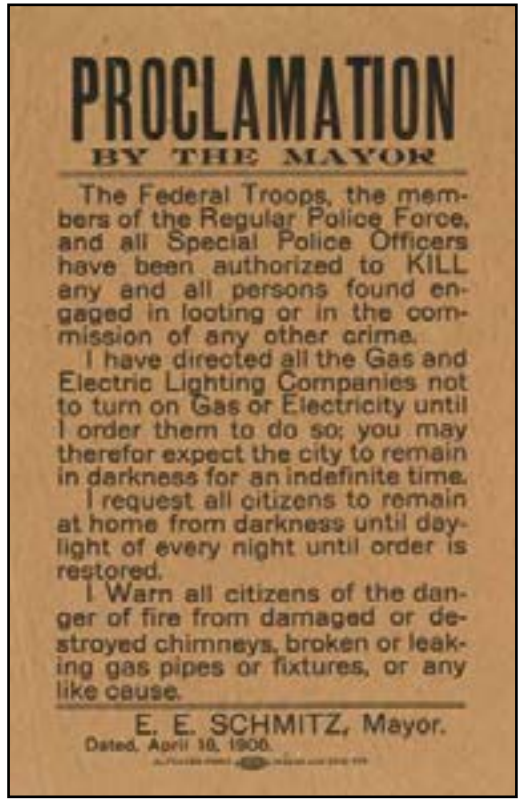
charged with demolishing buildings to create fire breaks or lighting back fires.[44] Funston's operation was a tactical one. The mission was not the fire, but security; Funston even maintained an infantry battalion "in reserve."[45] But, in reserve for what? The largest asset available to him for battling the conflagration stood in the streets ready to fight a battle, the people. While in his own mind Funston believed he was helping, in the first three days his leadership led to the controversial and problematic acts of the military relief operation: the use of force to police the city, the seizure and destruction of personal property, and the impressment of civilians for manual labor.

Policing the City

Funston unilaterally made the decision to send troops into the city with the purpose of securing government property. Before sending any messages to the mayor he sent dispatches to the adjacent garrisons, ordering troops to report to city hall. Funston might be credited with developing the situation through action. He had prepositioned his forces, if and when a request for some support from the civil authorities arrived. After conferring with Schmitz via messenger, and later in person, Funston agreed to police the city. Funston's statement in the Greely Report makes no mention of orders to shoot looters, but instead says the troops were intended for "keeping the most perfect order and in clearing the streets in the vicinity of the fire of the idle onlookers and anxious citizens, who seemed too dazed to act intelligently in their efforts to save their own property."[46]

Schmitz was greatly concerned about lawlessness and looting, although there was no widespread looting at the time. In conference with Schmitz on the morning of the 18th, Funston authorized his troops to use deadly force. Later, his explanation of the rules of engagement became confusing. In Greely's report, Funston said troops were acting under orders of the municipal authorities to shoot those caught looting.[47] In typical fashion, Funston authored an article for *Cosmopolitan* detailing his own magnanimous efforts. In this article, Funston contradicted his statement in Greely's report, claiming forces were ordered to "shoot instantly" not only looters, but anyone committing a "serious misdemeanor;" a classification of petty crimes that included public intoxication and the public use of profanity.[48] These rules of engagement are confirmed by Schmitz. Very early on the morning of the 18th, Schmitz ordered thousands of handbills declaring that federal troops had "been authorized to KILL any and all persons found engaged in looting or in the commission of any other crime," regardless of the nature (see figure 4.4.). No copy of this order was

included in Greely's report, nor any other rules of engagement for federal forces. When soldiers, sailors, and marines began policing the streets, they believed they had been granted authority to shoot anyone they found committing crime. The thousands of handbills plastered along the thoroughfares they patrolled, confirmed this alleged order.



PROCLAMATION

BY THE MAYOR

The Federal Troops, the members of the Regular Police Force, and all Special Police Officers have been authorized to KILL any and all persons found engaged in looting or in the commission of any other crime.

I have directed all the Gas and Electric Lighting Companies not to turn on Gas or Electricity until I order them to do so; you may therefor expect the city to remain in darkness for an indefinite time.

I request all citizens to remain at home from darkness until daylight of every night until order is restored.

I Warn all citizens of the danger of fire from damaged or destroyed chimneys, broken or leaking gas pipes or fixtures, or any like cause.

E. E. SCHMITZ, Mayor.

Dated, April 18, 1906.

Figure 4.4. Proclamation by the Mayor.

Source: US Berkeley, Bancroft Library. "The 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire Digital Collection," Online Archive of California, Call No. xF869.S3.93. S164, accessed 4 May 2019, https://oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/hb2f59n888/?layout=metadata&brand=oac4. Note: Handbills printed on the morning of 18 April and disseminated widely around the city warn citizens that Federal Troops will shoot looters.

In Greely's report, Funston's writings, and the *Infantry Journal* article by Devol, all reiterated, that despite orders to shoot looters, none were actually shot by the regular army.[49] They maintained a consistent narrative that the thousands of soldiers present had saved the city from the fire. However, by end of the conflagration, there were an estimated 2,500 soldiers, 300 marines, and 300 sailors, and 100 cuttermen in the city. Of those forces, only 200 to 300 were involved in firefighting in any capacity. Instead, the remaining 3,000 personnel were tasked with the policing of the city. Avoiding any challenges that may have arisen from complaints of violence by the military, Funston consistently denied any shootings had taken place. As mentioned, Funston argued that the large military presence served only as a deterrence to prevent crime and reassure the population:

> San Francisco had its class of people, no doubt, who would have taken advantage of any opportunity to plunder the banks and rich jewelry and other stores of the city, but the presence of the square-jawed silent men with magazine rifles, fixed bayonets, and with belts full of cartridges restrained them. There was no necessity for the regular troops to shoot anybody and there is no well-authenticated case of a single person having been killed by regular troops.[50]

Devol, writing in the *Infantry Journal,* concurred. "The army represented law and order, and it was to the army the people looked for leadership and assistance."[51] There is some truth to this sentiment. The publication of the mayor's proclamation, along with news headlines announcing martial law, and the presence of soldiers wielding rifles with bayonets fixed, created a perception that martial law had been declared.[52] Many citizens and journalists expressed a feeling of order and relief accompanying the troops. One eyewitness, after despairing at the immanent destruction of the city recorded a change of demeanor when seeing the troops: "But the bugle sounded and the boys in blue, led by General Funston, came trooping in, seemingly by thousands. They quickly restored order, shot a few looters, threatened death to all robbers and thieves, destroyed all liquor and closed the resorts."[53] The shooting of suspected cursers and reckless drivers somehow reduced the stress of the situation.

Hundreds of eyewitnesses commented on the heavy-handed tactics of the Army, using the "the menace of bayonets" to motivate the locals.[54] This raises some interesting questions. If the intent was not to shoot looters, as Greely concluded, what was the Army's intent? Rifles and bayonets are of little use in fighting fires. Would it have not been more helpful to

arm a portion of the force with shovels and axes? Bayonets are not a very practical weapon, but are known to be a psychological tool against an enemy. In this case, the bayonets fixed to the Krag–Jørgensen rifles of the soldiers, sailors, and Marines sent to help the citizens of San Francisco sent a mixed message (see figure 4.5.).

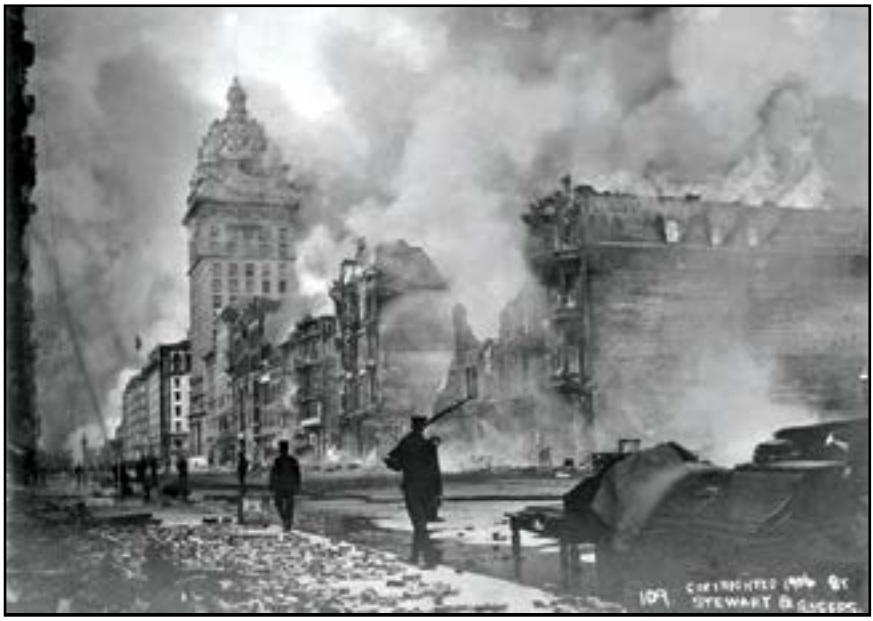


Figure 4.5. Armed soldier or National Guardsman walking up Market street while San Francisco burns.

Source: UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library, "The 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire Digital Collection," Online Archive of California, Call No. BANC PIC 1958.021 v.1:10—fALB, accessed 4 May 2019, https://oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/hb7g5009bf/?brand=oac4. Note: This photo shows Market Street on the afternoon of 18 April smoldering as The Call building billows smoke. Fire hoses can be seen laying in the street, serving as a reminder of the fireman working tirelessly to fight back the flames. Meanwhile, a noncommissioned officer in service cap walks down the street with rifle at shoulder arms and a bayonet fixed to the muzzle.

In the months after this event, Greely and Funston painted a picture of soldiers deploying to the ruins helping to save property, fighting fires, and providing aid to the victims of the disaster. However, analysis of imagery

and historical accounts of the time tell a different story. As mentioned, Schmitz's initial concern was a mob of looters. To counter this threat, he also created a "Special Police" force who were nothing less than sanctioned vigilantes. Frightening as this sounds, the city's raucous history included formations of "vigilance committees" that helped keep the peace in the years after the California Gold Rush, and was something the city's long-term residents would have been familiar with. The suspension of due process left any of the city's citizens open to the possibility of being shot on site with no questions asked. (see figure 4.6.).

Figure 4.6. Looters.

Source: San Francisco Public Library, "S.F. Earthquakes-1906, Looters," San Francisco Historical Photography Collection, Photo AAC-4043, accessed 4 May 2019, http://sflib1.sfpl.org:82/record=b1018914. Note: Fortunate not to have been shot, these two teenagers serve out a punishment for alleged theft as a group of soldiers looks on.

Greely's investigation concluded that despite the fanfare, only a mere nine people were shot during the occupation, and none of those were by soldiers. Greely fixed blame for the shootings on the police, special po-

lice, the national guard, and Marines.[55] One such account that Greely was aware of, yet took no responsibility for, was the shooting of a "foreign laborer" who was initially arrested by a drunken marine for attempting to take a chicken from a railroad car near the waterfront that was surrounded by fire. After being prodded by the marine's bayonet, the man swiped the rifle from the Marine's hands and attempted to flee. The marine fired his side arm at the fleeing man, seriously injuring him, and then left him to die in the streets.[56] Keep in mind that according to Funston, the marines were acting under his command.

The argument that the Army was free from culpability because no soldiers did any killing could be called the "no harm, no foul" defense. In other words, although some breach of the law technically was committed, it should be excused because no one was harmed and no damage done. Greely demurred, "No complaint has reached these headquarters that, among the tens of thousands of persons whom it became the duty of the soldiers of the Regular Establishment to restrict in personal movements during the progress of the fire, any person was violently treated or seriously injured."[57] This argument is repeated in Major Floyd Davis' manuscript; "not a single person was killed by a soldier."[58] Greely's public affairs strategy was effective, but his premise patently false.

The assertion that members of the US Army never "violently treated or seriously injured" the citizens of San Francisco stands in defiance of a mountain of historical evidence. Hundreds of reports—not only from newspapers—but also from journal entries, correspondence, and oral histories recount instances of soldiers, using violence and intimidation against civilians.[59] In most of these instances, violence was a means to force evictions, restrict movement, confiscate transportation, and conscript laborers. Time and space preclude me from referencing them all here, and opens opportunity for future research.

The killing of civilians by soldiers may not have been widespread, but they certainly exceeded the number presented by Greely. Funston himself, in a message detailing the Army's relief operations reported to Washington on 21 April that "in some cases looters have been shot," making no caveat about who was doing the shooting.[60] Defenders of the Army often point out that the civilians of San Francisco would not have known the difference in uniforms or insignia of the US Army and California National Guard. In some cases, this may be true, but the numbers of federal troops in the city far outweighed those of the California National Guard. Several helpful vignettes provided by eyewitnesses with the knowledge and expe-

rience to definitively identify those involved in shootings as regular army soldiers provide additional insights.

One of the most compelling and detailed examples is that of Irvin P. Aten, a Reserve Officer Training Corps cadet from the University of California in Berkley.[61] As a member of the security forces patrolling the city, and with enough experience to know the California National Guard from the US Army, Aten offers a detailed and credible account of the actions of the military during the first days of the crisis. On 18 April the cadre at the university, all regular army officers, marshalled the cadets and deployed across the bay to aid in the disaster. When they arrived, they were assigned an area of responsibility in the city and the cadets took regular 4-hour shifts patrolling or performing sentry duty.

On the morning of the 19th, after he had been relieved from his shift, Aten was walking with other cadets to observe the fire near Eddy and Polk Streets. He recounts seeing one "regular" soldier attempting to keep citizens from returning to their homes to secure belongings before they were consumed by the fire; "he was cursing, and threatening them and even pointing his gun at some of them so as to frighten them away."[62] With army dynamiting crews already at work on the other end of the block, the soldier enlisted the cadets' help to clear out a grocery and saloon. He describes the store was filled with an eclectic crowd of women and children seeking food, as well as a "howling drunken, fighting mob."[63] As the cadets cleared out the store, at least two soldiers outside began firing into the crowd, with one of the rounds hitting Aten in the leg, and another allegedly striking a civilian. Aten opined, "No material resistance was being offered, and a random shot into such a crowd of men, women, and children could not be justified."[64] Based on the accounts of the other cadets, Aten believed that the soldier was intoxicated. Aten was taken to the Army's General Hospital at the Presidio for treatment, where he observed two other patients allegedly shot by soldiers, a Chinese man "who had been a prisoner and tried to escape," that had been shot in the head and died of his wounds, and a Japanese man "who ran away when a soldier challenged him, and was shot through the hand, the head and the shoulder."[65] Aten remained in the Presidio hospital until the 25th June.

While the shooting of the Berkley cadet was widely documented, and though he was a patient at the Presidio General Hospital during the investigation, Aten was not mentioned once in Greely's report, nor does Aten mention being questioned by Greely's investigators.[66] Having the ability to tell regular army troops from cadets, national guardsman, and Marines,

Aten's account challenges the defense that all the violence was carried out by California National Guardsman.

One of Aten's classmates Ernest W. Cleary, later an orthopedic surgeon in San Mateo, provided a personal account to the California Historical Society. Cleary recalled a traumatized woman he encountered during guard duty. She told him a grocery owner, seeing that the approaching fire would soon destroy his property, opened the store and offered up the contents to passersby. A patrolling soldier assumed the store was being looted and bayoneted a man with his arms full of groceries.

Another credible eyewitness with ability to tell the difference between troops was Elmer Enewold, a member of the California National Guard's 1st Battalion, Coastal Artillery, and a resident of the city who ended up losing his home to the fire. Enewold penned a letter to his father on 5 May 1906 that included detailed account of the actions of a regular army soldier shooting a suspected looter:

> One evening during guard duty over the ruins at the end of 3rd St., I saw a man a quarter of a block away from me bending over something on the ground. I yelled at him to get out, but he paid no attention to me, so I up and fired at him. I missed of course but the shot must have scared him, for he started to run. I was just getting ready to shoot again, when a shot was fired from across the street and the fellow topped over. This was fired by a regular, who had seen him run after my shot was fired. When the two of us reached the fallen man we found he had been shot through the neck and was stone dead. It proved to be a negro. An officer came along and ordered us to throw the body into the still burning ruins, so in it went.[67]

One of the few period histories written by a local eyewitness, and not of the dime novel variety, was composed by Charles Keeler. Keeler had served as director of the prestigious California Academy of Science and was a prominent figure in the community, a member of many social organizations, and a founding member of the Sierra Club. Although favorable toward the military's overall response, he recorded multiple incidents of soldiers shooting or bayoneting civilians, including that of Aten and other prominent verifiable cases. A sad story not recorded elsewhere was reported to him by a Red Cross ambulance crew who responded to a call for help. "The Red Cross attendants on answering the summons found a young man wounded, shot in the dusk of evening while walking out of his own back door. The soldier had mistaken him for a looter."[68]

Many local newspaper headlines, such as "People Shot Down by Soldiers in Streets of San Francisco," reported widely on the shooting of civilians by the military.[69] Surely, some of them were sensationalized. Later, the *Chronicle* ran an editorial which called many earlier reports of shootings spurious. While the article downplayed the number of shootings by the US Army, the author said, "It is perfectly true that some men were shot by the soldiers, but they were men who needed shooting."[70]

The colloquial "no harm no foul" defense does not hold up. Although the number of those killed or injured by federal forces was likely low, and the total number unknown, the assertion that no one was shot by a soldier is simply fallacious. There is also no evidence that Greely attempted to ascertain the scope of the violence. The records of the Pacific Division demonstrate many investigations in the weeks following Greely's return, ranging from accountability of government property, confiscation of private property, and the transmission of relief supplies. No record exists of any similar investigation into acts of violence by the US Army or the ad hoc joint task force under Funston's command. The only document in the division's records pertaining to violent deaths is a one-page internal memo listing the prominent nine killings mentioned in Greely's report, all of which were well known, and three awaiting trial.

Even if one were to set aside the evidence and concede that no violence was committed by federal forces, the fact is that due process was suspended. Soldiers, sailors, and Marines had been handed authority by Funston, based on an unlawful order from Schmitz, to serve as judge, jury, and executioner for petty crimes. The illegality of Funston's actions does not relate solely to the authorities under which he acted.[71] Authority under Posse Comitatus to enforce the law did not give him authority to break the law. The fact that Funston ordered his men to carry out acts of violence which directly violated the law of the state of California, and the constitutional rights of the victims of catastrophe disaster. Funston's order to shoot suspected criminals was a gross breach of trust with the American people and an abuse of power that should have resulted in action against Funston from the military's civilian leadership. The fact that most of the alleged victims were of low socioeconomic and minority racial demographics may correlate directly to the lack of inquiry and response.

While Funston was working directly on behalf of the mayor during the fire, one of Greely's concerns upon his return was that the Army was taking orders from a corrupt city government who had exceeded all warrant. The comprehensive Relief Survey captured this dynamic well:

> The troops had been told to take orders from the mayor. Under authority from him they served as police to guard property, not to enforce a military rule. The mayor assumed almost absolute control of the city government for a time, superseding all departments and commissions. His first order was to shoot, not arrest, the looters; his second, to close the places that sold liquor.[72]

The historical record indicates that Greely's official support for Funston's orders to police the city was insincere. He had serious misgivings about the deployment of troops in a law enforcement function, conveying this repeatedly in private meetings and correspondence. For example, immediately upon his return Greely told the citizens committee, "it is against public interest, against public policy to keep any large number of troops [on the streets]. It is contrary to our forms of government, and contrary to sound principles."[73] A week after the flames were extinguished he wired Taft saying, "Every effort has been made to impress upon the civil authorities the absolute necessity of relieving the Army of its non-military duties at the earliest moment."[74] Taft also understood the legal challenges of the military response, telling Greely that "use of troops for police purposes is without authority unless the Governor makes the request."[75]

Believing the need great, initially he agreed to manage relief efforts (sans policing), and requested additional troops for the job. Pardee agreed and on 27 April sent an official request to President Roosevelt for troops, "per [Taft's] request after consultation with General Greely."[76] The administration viewed this request as retroactive, covering the decision made by Funston in the first days of the fire. Two days later he sent another message to Taft, "Similarly the Mayor of San Francisco and Citizens Committee were informed that the assistance of the Army in policing sanitation relief work, etc., should cease at the earliest possible moment consistent with safety of the public health, security of property and ensurement of public peace."[77]

Greely was not ignorant to the nature of the civic leaders he was now entangled with. In several confidential communications with the Military Secretary and War Department, Greely referenced scandals and corruption with his municipal partners, and their desire to maintain the Army as a front for their operations, adding legitimacy to their policies.[78]

Schmitz and the committee members also sent confidential communications to the administration, apparently behind Greely's back, asking Taft to extend the military's service in the city.[79] Knowing where Greely stood, he sent periodic requests over his head to Washington, asking for the con-

tinued consent of the administration in the Army's involvement, which the secretary and president approved, extending the military involvement until 30 June, contrary to Greely's advice.[80]

After one such message on 16 June, Greely followed up with a telegram to Taft that "retention of troops here would be [a] grave mistake," stating that continued police duty by the military, and enforcing of civic sanitary regulations "would inevitably lead to class of authority and consequent discredit of [the] army."[81] Without ever stating what misconduct, graft, or corruption he encountered, Greely informed Taft that "political complications were developing" with the civil authorities and "commercial" interests, whereby those institutions sought to dodge responsibility by usurping the authority of the military. Whatever was going on, Greely wanted out of the relief business, and out of business with the city leaders and oligarch run committees. At the same time, over and over again, Greely placed importance, both in correspondence to the war department and within his task force, on maintaining the appearance of "harmonious" working relationships with municipal, business, state, charity, and Red Cross leaders.[82] Although he clearly had concerns over the use of troops for police work, and had insight into the corruption of the civic leaders, he never elevated the issue, and doctored his reporting to reflect a harmonious working relationship. The inconsistencies between Greely's report and the eyewitness accounts of military violence, as well as Greely's decision to keep his concerns private, betray his greatest desire—to protect the reputation and honor of the US Army as a trusted American institution.

Seizure of Private Property

While the killing of civilians is a most egregious concern, another troubling theme in the military response was the seizure of private property. In his report Greely ironically wrote, "The respect of the army for the rights of private property was practically as marked as that regarding the sacredness of human life."[83] He went on to say, "Impressments of property were made in a few instances, such as transportation, especially automobiles, during the fire and immediately after of food where urgently needed for the hungry and exhausted."[84] This statement is one of the strongest and most straightforward examples of intentional misleading in the entire report. Greely, having ordered a full investigation into the seizure of property, was aware of the scale and scope of the problem.

Omitted from the appendix in the Greely Report is Circular No. 15, issued on 15 May 1906. The circular stated that all subordinate officers who operated in the city from 17 April to 1 May should report any and

all seizure, requisitions, or hire of any private property or transportation during the crisis.[85] The information was necessary to settle the many claims being made against the military. The thorough investigation, and hundreds of pages of statements produced from army, navy, and marine units that followed demonstrated staggering amounts of confiscated materiel. Hundreds of pages detail the dozens of vehicles, boats, horses, and wagons that were seized as personal transportation, as as well as the tens of thousands of dollars of food, clothing, medicine, building materials, fuel, and household goods that were seized and distributed. None of this was included in Greely's report. One incomplete spreadsheet indicates at least 48 wagons, 33 automobiles, 4 vessels, and at least 70 horses were confiscated or impressed into service, with many entries including imprecise measurements, such as "various" vehicles and "several horses."[86] It is also unknown how many units failed to account honestly, as the tone of the reports indicate that the officers knew seizing property was not looked upon favorably in retrospect. No previous research mentions this investigation, but it makes clear seizure of property was a common occurrence.

Eyewitness accounts from the period correlate with the widespread seizure of property. Any horse, wagon, or car was fair game for confiscation by any soldier, sailor, or marine with a gun, especially considering the distance needed to be traveled by foot in a city with no working public transit. "Whenever any of the Relief Committees needed a vehicle, all they do is to have a soldier or two detailed off to them, and the first team and wagon happening along is commandeered. The same with any work needed to be done such as clearing debris, building conveniences, etc. The first men passing were pressed into service, and as the request was accompanied by a rifle pointed in your direction with a bayonet on the end is generally met with compliance."[87]

Other similar personal accounts describe drivers of motor vehicles being forced to pull over at gunpoint and exit their vehicle so that soldiers could impress it for "official use."[88] Most citizens were powerless to resist these seizures. Only those with economic, political, or social power held sway when it came to complaints against such confiscations, further illustrating the inequity of the relief efforts. While hundreds of vehicles were impressed, very few complaints made it outside the city. One example of a complaint gaining traction was the seizure of an automobile belonging to Mrs. Thomas E. Grant, Secretary of the Red Cross Society of California. When a car she was using was impressed, by an assistant surgeon needing it to "move mattresses," her complaint, lodged through Pardee, caused Greely to initiate an individual investigation into this particular incident.

[89] Of course, simply having the complaint heard did not guarantee a favorable outcome for the property owner. The findings in Mrs. Grant's case asserted that since the car technically belonged to someone else, and she was not using it at the time, "under the circumstances, the impressment of the machine was undoubtedly justifiable."[90] There is no evidence that the owners of the many commandeered horses, wagons, cars, and boats received the same level of customer service.

In some cases, the seizure and distribution of property was an ethical dilemma brought on by approaching flames. In many instances it was left to very junior soldiers, sailors, and Marines to choose whether to let the supplies occupying warehouses and grocery stores burn, or remove them and give them away. Reports show that both happened, with some soldiers refusing to let passers by salvage endangered materials, and others liberally giving them away. In other cases, soldiers simply seized property to provide for those in need. One example is three privates who established their own relief camp which became known as "Jones Dump."[91]

Another questionably legal action by federal forces was the seizure and destruction of alcohol. Included in Greely's report was the claim that "There were only three or four occasions reported in which soldiers participated even in the appropriation of liquors, and these cases have been sent before military courts."[92] This is yet another provably false claim within the report in which Greely minimizes the questionable acts of federal forces.

After troops began to enter the city and establish security, the mayor sent word to Funston through his associate Ruef that he was concerned over public drunkenness and requested that the military forces ensure all the city's saloons remain closed. Those that refused to close should have their stock thrown out (see figure 4.7.). This order was transmitted in the form of written dispatches to the commanders in the city. The problem arose when the orders were misconstrued, and officers took it upon their own initiative to break into closed saloons and liquor stores to destroy alcohol.[93]

The order to stop the sale of liquor in the city may have seemed a logical one to Schmitz, but it was difficult to execute. It was Colonel Charles Morris, commander of the Presidio, whose troops destroyed the largest amounts of alcohol, breaking in to many closed saloons and stores to dispose of it. One conscientious lieutenant even left receipts for liquor destroyed, leading to many future claims against the government and creating quite the headache for the Pacific Division and the War Department.[94]

Just as problematic was the misconstrued operation to seize alcohol. It does not take much imagination to assume that soldiers being given the order to destroy the liquor were not inclined to let it all go to waste. From there forward, many eyewitnesses identify drunk soldiers on the streets. Dr. Ernest W. Cleary, the cadet from Berkley also recalled the prevalence of drinking among soldiers. "Some soldiers couldn't resist the liquor," even recounting an example of "a soldier in regular uniform" who was completely inebriated while patrolling.[95]

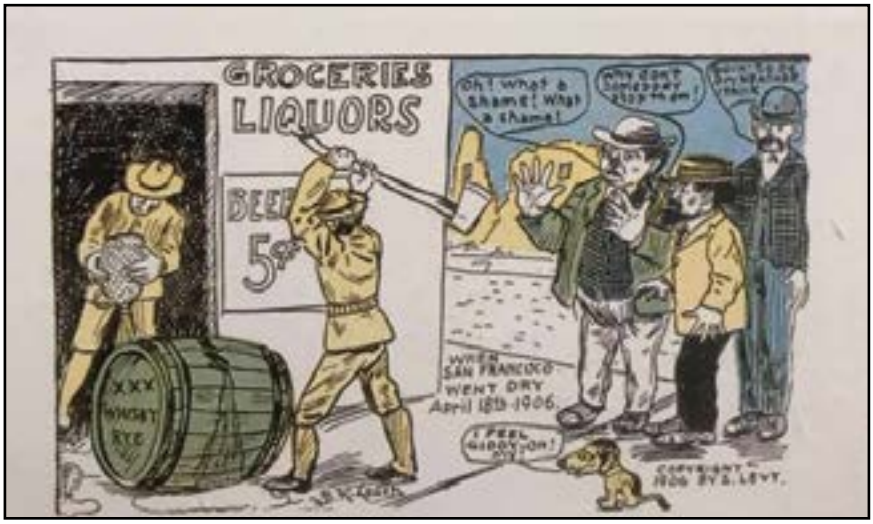


Figure 4.7. When San Francisco went dry.

Source: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library, "San Francisco Postcard Collection," Collection No. SFP 21. Note: This postcard was produced in mass quantity in the Bay Area and mailed to families around the country, waiting for news of survival. In this cartoon soldiers are shown destroying alcohol in a grocery store while drunkards (depicted with large dark noses) look on disparagingly. The caption "When San Francisco Went Dry," demonstrates the widespread awareness of the citizens that soldiers had seized and destroyed liquor in the city.

Later, when saloon owners filed a claim against the government for the stolen liquor, the War Department determined that soldiers took the alcohol illegally, and therefore the government was not liable, since the soldiers acted without legal authority. This stands in stark contrast to Gree-

ly's report, which contends that the Army acted legally on behalf of the civilian authorities.

In addition to the confiscation of materiel and transportation by the military, a handful of service members, themselves, were caught looting. Funston denied these accusations vehemently and Greely glossed over these accusations, disputing evidence of looting by troops. Once more, the Army's account stands in conflict with the historical record. Dozens of eyewitnesses observed soldiers looting personal property, usually in the face of advancing flames. In the months and years following the earthquake and fire, the Army invested significant amounts of time into litigation and claims against them for cases of looted goods. One example is that of H. Rinaldo and Company who claimed $8,831.50 worth of merchandise and cigars and had been taken from his store, worth over $200k in 2019 dollars.[96] Additionally, the photographic record provides important insights. One famous image provides a glimpse of the double standard established for looters. A photo likely from the afternoon of 18 April, based on the smoke between 7th and 8th Streets, shows an element of regular army soldiers in both blue garrison and khaki campaign uniforms standing on Market Street, holding rifles in one hand, and picking through boxes with the other. A close examination of the boxes shows that they were women's shoes (see figure 4.8.). This evidence of no less than eight soldiers participating in looting stands in direct contradiction of the Greely Report and calls into question the depth and bias of the Army's investigation.[97] It is hard to believe that Greely's investigating officers were unable to find witnesses to these acts.

Forced Evacuations

A major mistake made in the initial response to the earthquake crisis was the forced evacuations of citizens from homes; these were citizens who could have stayed to help fight fire. Numerous accounts exist of soldiers traveling blocks ahead of the fire informing residents that they would have to abandon their homes. Time limits were given to pack any belongings they could evacuate and egress the area before a patrol returned. This may seem like a noble effort to preserve human life but, in reality, the military was displacing people who may well have been able to fight the fires with means available to them. Accounts exist describing how some residents refused to leave, opting instead to either hide in their homes or to talk the soldiers into leaving them alone. Many of those who did were able to save their homes. Due in whole to the valiant efforts of individuals to save them, several historic structures predating 1906 survive in the burned sections of the city today.[98]

Figure 4.8. Soldiers loot women's shoes on Market street.

Source: California Historical Society, "Soldiers Loot Women's Shoes on Market Street," Online Archives of California, Call No. FN-33678, accessed 4 May 2019, https://oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/hb3x0nb3b7/?brand=oac4.

A fantastic example of the poor planning of forced evacuations is the account of James Stetson, a cable car company executive whose home sat in a posh neighborhood on Van Ness and Franklin Streets. After spending the morning observing soldiers set backfires in hopes of creating fire breaks, as well as listening to the explosions of dynamite get closer, he was eventually forced out of his home by an aggressive soldier who used his bayonet to prod him away from the neighborhood. Stetson snuck back to his home, and using buckets of water, staved off the destruction of the slow-moving fire. When a neighbor's house caught fire endangering his own, he offered a soldier of the regular army from the 28th Coastal Artillery Regiment, as well as two other civilians, $10 to climb to the top floor of the neighbor's home and extinguish the flames. Stetson's detailed account of the forced evacuations, as well as his observations about how the fire spread, establishes the possibility that many other homes could have

been saved had even a modest attempt been made to save them.[99] Instead, residents were forced to leave their properties and residences to burn.

Accounts of residents in the poorer Italian neighborhood of Telegraph Hill make the same point. In those cases, when families were not forced to evacuate (because soldiers perhaps did not wish to climb the high hills), they worked together to save their property. Many people recorded fighting the flames using homemade wine and vinegar by wetting mops and rags and smothering flames as they started to pop up on the eves of their homes or shingles of their roofs.

These interventions only worked on smaller residential structures. Fires in the denser tall buildings of Market Street were surely hard to fight without water, but there were buildings in this area saved by individuals, like the city's main post office. This building was constructed in 1905 and only recently opened. When soldiers ordered the postmaster and his staff to evacuate, the postmaster informed the soldiers that they had no authority over another federal agency or its property and that he and his staff planned to stay on site. The detail of troops acquiesced and allowed them to stay. The staff moved the furniture away from walls toward the center of rooms and as the flames approached and heat increased that extinguished smaller fires near windows with brooms, wet mops, and wetted mail bags. Eventually the fire passed Mission Street, leaving the Post Office intact.[100] Today the building is better known as the US Court of Appeals and is the oldest standing structure on 7th Street, largely due to the tenacity and will of a handful of individuals.

The decision to force citizens from their homes was well intentioned, but without a doubt contributed to the destruction of much property. How much more might have been accomplished if Funston had organized and committed his forces to firefighting instead of security? If their fixed bayonets had been replaced with shovels, mops, and buckets, there is no doubt that more property could have been saved. With the city's water mains dry, and steam engine dead, the greatest resource for combatting the fire lay in the thousands of soldiers, sailors, marine, and mariners of the Revenue Cutter Service patrolling the city.

Demolitions

Most of the US Army personnel involved in fighting the blaze used explosives. A common historical critique of the firefighting interventions was the demolition of buildings in hopes of creating fire breaks in the city. With limited water available to fight the conflagration, it seemed that the only option was to demolish buildings in the fire's path to stop the spread-

ing flames. This strategy had been used two years earlier in the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904 and proven ineffective. Chief Sullivan had put much thought and discussion into fighting a large scale fire in the city, and was well acquainted with modern techniques, but as he lay dying in the hospital, and no other apparent solutions to the problem, it is understandable that the decision was made to use dynamite in creating fire breaks.[101]

Beginning on the 18th, a joint force of soldiers, sailors, firefighters, and civilian volunteers set to work demolishing buildings. How they chose which buildings to demolish is unclear. Greely's report indicated that a committee appointed by Schmitz approved which structures could be brought down. Initially, they decided that only those buildings currently in flames could be demolished. The biggest problem with this strategy was the spread of burning materials launched into the area and carried to city blocks not currently on fire. By the afternoon of the 19th, the civil and military authorities determined that they needed a new strategy, and decided to work ahead of the flames to create a firebreak (see figure 4.9.). Overall responsibility for the demolition was delegated to two artillery officers, Captain LaVert Coleman and 1st Lieutenant Raymond Briggs. Coleman's account was included in Greely's reports.

The initial use of dynamite was chaotic and inconsistent. In Funston's words, no one could "ever know the amount of dynamite and guncotton used in blowing up buildings, but it must have been tremendous, as there were times when the explosions were so continuous as to resemble a bombardment."[102] The bombardment language was not far off target, as eyewitnesses reported at least one artillery unit actually attempted to use their cannon to shell buildings in hopes of reducing them, a dangerous and pointless endeavor.[103] No record of the use of artillery in the city is documented in any of the Army records.

Multiple eyewitness accounts indicate that far too much explosive material was initially used, wasting resources and causing greater effects than intended. Davis' manuscript argues that it is safe to assume these officers, as artillerymen, were experts in the use of dynamite. This is a fallacious assertion. Pulling a lanyard on an artillery piece does not make one an expert in heavy demolitions. There is no record of structural demolitions training taking place at the US Army artillery school in the late 19th century, nor did artillery doctrine provide such knowledge; these officers' exposure to dynamite would have likely been limited.[104] The demolitions of walls and remaining ruins of buildings destroyed by fire continued to be demolished for public safety by Coleman and his team. However, in a private letter to Taft, Greely acknowledged that upon his return, and despite not wanting to

be seen undermining the decisions of Funston, he "was obliged to relieve them" after they had seriously damaged the US Post Office and wrecked certain buildings on Van Ness Avenue.[105] He regretted making these "adverse comments" to Taft, and no criticism of the demolition work was included in the official report.[106]

When the dynamite supplies ran out, those involved in demolitions turned to the explosive they had readily on hand; black powder from the many coastal defense artillery batteries. This was a critical error. Where dynamite is an explosive, the powder in possession of the US Army was a propellant that burned and produced a gas. When the powder was ignited in buildings, instead of creating a shock wave that demolished the structure, it shot burning debris and flames in every direction.

Figure 4.9. The remains of the Phelen building were dynamited on 20 April 1906.

Source: National Park Service, "1906 Earthquake: Fire Fighting," accessed 4 May 2019, https://www.nps.gov/prsf/learn/historyculture/1906-earthquake-fire-fighting.htm. Note: Smoke fills the air as a demolition party under the command of Captain La Vert Coleman destroys the Phelan Building on Market Street.

Coleman never admitted to personally using gunpowder to demolish buildings. He said instead that it was the police department that had used black powder, and that, only after he advised them not to do so. 108 His assistant, Briggs, however, admitted using giant powder (or dynamite in granular form) with a similar result to black powder: burning debris catching adjacent builds on fire, and embers crossing a firebreak and igniting a previously unscathed block.[108] In their detailed report, the San Francisco Fire Department later acknowledged, the use of black powder was not as limited as Coleman claimed, and that "great harm was done during the first days of the fire by the indiscriminate use of black powder."[109] The Fire Department's report goes on to say, when dynamite is used "it should be exploded with electricity, as with the fuse system there is danger of not exploding when expected."[110] Unfortunately, these lessons learned were generated at great cost, and accidents critically injured at least two individuals aiding in the demolitions, though neither were mentioned in the official report.

While fire experts have long debated the efficacy of dynamite, and many historians have posited that dynamiting in 1906 played no factor in stopping the conflagration, it is certain that the use of powder had an extremely detrimental impact on the firefighting efforts. Many city blocks would have been free from the flames had black powder and giant powder not been used. While there were other dynamiting teams working in the city, according to Funston, Coleman had ultimately been placed in charge of the military efforts. Additionally, while he and Briggs only list two occasions of powder being used, Greely's report indicate 48 barrels of powder were carried in to the city from US Army stores the first day alone.[111] Jerome Barker Landfield, a prominent historian from University of California, watched the firefighting efforts in Chinatown on 18 April from the top floor of the Saint Francis hotel. "Below us spread Chinatown. Suddenly there were blasts, followed by flames. Here was apparently the dynamiting that had been rumored. To my experienced eye it was obvious, that it was not dynamite, but black powder that was being employed. As a result it was simply spreading the fire."[112]

In his statement Coleman offers that he knew how the powder would react, but was only supporting the civil authorities. The Army consistently shifted blame to the civil authorities in its reports of the dynamiting; but the implication that the Army had no choice but to carry out illegal or unsafe orders from local authorities is hard to believe. Briggs (and Funston for that matter) did not seem aware that neither the San Francisco Fire Department, nor the ad hoc committee on building demolition established

by Schmitz and run at times by Ruef, had any authority to issue orders to the US Army. This could only have been a classic case of buck-passing.

Forced Labor

In the first three days of the fire, reports of forced labor were widespread and the soldiers did not seem to discriminate between the poor or rich. Private citizens were being pressed into labor to clear debris or act as manual labor for any number of projects seen fit by any private standing guard in that sector. In the first three days of the fire, reports of forced labor were widespread, and the soldiers did not seem to discriminate between the poor or rich of the city. After multiple complaints levied by the city's elite who were forced into manual labor, the state devised a way to excuse people from these labor parties through the use of passes. An example of a pass issued to Benjamin Weston, a resident of Berkley, California, on 23 April, includes a rider "do not impress."[113] Without which, there was a high likelihood he would have been snatched up for a work detail as he trafficked between the waterfront and other portions of the city. One California newspaper reported, "Every man who came in reach was forced to work at least one hour. Rich men who had never done much work labored by the side of workingmen."[114] Although forced labor is not mentioned in Greely's report, the impressment of civilians into servitude did come to an end after his return, and paid laborers became part of the strategy to rebuild "rehabilitate" San Francisco.[115]

Summary

Greely's report on the Army's intervention in San Francisco from 18 to 21 April paints a glowing picture of Funston and the conduct of the troops. But as we have seen, this version of events does not tell the whole story and even conflicts with the historical record. Hundreds of narratives from the first three days of the disaster depict heavy-handedness towards the city's citizens, as well as the enforcement of policies which lacked common sense. Surely, most military leaders were trying to do their best to help bring a quick end to the calamity; but there were certainly a minority who dealt unfair judgement, stole, confiscated, or destroyed personal property, and pressed civilians into service. But the greatest irresponsibility after the crisis was the lack of transparency from the leaders in California and Washington. Perhaps it was Greely's desire to save the Army he loved from embarrassment. Perhaps it was a desire to move toward recovery. Perhaps it was the Roosevelt administration's desire to sidestep political disaster. Whatever the cause, the military failed to take inventory of their actions or hold their leaders accountable.

Notes

1. Lawson Report, 1-2, 106, 166, 180.
2. Dyl, *Seismic City,* 56.
3. Dyl, *Seismic City,* 56.
4. "Hotel Sinks into Ground," *Santa Cruz Sentinel,* 26 April 1906.
5. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 12.
6. Lawson Report, 239.
7. Greely Report, 15.
8. Albert S. Reed, *The San Francisco Conflagration of April 1906: Special Report to the National Board of Fire Underwriters, Committee of Twenty* ([New York ?] May 1906), 2-6. A copy of this bound report is located at Bancroft Library. Hereafter referred to as NBFU Report.
9. Albert S. Reed, *The San Francisco Conflagration of April 1906,* 2-4.
10. Reed, *The San Francisco Conflagration of April 1906,* 4.
11. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 38.
12. Smith, *San Francisco is Burning,* 91.
13. "Fire Chief Succumbs to Injuries," *San Francisco Call,* 23 April 1906.
14. NBFU Report, 6.
15. NBFU Report, 6-7.
16. Greely Report, 5-11.
17. Dyl, *Seismic City,* 66.
18. Charmian London, *The Book of Jack London* (New York: The Century Company, 1921), 127.
19. Jack London, "The Story of an Eyewitness," *Collier's: The National Weekly,* 5 May 1906.
20. Frederick Funston, "A Letter from General Funston," *Argonaut,* 7 July 1906.
21. Militia Act of 1903, 32 Stat. 775 (1903).
22. Greely Report, 16.
23. Adolphus Greely, "Regarding Confiscation of Property by State Troops," memo to Pardee, Pardee Papers, MSS C-B 400, Box 113, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.
24. Correspondence from Pardee and Lauck, 18 April 1906, Pardee Papers, MSS C-B 400, Box 112, File 4, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.
25. Elmer Enewold, letter to his father, Lawrence Enewold, 3 May 1906, MS3474, California Historical Society, San Francisco, CA.
26. Greely Report, 9, 16-17.
27. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service,* 224.
28. Greely Report, 12.
29. Frederick Funston, Telegram to the Military Secretary's office, 21 April 1906, File 1121191, Box 4458, Record Group 94: Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's–1917, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.

30. Robert Browning, "Always Ready-the Revenue Cutter Service and the Great San Francisco Earthquake," *The Northern Mariner/le marin du nord* 17, no. 4 (October 2007): 38-37.

31. Greely Report, 9.

32. Erwin N. Thompson, *Defender of the Gate: Presidio of San Francisco, CA 1900-1904* (Denver, CO: National Park Service, 1997), 352.

33. Copy of telegram from Taft to Funston, 18 April 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

34. Copy of second telegram from Taft to Funston, 18 April 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

35. No evidence exists that Funston ordered any sort of action specifically aimed at stifling the press. It is my assessment that agents of the press were experiencing the same restriction on movement into the city, and within the city that hundreds of other eyewitnesses have reported.

36. Copy of second telegram from Taft to Funston, 18 April 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

37. Copy of third telegram, Taft to Funston, 18 April 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

38. California State Senate, Concurrent Resolution No. 4, 2nd Cong., 3rd sess. (12 June) 1906, *Journal of the Senate during the Extra Session of the Thirty-sixth Legislature of the State of California,* 202.

39. 18 April telegram, Funston to Taft. 18 April 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

40. Copy of fourth telegram, to Funston, 18 April 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

41. Telegram April 19, Dept. California to War Department (Funston to Taft), Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

42. Funston portrays himself very coolly in the article. Frederick Funston, "How the Army Worked to Save San Francisco," *Cosmopolitan Magazine,* July 1906.

43. Greely Report, 6.

44. Greely Report, 6.

45. Greely Report, 6.

46. Greely Report, 7.

47. Greely Report, 6.

48. Funston, "How the Army Worked to Save San Francisco," 239.

49. Devol, "The Army in the San Francisco Disaster."

50. Funston, "How the Army Worked to Save San Francisco," 239.

51. Devol, "The Army in the San Francisco Disaster."

52. On 19 April, the headline of the *New York Press* that date reported "Martial Law Rules, the Troops Will Shoot Down Marauders on Sight," *New York Press,* 19 April 1906, 1.

53. Eyewitness account, W. E. Alexander Papers, MS 3456, California Historical Society, San Francisco, CA.

54. London, "The Story of an Eyewitness," 145.

55. Greely Report, 12.

56. Ballantine, "Military Dictatorship in California and West Virginia."

57. Greely Report, 12.

58. Davis, "Soldier Amidst the Rubble," 138.

59. For example: "Thugs Are Killed by Soldiers," *San Francisco Examiner,* 21 April 1906, 2; "Kill 20 Looters Shot In Hour," *San Francisco Examiner,* 22 April 1906, 3; "11 Killed by Presidio Soldiers," *San Francisco Examiner,* 23 April 1906, 1.

60. Telegraph to Military Secretary from Funston, relayed via USS Chicago on 21 April at 9:23 am Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

61. Irvine Aten's full account is recorded in Barker, *Three Fearful Days,* 263-66.

62. Aten, *Three Fearful Days,* 263.

63. Barker, *Three Fearful Days,* 264.

64. Barker, *Three Fearful Days,* 264.

65. Barker, *Three Fearful Days,* 265.

66. "Irvine Aten Recovering," *Oakland Tribune,* 2 July 1906, 8.

67. Elmer Enewold, letter to his father, Lawrence Enewold, 3 May 1906.

68. Charles Keeler, *San Francisco Through Earthquake and Fire* (San Francisco: Paul Elder and Company, 1906), 24.

69. "People Shot Down by Soldiers in Streets of San Francisco," *Oakland Tribune,* 19 April 1906.

70. "What San Francisco Owes the Regulars," *San Francisco Examiner,* 28 April 1906.

71. Greely and War Department concluded that Funston's acted under the authorities of the Posse Commitatus Act, and not the Insurrection Act.

72. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 8.

73. Journal of Proceedings of Committee on Finance–General Relief Committee, 3 May 1906, MSS C-B 800, Box 13:1, James D. Phelan Papers, Committees, Clubs and Organizations, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

74. Telegram to Secretary of War from Greely, on 28 April Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

75. Telegram to Greely from Taft, 27 April 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

76. Telegram 27-28 April 1906 6:23 pm, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

77. Telegram from Greely to Taft, 28 April, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

78. For example, on 30 May Greely sent a letter to Taft talking about corruption and relief supplies. Letter from Greely to Taft, marked Personal, 30 May 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

79. Telegram Taft to Greely, 18 May 1906, Box 4, Entry 3705, Record Group 393: Records of US Army Continental Commands, Pt 1, Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

80. Telegram Taft to Greely, 18 May 1906.

81. Telegram from Greely to Taft, 15 June 1906, "confidential," Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

82. "Letter from Greely to Taft, marked Personal," 30 May 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

83. Greely Report, 12.

84. Greely Report, 12.

85. Adolphus W. Greely, *Circular No. 15, Pacific Division,* May 15, 1906 (San Francisco, 1906). Box 2, Entry 521, Record Group 393: Records of US Army Continental Commands, Pt 1, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

86. Spreadsheet detailing confiscated, requisitioned, and procured property during the earthquake and fire, May 1906, Box 2, Entry 521 Record Group 393: Records of US Army Continental Commands, Pt 1, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

87. Tom Crawford, letter to his mother in England, 22 April 1906, MS 3471, San Francisco Earthquake Collection, California Historical Society, San Francisco, CA.

88. Catherine O'Caine Strittmatter, Interview by Carla Ehatt, 22 November 1976, Oral History Project, Marin County Free Library, San Rafael, CA.

89. George Pardee, "Alleged Seizure by of Automobile belonging to Mrs. Thomas E. Grant," letter to Adolphus Greely, Pardee Papers, BANC MSS C-B 400, Box 113, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA.

90. Report returned to Gov Pardee from Greely regarding seizure of automobile belonging to Mrs. Thomas E. Grant, Pardee Papers, BANC MSS C-B 400, Box 113, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA.

91. Devol, "The Army in the San Francisco Disaster," 85.

92. Greely Report, 12.

93. Greely Report, 13.

94. Charles Krueckel and Son v. The United States of America and The City of San Francisco, August 24, 1906. Copy located in Box 4458, Entry 25, Record Group 94: Office of the Adjutant General, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

95. Ernest W. Clearly, eyewitness account, 14 April, 1971, MS 3468, California State Historical Society, San Francisco, CA.

96. Memorandum 8577 D, Pacific Division, 24 October 1906. Copy located in Box 1, Entry 3705, Record Group 393: Records of US Army Continental Commands, Pt 1. Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

97. Greely Report, 5.

98. Examples include the Hotalings building and Federal Appraiser's building, saved by a bucket brigade. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 171. Another example is the "House of the Flag," a city landmark on Russian Hill that was saved by a handful of soldiers with a bathtub of water and buckets of sand. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 167.

99. Statement of James B. Stetson, Esq., Member of the Firm of Holbrook, Merrill and Stetson, President of the California Street Cable Railroad Company, 22 June 1906, BANC MSS C-D 5100, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

100. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 122.

101. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 38, 69.

102. Funston, "How the Army Worked to Save San Francisco," 246.

103. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 128.

104. Department of the Army, *Artillery Tactics 1889* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1889).

105. Letter to Military Secretary from Greely 26 June 1906 regarding those in need of special recognition for their service during the fire. Box 87, Record Group 106: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

106. Letter to Military Secretary from Greely 26 June 1906.

107. Greely Report, 138.

108. Greely Report,149.

109. San Francisco Fire Department, *Reports of Fire Officers.*

110. San Francisco Fire Department, *Reports of Fire Officers.*

111. Greely Report, 7.

112. Jerome Barker Landfield, "Operation Kaleidoscope: A Mélange of Personal Recollections," unpublished manuscript, BANC MSS 73/194c: Chapter 28, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

113. Barker, *Three Fearful Days,* 44.

114. "To Feed the Multitude is Now the Problem," *San Bernadina Daily Sun,* 21 April 1906, 5.

115. Meeting of the Finance Committee of the San Francisco Relief and Red Cross Funds, 18 May, 1906, James D. Phelan Papers, MSS C-B 800, Box 13:1, Committees, Clubs and Organizations, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA.

Chapter 5
Herculean Tasks and Success in Disaster Relief

Once the urgency of the firestorm had passed, a great task lay ahead, caring for the many refugees, tackling the wrecked economy, and rebuilding the city. In 1906, there was no Federal Emergency Management Agency or Department of Homeland Defense to aid state and local authorities. Government response was typically left in the hands of the state, with additional help from charities and relief agencies. On the day of the earthquake, Mayor Eugene Schmitz formed a committee made up of prominent citizens to help manage the crisis.[1] Schmitz sought to build a coalition, even inviting his fiercest political enemies, such as James D. Phelan to join the committee. Phelan, the former San Francisco city mayor would later go on to a long career as a US Senator representing the State of California. Other powerful figures on the committee included the railroad magnate E. H. Harriman, and Rudolph Spreckels, the heir to the C&H Sugar Company. At one time the members of this committee may have competed in business and politics, but held in common an interest in restoring the social order of wealth, status, and property to San Francisco.[2] The city's Board of Supervisors held little sway during the recovery, as power and money had been vested in the committees. As Joanna Dyl pointed out, "Schmitz had handed over the keys to the 'labor city' to its economic and social elites."[3]

All were power brokers of finance and industry, all held social or political influence to some extent in the city and state, and all had shared economic interests. Initially known as the "Committee of 50," this unelected assembly, and those versions that followed it, did not exactly represent the demographics of the city. As an unelected commission operating outside any lawful warrant, they held no strict legal authority. However, they exerted control over 13.1 million dollars in donated and appropriated relief funds, not to mention untold amounts of donated commodities (a relative purchasing power of 365 million in 2019 dollars).[4]

Adding to suspicion of corruption, accurate records of the donations were not kept, with the Relief Survey concluding, "No complete record of cash contributions can be made."[5] Phelan, as the chair of the powerful finance committee, communicated directly with the Roosevelt administration—past the mayor and the governor—about decisions in the recovery, although he held no elected office. They certainly represented a powerful commission, but the system posed problems of fair representation and equitable relief practices. For example, the attempt made by committee members to underhandedly acquire the valuable land in Chinatown and

relocate the residents to a new neighborhood on the south side of the city near Hunter's Point.[6] Within days of the fire's end, the relief committee and local newspapers were discussing this proposal.[7] Schmitz was over his head in the relief efforts. It should come as no surprise that he was not up to the challenge of managing the recovery and reconstruction, especially considering his mounting legal headaches and pending indictment for graft and bribery charges unrelated to the earthquake.[8] As Andrea Reese Davies pointed out, because of the growing power of the committees, "Mayor Schmitz slowly lost his solitary grip on the vulnerable city during the transition from emergency response to disaster relief."[9]

Some have levied criticism at the Governor George Pardee for not taking a more proactive leadership role. While Pardee did not command the headlines in the way that Brigadier General Funston and Schmitz did, he was busy at work during the disaster coordinating support from inside the state, helping find places of refuge for displaced persons around the state, and lobbying other states and the federal authorities for support. A review of his incoming and outgoing correspondence through those days demonstrates he was certainly not idle. Pardee did not wish to get in the way of city leaders and sought to empower them. He also believed that the municipal authorities were handling the crisis as well as anyone could, and tried to avoid duplicating efforts. Had he asserted himself more, it is still unlikely he could have affected greater change against such a powerful group. The San Francisco various iterations relief committees would govern through group consensus.

At that time, the American Red Cross served in the capacity of the nation's disaster relief entity, and Secretary of War Taft dual hatted as the head of the Red Cross board. The Red Cross had some means of collecting donations across the country and mobilizing volunteers to assist. In the case of San Francisco in 1906, the disaster response posed significant challenges even for relief agencies like the Red Cross. The number of those displaced was too high. Getting volunteers to the site was a challenge. Recruiting and utilizing local volunteers was not possible since nearly 80 percent of the city was affected in some way by the disaster. President Roosevelt appointed Dr. Edward T. Devine as a special representative for the Red Cross to the city of San Francisco and the Relief Committee. Devine was a professor at Columbia University and had vast experience with social work.[10] His contemporaries viewed him as a competent administrator and social progressive who strove to ensure accountability of resources.[11]

Disaster of the scale and size seen in San Francisco that spring made it impossible for the Red Cross to face the needs alone. While the exact num-

ber is unknown, Major General Greely estimated 300,000 people were left in need of food, clothing, and shelter.[12] The Relief Survey by the Russell Sage Foundation estimated those made completely homeless as 200,000.[13] The scale of the crisis necessitated federal involvement.

By Greely's return on 22 April, the Army was already deeply involved in delivering physical aid to the city. Although the larger military depots in San Francisco were destroyed by fire, the Army expended whatever supplies it had on hand at the garrisons in the Bay Area in the first few days of the disaster. During the fire, the Army's bakeries kicked in to full production, mass quantities of coffee and food were delivered to the forming camps, and blankets and tents were distributed quickly to the initial gaggle of refugees.[14]

As mentioned in the previous chapter, some of these initial supplies were "requisitioned" locally, purchased on credit, or simply confiscated, often with receipts left for the goods taken. While police work garnered the most attention, it would be unfair not to acknowledge the many acts of commanders and individuals who identified needs in their districts, and lacking guidance from the higher headquarters, sought to meet them. The story of Jones Dump is an example of the initiative of individual soldiers to help provide aid during the initial crisis. Although the accounts exist in several reports, Major Carol Devol, the Division Quartermaster, happened upon the comical site himself, and retold the story in the *Infantry Journal:*

> About dark, April 21, I was stopped near the Presidio bakery by a tall, earnest-looking young soldier of the 22d Infantry, who was walking down the road with two wagons. He inquired where he could get some bread, said the bakery was closed and he must have some food. I asked what he meant and who wanted the food. He then told me that he and two other members of his company had become separated from their command and found themselves near the foot of Jones Street, just out of the burnt district in the vicinity of what is called "Jones Dump," being a general dumping ground for that part of the city. He said they found about 5,000 dagoes 15 down there who looked to them as wearers of the United States uniform to do something for them. With true American spirit they accepted the responsibility and took charge. They levied on some adjoining stores and warerooms, making systematic issues. They settled disputes and maintained order. Finally, having exhausted all the resources of his immediate locality he had started out with two wagons on a foraging expedition, and he said "Those people are hungry

> and I have simply got to get something for them." I took him to the Presidio dock and loaded up his wagons, and asked Colonel Febiger that night if he would not visit the foot of Jones Street the next morning and see what was going on. He reported that the man's story was all true. The three privates were running 5,000 refugees, mostly foreign, and doing it very well, and their authority down there was unquestioned. These refugees were taken in the general organized plan later and the enlisted men returned to their commands.[15]

As leaders sought to provide for the masses from 18 to 21 April, the War Department was also at work, coordinating support that would be needed for months to come. Nine hundred-thousand field rations were either en route or preparing shipment to the city by agents of the commissary general as early as the 21st.[16]

A critical examination of the military's involvement in the 1906 earthquake and fire will leave the researcher with little doubt that the Army contributed to an unnecessary loss of life, liberty, and property. The firefighting and law enforcement efforts, no matter how well intentioned, furthered the effects of the disaster. However, given the complex political realities, the scale of the destruction, and the numbers of those in need, there was only one organization at the time that had the experience and resources to create a unity of effort in the relief operations. What agency had tentage to house tens of thousands of people? Who else had the experience to manage such large encampments? Who had stockpiles of field rations and meals ready to eat that required no cold storage or cooking? What organization had the logistical capacity to operate in an austere environment? Who had medical treatment facilities that could be deployed in an expeditionary fashion? Who had the staff and manpower available to operate such a program? Only the US Army could render such aid.

The role of the Amy in relieving the city's citizens from suffering has been underplayed by historians in recent years, and there are a multitude of unsung heroes in this history. This is understandable, given the nonsensical actions during the fire. In the midst of the confusion and crisis, many eyewitnesses expressed an appreciation for the efforts of the joint force. The official dispatch from the British Consulate in San Francisco on 25 April 1906 by Consul General C. W. Bennett provides interesting perspective: "The situation was saved by the military forces under General Funston." He went on to say that of the relief camps started by the Army, "All was admirably managed, and everything done to avoid suffering. I

can say from personal experience that no hunger need exist in the camps, although over two-hundred thousand are living in the open."[17]

Greely did not want the military to assume the lead role in the relief operation. In his own words, "I was asked on April 23, the first day, by the Mayor to take over this work, which I declined to do on the grounds that such action would be unwarranted by law."[18] His opposition to the continued policing of the city was even stronger, saying, "it is against public interest, against public policy" for troops to patrol the streets, and was "contrary to our forms of government, and contrary to sound principles."[19] Although Greely defended Funston's actions in his report, he quickly issued counter orders upon his arrival and sought to remove the Army from the "nonmilitary duties" Funston had assumed.[20] On 24 April, Greely met with the mayor, citizens committees, and Red Cross members for a conference to determine the way ahead. Being convinced that the city and state authorities were not able to relieve suffering, he ultimately gave in. "After a heated argument it was decided that the military authorities should have entire charge of the relief stations and the shelters for the homeless."[21] Again, mountains of correspondence indicate that this was not a mission Greely wanted, but one he accepted begrudgingly for the greater good. Taking inventory of the mission requirements, he sent a request to Washington for 2,500 additional troops and asked Pardee to send an official request for support from the military to the president, thus making his presence and leadership lawful. In the end, the US Army was critical in delivering support to the people of the city, with the Army contributing significantly to the recovery by taking a lead role in the delivery of relief to the imperiled city.

Delivery and Distribution of Aid

With so many left homeless and without basic necessities, the crisis continued long after the flames were extinguished. With hundreds of thousands left displaced, homeless, and jobless, the recovery would take years. In the near-term, hunger, exposure, and disease were all risks that could destabilize the situation. Organizing the behemoth effort would take time, analysis, problem solving, and experience. While many previous researchers have provided great insight into the recovery, few have demonstrated an appreciation for the scale of the sheer logistical challenge. By 4 May, 860 railcars, and 19 steamships of food and supplies would pour into the Bay Area, but getting these supplies, in the right quantities, to the right place was easier said than done, and often underappreciated by historians studying the disaster.[22] These are the kinds of challenges that plague armies in times of war. With a supply system in place to organize the ma-

terials by classification, and means of deploying and distributing aid, this was an appropriate mission for the military.

The immediate needs of the recovery were obvious; food and shelter. Two of the unsung heroes of the early recovery and relief efforts were Quartermaster General of the Army C. R. Humphrey, and Commissary General Brigadier General Henry Sharpe. Greely, Funston, and their staffs would not have been able to coordinate the martialing of resources outside of California without their aid. The initial requests for support from the Department of the Army were imprecise. Indeed, the very first requisition was limited to one sentence asking the War Department to send "thousands of tents and all the rations that (could) be sent."[23] It was the General Staff in Washington, DC that took the initiative and began an aggressive effort to analyze requirements, identify available assets across the United States, and begin deploying those resources to the Bay Area.

Delivered to Congress from the White House, a report on the relief work by the military started a rapid fire of telegrams to supply depots, logistics hubs, and quartermaster officers across the Army to identify resources available and deployment orders for those supplies to ship to San Francisco.[24] One can imagine the planning manpower and effort this would have taken. Miraculously, the first train cars of blankets, ponchos, canvas tents, and rations began to arrive in the Bay Area within two days and by 20 April food and commodities were flowing in to the city.[25]

The initial distribution of aid was also disorganized. According to the Relief Survey, there were 165 relief stations throughout the city that provided the victims of the disaster with bread, meat, milk, and other necessities.[26] Many of these were started by private charities. Soup kitchens and relief stands set up by nongovernmental agencies like the Salvation Army and Sisters of Charity were active in distributing food and sustenance in the first days of the disaster.[27] However, there was a problem with the duplication of services, and the distribution of the right supplies to each station. Over the long term, there was a need for collaboration. Greely believed the distribution of supplies was unsatisfactory and produced unnecessary waste. There was a need to develop a standardized system.

The headquarters at Fort Mason transformed into a multiagency coordination center, which established a central location for coordination of federal, state, municipal, and nongovernmental organizations. In fact, Greely invited the city government to set up their offices at Fort Mason, in hopes of creating better collaboration. This strategy was effective and offered the command greater ability to influence during the recovery. Within

days, all relief stations were brought under a standard system managed by the Army, to ensure the adequate flow and distribution of supplies (see figure 5.1.). The system was by no means perfect, but the distribution was a fairly orderly process. Despite the long lines, there are no reports of starvation in any of the thousands of reports from the city. Many images depict hundreds of people waiting patiently as soldiers and volunteers handed out food. With 2,500 additional troops deployed from installations as far away as Kansas and Minnesota, there was adequate manpower for the task. After the 27 April gubernatorial request for support, presidential sanction allowed soldiers to aid the civil authorities, but Greely insisted on a limited security operation to guard infrastructure, supplies, and camps over the next month. By the 23rd, orders to shoot to kill were fully rescinded, and the Army transitioned police work back to the city's actual police department. For months afterward, Greely appeared in front of the press and at public gatherings to spread his message that the military was not there to enforce the law and martial law was not in effect. In one interview he said, "The presence of soldiers here now is not to help to maintain order," and went on to say, "the Army is really here now to do relief work."[28] In his article in the *Infantry Journal,* Devol said that during this period, "The police were used generally in their legitimate work throughout the city, the military in all cases making civil arrests only when absolutely required and then turning over the arrested persons to the police."[29] The main effort at this point was rightly the relief.

Managing the financial resources of the relief was also a serious task. Congress had authorized several appropriations, totaling 2.5 million in 1906 dollars, to be spent by the Army. However, the control of these funds was not initially centralized, with many agencies drawing against them. Upon his arrival, Greely recognized the hemorrhaging effect of individual officers and the General Staff in Washington making uncoordinated commitments of resources (as previously shown through the confiscation investigation), and he placed management of the funds on the shoulders of Division Quartermaster Devol.[30]

Devol had another important job. He was responsible for receiving, staging, and distributing the trains full of supplies pouring in to the Bay Area; a monumental feat. This included more than army supplies. All the materiel sent to the Red Cross was received and distributed through military channels.[31] Truly, an Army was needed to move the supplies in such an expeditionary environment. The challenge was herculean, even to a modern logistician, and required an incredible amount of organization and manpower. Clerks, wagon teams, and supply non-commissioned officers

sorted through every assortment and class of supply. Disorganized lots of food, household goods, typewriters, urinals, used clothing, and medicine clogged the logistics pipeline. The salvation of the city's wharves and docks were a windfall for the relief efforts. Deployment and distribution of the relief supplies necessitated quick communication inside and outside the city. Members of the US Army Signal Corps quickly got to work installing hundreds of miles of telegraph lines, 26 telegraph offices, and 156 telephone stations by 2 May.[32] These lines would later be used by commercial enterprises, and enabled victims of the fire to reach out to loved ones outside the city, while allowing for better coordination for the distribution of relief supplies within the Bay Area.

Figure 5.1. Soldiers guarding relief supplies after the earthquake.

Source: Center for Military History, "'Thank God for the Soldiers' San Francisco Earthquake 100 Years 1906-2006)," Center for Military History Online, SC95176, accessed 4 May 2019, https://history.army.mil/documents/SFEarthquake/1906Earthquake.htm. Note: An undated photo of one of the Army's relief stations for distributing supplies. An infantryman with M1898 Krag rifle stands guard in front of boxes of corned beef, rolled oats, and a 6-foot-tall pile of bread.

According to Devol, "The stores that arrived for the relief of San Francisco up to July 20 amounted to 1,702 car loads and 5 steamship loads, a total of approximately 50,000 tons. At the height of the operations about 150 car loads were delivered into the city daily, in addition to stores arriving by steamers."[33] Not mentioned specifically in Greely's report, was a labor-intensive effort to deliver clean drinking water to the stricken city. With sewer lines broken and drinking water potentially tainted, the logisticians also had to plan for the delivery of tens of thousands of gallons of water to points around the city each day. In a report to the chief of the Signal Branch, one local officer said, "It is probable that Major Devol is the hardest worked man in the whole Division."[34] The logistics enterprise brought to bear by the Army facilitated the distribution of daily rations for an average of 240,143 people from 19 April to 12 May 1906.[35]

From the beginning, there existed a consensus among city, state, committee, and military leaders that relief distribution should be slowly scaled back, in hopes of not creating a dependent class.[36] One strategy was to gradually close relief stations by the beginning of June, and transition others to field kitchens. The belief was that greater efficiency could be achieved in preparing mass meals, and those not truly in need would be less likely to partake. According to Greely, there was a great reduction in the numbers of people seeking aid once the relief stations stopped distributing coffee, tea, and sugar at the end of May.[37] However, the Relief Survey opined that this strategy was not necessarily effective.[38] Whatever the case, the needs of the city for sustenance were met, with almost 1.5 million free meals being served from May through October of 1906.[39] As jobs became prevalent, and longer term housing became available (in addition to increasingly rigorous examination of need employed by the relief organization), the reliance on relief stations and hot meal kitchens eventually dropped.

One remaining shadow over the relief operations was the existence of racial inequality. There is much reason to believe there was a significant disparity in the quality of care that minorities received.[40] A Chinese delegation traveled to San Francisco in the days after the fire to look into allegations of the mistreatment of Chinese victims of the fire, although according to Army reports seemed satisfied with the segregated camps they toured.[41] Financial and physical aid in Chinese and Japanese communities tended to be insular, with a proportionally low number seeking help from the government.[42] Certainly, there were racial prejudices in play during the recovery, but none acknowledged by the military. When questioned about how the Chinese were treated, Funston told Taft, "All nations are re-

ceiving the same considerations. My orders have been to that effect."[43] An examination of records pertaining to the relief operations indicates no intentional systemic inequality on the part of the military. At times, the city's residents were offended at the lack of segregation by the Army. Greely shared one recollection in his memoirs of a white woman who approached him to convey her shock that she had eaten a meal at a relief station next to a black man. Greely, who had commanded black units in the Civil War and American West replied sarcastically, "Doubtless they are hungry. A negro who sat next to me, as I took my luncheon yesterday, ate enormously." [44] There are several other accounts of the city's inhabitants being deeply offended at the soldiers' lack of decorum in allowing minorities to stand in the same relief lines or stay in the same camps. One female patient in the Presidio General Hospital complained in a letter to her mother that "white, yellow, and black [women] were all housed in the same ward."[45] This does not mean that the members of the military were free from racial and social prejudice. As products of their time, that assertion would be unlikely, but it seemed less pervasive in the military as an institution than in the rest of the city.

At the same time, when racism did exist on the part of civilian leaders, Greely did little to stop or address it. Historians have widely discussed attempts by the city's elite, including Schmitz and Phelan, to take control of the valuable real estate of Chinatown, and relocate the neighborhood to the furthest regions of the city.[46] Greely wrote a letter, which was forwarded to Roosevelt, sharing his concern about the recovery and Chinese San Franciscans, saying that there was colluding between the mayor and labor parties to keep those of "Asiatic descent" from being employed in the recovery efforts. This was reported to Washington, but nothing was done, and it was not mentioned in the official report. In typical fashion Greely's report turned a blind eye to the problems he identified in private. Of Mayor Schmitz, he reported, "Neither word nor act of discrimination emanated from him against or in favor of any race, sect, color, or nationality."[47]

The delivery and organization of supplies was complex enough without the racial dynamics, and likely frustrating for all victims of the catastrophe. The efforts of the Army were not without complaint. For citizens who had lost all their belongings, being forced to live in a camp, stand in food lines for hours, and be treated with skepticism when questioned about needs for assistance was more than many could bear. While the military system came with benefits in organization and distribution, it had inherent drawbacks in red tape that most private citizens had a hard time navigating. One letter of complaint sent to the Red Cross, describes one family's

"Catch 22" experience of simply trying to procure an available mattress from a relief station.[48] The relief was not without challenge, and there were just criticisms made, but it does seem Greely was just as critical of the relief efforts. He worked his inspectors general very hard to reduce friction and manage risk. Overall, he was successful. The heavy lifting done by the Army benefited the victims of the earthquake and fire.

Housing Displaced Persons

From his first conversation with the relief committee, Greely expressed a professional opinion that there were two appropriate missions in this disaster that the military held expertise and therefore could best support the civil authorities: "the distribution of supplies and the care of camps."[49] Multiple researchers place the number of homeless at 250,000. The Army's estimate of 200,000 correlates to that of the Relief Survey.[50] These are all staggering numbers.

More than a few modern researchers have lobbed grenades at the military for conditions in the camps. The discussion of camps and their management is a large one worthy of more detailed future study. It is most helpful to understand the camps in terms of the temporary and long-term housing of displaced people. In the aftermath of the earthquake, an estimated 75,000 citizens simply evacuated San Francisco.[51] During the fire, refugees remaining in the city slept outdoors, in makeshift shelters, or "under canvas" in temporary camps.[52] Most of these camps were set up in the city's many green spaces and parks. These temporary camps were not under the direct administration of the military (or anyone for that matter). As with the first relief stations, some were started by private charities, and some just developed on their own. As the Army's report said, "In every convenient spot outside the burned district there speedily sprang up tent cities and temporary barracks, into which the destitute crowded as fast as they could."[53] Several camps were established by the Army on the Presidio grounds and elsewhere. For those not under military administration, the Army offered assistance by providing shelters, blankets, and other supplies that made these camps possible. With the city broken into "military districts," service members were also often seen patrolling the various camps while providing security and assistance to those escaping the flames. One eyewitness recalled soldiers in the camp during the fire trying to protect victims from profiteering. As wagon drivers charged exorbitant prices to carry household goods to safety at the camps in Golden Gate Park on the 19th, a soldier checked the prices paid and forced waggoneers to return overcharged profits.[54] Most San Franciscans' experiences with "camp

life" occurred in this brief context, and the topic was widely discussed in newsprint and correspondence.

In the two weeks following the fire, the majority of those displaced found more permanent shelter with friends, family, or in rented space. Many relocated to other towns in the Bay Area where they could find rooms for rent. Others stayed on their old home lots, living in tents or makeshift structures until their homes could be rebuilt. Others were housed by the local authorities in vacant properties. The remaining homeless population stayed in at least 100 makeshift camps in park areas and amidst the burnt-out ruins of the city. The Army estimated it took one week to find adequate housing or tents for all the victims. Only 28 of the 100 camps were official or sanctioned.[55] By 15 May, a total of 50,000 homeless victims of the fire remained in these 100 encampments.

As mentioned, Greely was given control of 21 of the 28 official and permanent camps in the city by the relief committee.[56] Several were already under military control, and four camps were located on the Presidio grounds, including the camp for Chinese refugees.[57] These camps held the largest percentage of displaced people. The management of a refugee camp poses endless challenges. Setting up and administering such facilities would have been no easy task, and trying to organize the unofficial camps that had "sprung up" would have been near impossible. With its doctrinal knowledge and recent experience in the Spanish American War of managing large encampments, the military rose to the challenge. Those under their direct control were quickly brought into compliance with military standards.

The mild climate of the Bay Area worked in favor of those living outdoors, but long-term solutions were still required. The challenge with any encampment is field sanitation and hygiene. The US Army camps focused construction and organization on "sanitary arrangements for sewage and refuse," while the unofficial camps without any oversight or regulation posed risk to the public health. Trash heaps, lack of water, and putrid latrines were often reported to exist in proximity to living and eating areas in the temporary and unofficial camps. "Conditions were gradually becoming worse and worse" in the unsanctioned facilities.[58] An example is the Kansas Street Camp in the Portrero district. An article in the *Daily News* levied complaints about the sanitation and needs of these camps ignored by the relief administration.[59] Army officers exerted their influence on these camps to improve living conditions and reduce risks of disease as much as possible. In many cases, the best course of action was to close the smaller camps, and invite residents to join new and improved Army run

camps. Of course, there was no way to force people to live in these camps, even if that is how city leaders would have wanted it. Greely informed the mayor that no forced relocations would take place; "neither moral stress nor physical force, relying upon the attractiveness of properly constructed, well-policed, and orderly camps against others of heterogeneous character."[60]

In the camps administered by the military, thousands of tents were arranged in orderly street-grid formation, complete with tent numbers, street signs, and corner directories (see figure 5.2.). Net enclosed kitchens were established away from living areas and latrines. Hot and cold running water was present. Latrines, bathing facilities, and laundry facilities were constructed. Tents were set on wooden platforms, and there were platforms built for outdoor schools. Medical clinics and dispensaries were present in each camp. The organization was impressive. However, life was frustrating for the residents of the Army camps. One of the greatest complaints was the strict enforcement of draconian rules. The residents were highly regulated and closely inspected by camp supervisors. A common refrain was that the camps more closely resembled prison. This is perhaps understandable, since Greely referred to the residents as "inmates." The Army insisted the rules were simple and served a purpose:

> As to the inmates of these camps, there were no restrictions on personal conduct or liberty save for three purposes- those of decency, order, and cleanliness. Unless occupants were willing to conform to those three simple rules, they were obliged to forgo the benefits of government canvas, government bedding, and relief stores.[61]

This mantra, "decency, cleanliness and order," repeated throughout Greely's notes, are also found in his subordinates' correspondence, and were the basic principle that guided his administration of these facilities.[62] Perhaps what surprised and frustrated most residents was not that rules for decency, order, and cleanliness were in place, but the level of detail of the regulations enforced, and the sheer amount of them. There were regulations on requirements for vaccinations, proper use of latrines, bathing, laundry, fires, boiling water, limitations on cooking, food coverings, fly traps, instructions on proper tent ventilation, and prohibitions on strong or noxious odors. If residents did not comply, they were likely to receive citations which could eventually force their eviction:

> All persons sheltered in permanent camps will render prompt and implicit obedience to the camp commander in regard to

matters of decency, order, and sanitation. Any person ejected from a camp under military control for failure to obey proper orders of the camp commander will not be admitted to any other military camp.[63]

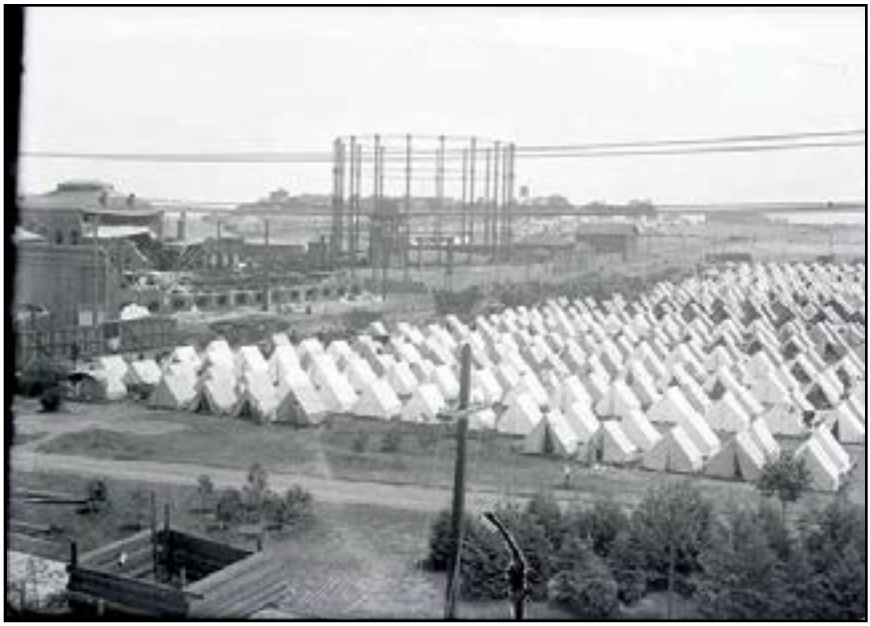


Figure 5.2. Marina Refugee Camp.

Source: San Francisco Public Library, "Marina Refugee Camp," San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, Image AAC-3104, accessed 4 May 2019, http://sflib1.sfpl.org:82/record=b1017981. Note: The US Army General Staff in Washington, DC worked tirelessly to deliver emergency resources, such as these tents at the Marina Refugee Camp.

The greatest scrutiny by inspectors was placed on Army camps, but the military was given authority to inspect unofficial camps as well. "The most rigid supervision was exercised over military camps in which there were at different times 20,000 refugees, and a close eye was had on 25,000 scattered campers not under our supervision, and the 5,000 in temporary shacks."[64] Eyewitness accounts validate and augment the seriousness with which inspectors and camp commanders took their duties. Military officers worked with city officials to create and enforce some basic regulations for

any encampments before transitioning supervision back over to the civil authorities, and serves as a good example of civil and military cooperation in creating conditions for recovery.

The overall relief strategy of the Red Cross and US Army was to reduce the numbers of those living in camps as quickly as possible through the creation of jobs and the rebuilding of residential neighborhoods. Greely said his intent was to avoid creating a dependent class by attempting to "stimulate individual resourcefulness, foster self-helpfulness, discourage dependence, and discount pauperism."[65] Insurance claims for property owners did not come close to meeting the value of property lost, and were slow in being paid. Private loans were also critical in rebuilding the city, but generally were not available to working class and the unskilled poor. The city began to rise back from the ashes. By 1 June 1906, the numbers of resident in the Army's camps shrunk to 13,170 as families were able to consolidate their resources and find employment and other accommodations.[66] A year after in the fire, in April of 1907, the permanent camp's population was 17,614, growing because unofficial camps had been consolidated into the official camps.[67] The challenge was that remaining residents in the relief camps were of lower socioeconomic status. Many of these were immigrants, unskilled, below the poverty line prior to the earthquake, or were suffering from disability or illness.[68] Those residents who had the financial means to rebuild or social connections to find living accommodations elsewhere did so.

By July, Greely had solidified his plan to transition all military responsibilities to the city and state, even dodging some last-minute politicking by Schmitz to keep the military involved. Greely agreed to provide several officers to serve in administrative capacities and act as subject-matter experts for the relief, and Greely himself continued to advise the civilian leadership on strategies for the administration of the recovery.[69]

It became evident that the remaining population in the official camps would require more permanent housing. While homes and businesses were being reconstructed by those who could afford it, no one made any plans to produce affordable housing for those who could not afford it. The low-income apartments and tenements that had housed so many would not be quickly reconstructed to meet the needs of the poor. As early as the 1st of May, Greely had recommended to the relief committee that temporary buildings be constructed to house 10,000 people.[70] The city leaders and committee members saw wisdom in this course of action, and after much debate devised a plan to construct simple rectangular wooden structures to serve as a more durable temporary housing for displaced persons on pub-

lic land.[71] The Presidio newspaper reported the design was based on one personally provided by Greely, drawing on his experience constructing buildings in the artic with limited supplies.[72] However, project managers collected multiple bids for the design and construction, and it is not apparent if Greely's suggestions influenced the final design.[73] The final product was an efficient and simple design (see figure 5.3.). As one of the many projects to stimulate the economy, the earthquake cottages or "earthquake shacks" as they became known, were constructed by local union carpenters.

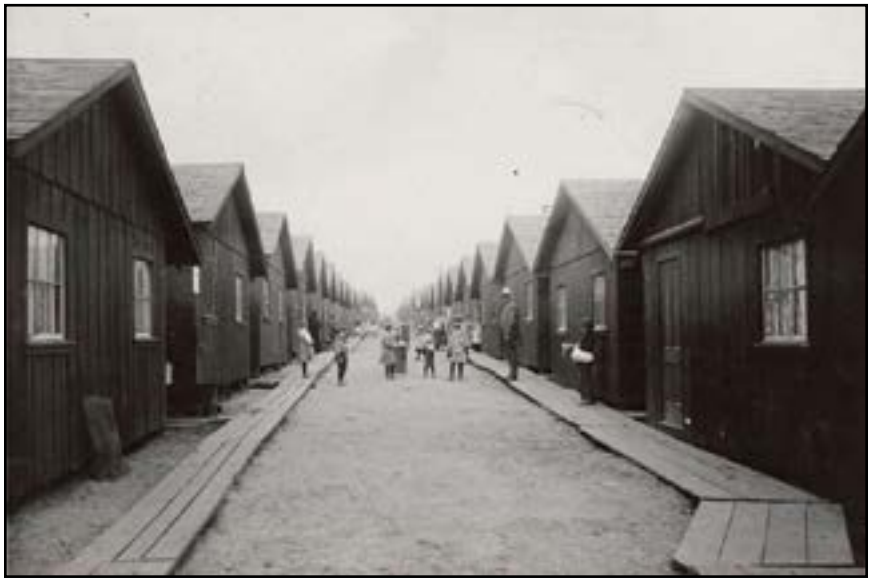


Figure 5.3. Camp 13 on Franklin Square in the months following the earthquake.

Source: San Francisco Public Library, "Camp 13, Franklin Square," San Francisco Historical Photograph Collection, Photo AAC-2979, accessed 4 May 2019, http://sflib1.sfpl.org:82/record=b1017858.

The concept was not necessarily a popular one with the city's elites. Long-term dwellings created fear that the dependent lower class may squat indefinitely on public property. Schmitz had lobbied to construct tract housing on the outskirts of the city and sell homes to the camp dwell-

ers at a profit.[74] There was also an issue of aesthetics, with many of these encampments occupying city parks beyond the summer of 1906. The solution to this dilemma was to paint them green, in hopes they would blend in with the terrain. A total of 16,448 refugees were housed in the newly constructed homes. Offsetting the cost, and in hopes of creating self-sufficiency amongst residents were charged $5 a month in a "rent to own" contract. Once the resident paid off the $50 it cost to construct the cottage, they were allowed and encouraged to move it from the encampment to a home site within the city. The last camp closed on 30 June 1908.[75]

At the time of construction these homes were not intended to serve as long-term dwellings, but many became just that. Some residents cobbled them together to make larger homes. Some shacks were used for building components. Over the decades, many were added on to, so that the original design may be unrecognizable from the street. At least 45 complete earthquake cottages continue to be used as residences today.[76] Potentially hundreds of suspected or partial cottages also exist.[77] This housing project was quite significant, and aided the economic recovery of the city. It helped keep displaced persons in the city without them relocating to other areas, thus providing living space for lower income families, and encouraging regrowth and redevelopment.

Medical Relief

The initial quake resulted in serious injuries to hundreds of people. Sadly, many of the city's hospitals were seriously damaged or destroyed. Casualties quickly filled those hospitals not disabled by the earthquake, and the flames which followed soon forced the operational hospitals to close. On the morning of the 18th, a citywide casualty collection point was established by volunteer doctors and nurses at the Mechanics' Pavilion across from the Central Emergency Hospital. The Mechanics' Pavilion was a large civic auditorium, which the night before had hosted a roller-skating exposition. One newspaper reported that "The space was filled with dead, dying and injured and its vaulted ceiling echoed their cries and groans."[78] At least 150 casualties were treated here. [79]

The injured were carried in on stretchers and blankets from across the city. Local press reported that US Army and US Navy doctors and nurses quickly augmented overwhelmed volunteers. One large group of medical providers had been transported from the Mare Island Naval Base to the city by Lieutenant Frederick Freeman aboard the *USS Prebble.*[80] The paper reported that the military doctors "rendered great aid" to the injured.[81] As

the Hayes Valley fire encroached by the early afternoon, casualties were transported to the safety of Golden Gate Park.

While there were many hospitals and a large number of skilled medical providers in the city, none of these physicians or treatment facilities had the capability to provide full-service medical care in an expeditionary environment. There was only one organization with the training and resources to perform such a task; the US Army. Most of the injured were transported to the Presidio, which was far from damaged in comparison to the destruction wrought on the city. The 300-bed General Hospital had 11 doctors and 39 nurses, along with a smaller post hospital for those assigned to the garrison. The Presidio hospitals quickly filled with those injured in the earthquake and with patients transferred from other facilities which had been damaged by the quake or imperiled by the flames.[82] An estimated 272 emergency patients were treated in the Presidio General Hospital (later known as Letterman Army Hospital) on the 18th and 20th alone, more than any other single medical treatment facility in the city.[83]

While many of the injured were carried to the Presidio's hospitals, the Army capitalized on its expertise and setup field hospitals. In total, three separate field hospitals were deployed, the first being Company B, Hospital Corps, of the Pacific Division under the command of Captain Albert E. Truby, and by the 19th was in full operation. "Every provision is being made for the care of the sick," said Lieutenant Colonel G. H. Torney in a dispatch to the US Army Surgeon General on 19 April, which included a request for additional medical supplies.[84] By the 21st, Company A, Hospital Corps, arrived from Washington, DC, and established a field hospital at Golden Gate Park with special maternity and a contagious disease wards.[85] Dozens of babies were delivered in Golden Gate Park by US Army surgeons in the days following the fire. After the earthquake and during the fire, army and navy physicians provided triage to more than an estimated two thousand individuals. Additionally, the Pacific Division coordinated the resupply of many of the civilian ad hoc medical treatment centers.[86]

After the fire, each of the Army-run relief camps also established medical clinics to provide basic care to the residents. Emergency and routine medical treatment was provided free of charge to all in San Francisco until the city's hospitals were reopened, and dispensaries issued medication at no cost until drug stores could go back in business.[87]

While the medical treatment of victims of the earthquake and fire was positive, one of the greatest military successes was the remarkably low spread of disease during the first months of the recovery, due largely to

aggressive enforcement of public health policies. The Army's contribution in preventive medicine is too often ignored or downplayed by modern historians. Great catastrophes are often followed by great outbreaks of disease.[88] However, natural disaster does not necessarily have to be accompanied by consequences in public health. Prevention can greatly reduce these risks. Popular writings and newspapers following large disasters in US history often falsely associated epidemics with the presence of human remains. Studies have since shown that public health hazards following a disaster are more closely associated with poor sanitation and the massing of displaced people in tight proximity. With the destruction of sewer systems, and tens of thousands of people crowding city squares, this would have been expected in San Francisco.

There were cases of typhoid and smallpox in the days and weeks following the fire, which could easily have spread from the dozens it infected to thousands of refugees living in close quarters. The conditions were ripe for such a situation.[89] San Francisco had also seen outbreaks of bubonic plague in the four years leading up to the earthquake. The accumulation of trash heaps near relief camps, along with the displacement of the city's massive rat population due to the fire increased the likelihood of vector-borne disease spreading quickly.[90] In 1907, such an outbreak of plague did occur. However, in the two months following the fire, disease rates remained astonishingly low, especially in the camps established by the military. It turned out that 95 cases of typhoid developed between 18 April and 23 June, "but only five developed in official camps."[91] Of the smallpox cases, 123 diagnoses were made in the same time frame, with only 5 originating from the camps (none of which developed in Army camps).[92] The Army engaged in an extremely successful public health campaign designed to inform the public, enact policies, provide immunizations, and isolate outbreaks of disease. This is perhaps the greatest single contribution of the military during the disaster of 1906, which directly translated to saving lives.

The work of sanitation and public health fell to the chief surgeon of the Department of California, Lieutenant Colonel G. H. Torney. Torney understood that disease posed a greater mortal threat to the city's inhabitants than the earthquake or fire ever did. This expertise in field sanitation and public health was born from the painful experience of the Spanish American War, which saw over five times more American soldiers killed by disease than combat. A crippling outbreak of typhoid fever had led to significant reforms in army doctrine and regulations.[93] Torney was approached by the City Health Commission on the 20th while the fires still

burned to serve as the temporary head of the sanitation committee. As public parks filled with people and makeshift camps, the Army's expertise was needed, and Torney filled a leading role in the sanitation committee until 23 May.[94]

Recognizing the potential for disease, and a large unvaccinated population of those displaced, military doctors worked with civil authorities to secure vaccines from across the state. One prominent San Franciscan who was a patient in the Presidio's General Hospital complained about forced vaccinations by Army surgeons.[95] Greely's report references the aggressive immunization campaign spearheaded by the Army, and the Relief Survey credit's the Army with preventing wide spread outbreak of smallpox."[96]

After the military turned control of the Army-run camps back over to the relief commission on 30 June, the Pacific Division continued to provide expertise from the Medical Corps to supervise the sanitation of the camps. Many of the camps' residents commented on the strict nature of the Army's preventative medicine policies. Correspondence to family and friends often included jabs at the soldiers that took their jobs very seriously. However, no other agency or organization had the experience of managing the sanitation or vector control of large encamped populations, and proof of their effectiveness is evidenced in the fact that no "great epidemic of 1906" took place. The Relief Survey concluded, "Because of the army's efficiency during the first few weeks there was no serious outbreak of disease."[97]

Summary

In 1913, the Russell Sage Foundation completed the nonpartisan Relief Survey from the many records that had been compiled by the time. With the benefit of seven years of hindsight, and access to all the primary sources, the investigators had strong insights into the challenges and success of the relief and recovery. In the report's conclusion the authors note, "The value of utilizing for emergency administration a body so highly organized and so efficient as the United States Army, to take charge of camps, and to bring to points of distribution the supplies required for those in need of food and clothing."[98]

The fact is that Greely did not want the military involved in the relief mission, and at every turn sought to extricate himself and his forces. He begrudgingly accepted responsibility in April, being convinced federal assistance was needed and the US Army was best positioned to aid with logistics, housing, and preventive medicine. However, this agreement

came with the understanding that he would simply hold things together until the local authorities could take charge. At the request of the governor, the president authorized the military relief and corresponding security mission. Publicly, Greely portrayed an image of collegiality and unity with Schmitz and the oligarchs of the committee. However, from the very beginning, he made it quite clear in private correspondence that he was aware of underlying corruption, as well as duplicity in the good intentions of city leaders. In a confidential letter on 30 April, Greely conveyed these concerns to Washington, saying that the he feared the relief committee members had devoted themselves to business concerns and that "political and personal interests" were gradually intruding on the operations of the recovery.[99]

Greely originally had planned to transition responsibility of the relief management on 1 June.[100] However, he was politically outmaneuvered by city leaders and relief committee members time and again, as they lobbied Washington for the military's continued involvement. Both Greely and Schmitz sent "confidential" telegrams to Taft urging for and against the withdrawal of troops. There were certainly financial benefits to the US Army running the camps, since the congressional appropriation covered their expense. Greely also felt the political leaders wanted the Army to take on the difficult work so that they themselves could avoid negative public perception.[101] "Any work found too difficult, or repugnant to this committee, was at once assumed by the army, especially when their action excited unjust and vexatious criticism by the local press."[102]

On 15 June, Greely sent a letter to Phelan. "The spirit of American institutions is obviously averse to the quartering of troops in times of peace in large cities, which is in this case supplemented by reasons of a practical and economic character." He also observed a detrimental impact of the Army administrating the city and providing basic services that could provide jobs to those out of work. "In short, the officers and men of the army are now performing duties and rendering services which should be performed and rendered by the destitute men in San Francisco. I submit to your Committee whether it is advisable to favor a policy which thus discriminates against civilian labor because the work of the Army is done without expense to the Red Cross Funds."[103] Greely won out, and transitioned control of the relief effort to civilian control on 1 July. Over 30 officers continued to serve in administrative capacities under the civilian administration of the camps and relief agencies.

While Greely's frustrations with the political leaders and committee members were understandable, his leadership helped those in need, and

perhaps as an honest broker with no financial or political motives in the recovery, was well positioned to assist in the mega-task of organizing the relief. Despite his complaints at the negative press, many citizens felt grateful for the Army's role in the relief. President Roosevelt received a letter from a Mrs. Allen of San Francisco who petitioned him to keep the Army in the city to keep it from "falling into the hands of the city authorities."[104] While not without flaws, the military did contribute significantly to the protection of the survivors through their relief efforts. No other agency had the ability to deploy field rations and supplies, to feed such a number, or organize the logistics operations of such a task. No other federal or state agency had the resources or expertise to house hundreds of thousands of displaced people. Lastly, no other relief organization had the resources or expertise to deploy the field hospitals and field sanitations team required to stave off disease and epidemic. Of course, the fact remains that Greely's official reporting portrayed a brighter depiction than reality warranted. He never publicly acknowledged the frictions with the relief committees and civil authorities.

Notes

1. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 10.
2. Davies, *Saving San Francisco,* 49-50.
3. Dyl, *Seismic City,* 91.
4. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 33-34.
5. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 33.
6. Dyl, *Seismic City,* 152.
7. "Plan to Build an Oriental City," *San Francisco Chronicle,* 27 April 1906.
8. Fradkin, The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906, 106.
9. Davies, *Saving San Francisco,* 50.
10. Davies, *Saving San Francisco,* 53.
11. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 201.
12. Greely Report, 77.
13. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 4.
14. Greely Report, 37, 116.
15. This racial slur, likely referring to Italian Americans, is an example of the language and ideas of the time that permeated not only the army, but American society, and should be understood in its historical context. Devol, "The Army in the San Francisco Disaster," 85-86.
16. Greely Report, 33, 115.
17. Official dispatch from C. W. Bennett, British Consul General in San Francisco, 25 April 1906, MS3481, California State Historical Society, San Francisco, CA.
19. Greely Report, 22.
21. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 63.
20. After Greely's return, the "Impressment of laborers, destruction of property, and the seizing of auto-mobiles, clothing, or food was strictly prohibited." Greely Report, 19.
21. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 11.
22. Thompson, *Defender of the Gate,* 353.
23. US Congress, House, Message from the President of the United States, H.R. Doc. 714, 59th Cong., 1st sess., 1906.
24. H.R. Doc. 714.
25. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 36-39; Greely Report, 37.
26. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 42.
27. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 35.
28. "Army Draws on Grant to Taft," *San Francisco Call,* 27 May 1906, 32.
29. Devol, "The Army in the San Francisco Disaster," 71.
30. Greely Report, 25.
31. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 32.
32. Captain L. D. Wildman, "Reports in Connection with San Francisco," 2 May 1906, Box 204, Entry 44, Record Group 111: Office of the Chief Signal

Officer Document File, 1894-1917, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

33. Devol, "The Army in the San Francisco Disaster," 72.

34. Wildman, "Reports in Connection with San Francisco."

35. O'Connor et al., Relief Survey, 42.

36. Greely Report, 40.

37. Greely Report, 41.

38. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 48.

39. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 51.

40. Davies, *Saving San Francisco,* 45.

43. Greely Report, 46.

42. Davies, *Saving San Francisco,* 51.

43. Funston telegraph to Taft on 24 April 1906, Box 87, Entry 80, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

44. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service,* 243.

45. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906.*

46. "Chinese Protest Against Forcible Change of Site," *San Francisco Call,* 3 May 1906, 4.

47. Greely Report, 19.

48. Anonymous Letter to Red Cross Relief Committee, forwarded to War Department (presumably by Dr. Devine), received 8 July 2019, Box 87, Entry 80, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

49. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 18.

50. Greely Report, 29.

51. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 69.

52. Greely Report, 78.

53. Greely Report, 34.

54. Eyewitness account, W. E. Alexander Papers, MS 3456, California Historical Society, San Francisco, CA.

55. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 404.

56. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 78.

57. Greely Report, 46.

58. Greely Report, 113.

59. "Camp Kansas Crime Against Decency," *Daily News,* 12 July 1906.

60. Greely Report, 35.

61. Greely Report, 35.

62. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service,* 222.

63. Greely Report, 73.

64. Greely Report, 33.

65. Greely Report, 40.

66. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 81.

67. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 28.

68. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 262.

69. Letter from Major General Adolphus Greely to James D. Phelan, 15 June 1906. Captured in O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 387-390.

70. Greely Report, 34.

71. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 289.

72. "Engineers Build New Dwellings for Refugees," Presidial Weekly Clarion, 27 April 1906.

73. Arianna Urban, "'From Green Refugee Shacks to Cozy Homes of Their Own': San Francisco's Earthquake Relief Cottages as Vernacular Architecture" (Master's thesis, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR, 2016).

74. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 217.

75. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 87.

76. Urban, "From Green Refugee Shack to Cozy Homes of their Own," 86.

77. The earthquake shacks bear special significance in this manuscript as I myself grew up in a small home on the south side of San Francisco that was constructed partially from the unauthenticated remnants of an earthquake cottage.

78. "Awful Scenes at the Mechanics' Pavilion," *Santa Cruz Weekly Sentinel*, 21 April 1906, 8.

79. Fradkin, The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906, 101.

80. Department of the Navy, "Report of Lieutenant Frederick N. Freeman."

81. "Heartbreaking Scenes at the Pavilion," *The Call/Chronicle/Examiner,* Special Edition, 19 April 1906.

82. Fradkin, *The Great Earthquake and Firestorms of 1906,* 105.

83. Greely Report, 127.

84. Memorandum, "Torney, Fort Mason CA to Surgeon General, US Army, Washington, DC," 19 April 1906, Record Group 112: Records of the Office of the Surgeon General (Army), 1775-1994, National Archives and Records Administration, San Bruno, California. Also available online: https://catalog.archives.gov/id/296618#.XKPXBIVlg1Q.link.

85. Greely Report, 111.

86. Greely Report, 32.

87. Greely Report, 32.

88. Linda Y. Landesman, *Public Health Management of Disasters* (Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, 2005), 28.

89. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 90.

90. Thomas L. Snyder, "The Military Medical Response to the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire," Military Medicine 181, no. 11-12 (November 2016): 1399-1400.

91. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 92.

92. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 92.

93. Vincent J. Crillo, "Fever and Reform: The Typhoid Epidemic in the Spanish-American War," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 55, no. 4 (October 2000): 363-97.

94. Greely Report, 18, 23.

95. Letter from Anna Blake to her mother, BANC MSS 73/188, Anna Blake Mezquida Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA.

96. Greely Report, 32, 132; O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 90.

97. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 90.

98. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 369.

103. Letter from Greely to Military Secretary, 30 April 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

102. Letter from Greely to Governor Pardee, Pardee Papers, BANC MSS C-B 400, Box 113, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA.

101. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service,* 222.

102. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service,* 222.

103. O'Connor et al., *Relief Survey,* 390.

104. Letter from Mrs. Allen to the White House, Forwarded to War Department, 27 June 1906, Box 87, Record Group 107: Records of the Office of the Secretary of War, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

Chapter 6
To Save Lives, Alleviate Suffereing, and Protect Property

As historian Andrea Resse Davies said, "disasters make messy subjects."[1] Although widely written about and deeply researched in the century since, a great disparity exists in the scholarship of the San Francisco earthquake and fire. Civilian historians have aptly captured the transgressions of the military response during the fire, while military authors and academic institutions have largely ignored the shooting of civilians, seizure of property, and unnecessary destruction of property; espousing a triumphant view of the intervention. Likewise, civilian scholars have not adequately covered the success of the recovery operations, hand-waiving the vast logistics enterprise, control of disease, and housing of displaced persons. A fair appraisal of both sets of successes and failures are necessary to understand this disaster.

The failures of the first days relate to a misunderstanding of requirements and mission. In war the complexities of the strategic and operational environments often cause commanders to revert to what is comfortable and focus their attention on the tactical level. Similarly, in the midst of great turmoil, the military intervention from 18 to 21 April 1906 devolved into a tactical exercise. Chaos was met with bayonets, and the flames were met with explosives. In San Francisco in 1906, with no legal authority, Brigadier General Frederick Funston accepted on face value the authority of municipal leader to suspend due process: basic rights guaranteed to all citizens of this country under the 5th and 14th amendments of the United States Constitution. Funston then issued an illegal order to troops within his command to carry out summary executions of those suspected of petty crimes. He ordered the forced eviction of private citizens from the homes they were fighting to save. He authorized the illegal seizure of property and impressment of private citizens in manual labor. His defense was later that he was following orders of municipal leaders that had no authority over his command, and that no one was shot by the Army, therefore, no harm no foul. The preponderance of evidence casts doubts on that claim. We will never know how many were killed by federal forces, but some researchers have calculated the number at near 50.[2] By issuing these orders, Funston further denied the surviving disaster victims of their life, liberty, and property.

Hundreds of eyewitnesses reported on the troubling consequences of Funston's orders. The prominent San Franciscan and physician Marion

Osgood Hooker lamented, "'Preserve us from our preservers,' was the cry of many of us."[3]

It is highly unlikely that any civil or military court in his day would have convicted him of such a crime given the nature of the crisis and his good intentions. However, this makes him no less culpable as a commander. Adding to the dissonance of these events is the fact that large numbers of San Franciscans and Californians hailed Funston as a hero. Why? Perhaps it is because they were consenters to the military response. In dozens of publications, and hundreds of personal accounts, people expressed a feeling that in the midst of their trauma, the presence of soldiers, sailors, and Marines on the city streets, dressed sharply in uniform, with bayonets fixed offered some sense of order in a situation they were unable to control. Perhaps it was borne from fear; those "in need of shooting" were likely minorities, the poor, and those on the margins of society. If nothing else, this history reminds us of the frailty of liberty in times of crisis.

There was also an appreciation for the services of the military, one that carried forward for decades to come. Pardee's letter to Roosevelt lauded Funston as a hero. This long lasting gratitude may in part also be due to the ruling class of San Franciscans who controlled the narrative of the disaster, by focusing the city's attention on the future, and knowing that they themselves had consented to (if not orchestrated) the needless killing and destruction. In praising the military, they absolved themselves. When Funston died, he laid in state under the dome of City Hall. To this day a bust of the pro-imperial and sometimes racist Funston sits in the rotunda of that building, home to a civic government considered to be among the most liberal and progressive in the nation. His name and likeness appear in dozens of places across the peninsula, though few living San Franciscans know who he was.

While there is much to reflect on in regards to law enforcement and use of force by the military in the city, critics should keep in mind the challenges that the Army faced while firefighting. It would be unreasonable to accuse the US Army of being solely responsible for the city's destruction. A massive seismic event was the root cause, while inadequate building codes, infrastructure challenges, and city government set conditions for the events of that tragic week. It was city officials who conceived of the use of demolitions; although, to be fair, it was the Army who delivered the black powder by the wagonload—knowing the limits of its explosive properties. When the Army was asked to assist with the fire, they were operating outside of their expertise. There were many mines and quarries within the Bay Area, along with experts that could have advised on the use

of demolitions. We will never know how much of the city may have been saved had burning buildings not been blown up and black powder not been used. We do know that buildings were protected without demolitions when private citizens, service members, and dedicated fire fighters committed themselves to the task. Had the military put their thousands of able-bodied troops toward fighting the fire rather than committing their forces to evict people from their homes, many more structures might have been saved. Funston argued that it would have all burned down anyway. But it is more likely that pockets of the city, and potentially hundreds of buildings could have been protected under a different approach.

Once the flames were extinguished, the relief effort was no less challenging for Army leaders. Certainly many of the overall recovery strategies were problematic, and many policies reflected the political and social realities of the time. An example is the segregation of Chinese into their own camp, which coincided with a plan by the city elites to seize Chinese owned real estate in the more valuable parts of the city, and rebuild Chinatown on the south side of the county, instead. However, compared to the efforts of the oligarchs, who at times used the disaster to take advantage of the disenfranchised residents of the city, the military had no overt agenda, and at times displayed an impartiality that angered city elites. While the military made many mistakes in the first three days of the conflagration, and faced tense civil-military relationships afterwards, they worked tirelessly during the recovery to care for hundreds of thousands of people affected by the disaster. Under Major General Adolphus Greely, the force organized and delivered large amounts of goods and supplies to the imperiled city. Although the delivery and distribution were complex, and food lines in varying neighborhoods long, a process spearheaded by the military, took shape.

The success of the relief effort could not have been foreseen after the many missteps in the first few days after the quake. One of the main points of debarkation for relief supplies was the San Francisco docks and waterfront. These wooden structures stood directly in the fire's path, and saving them was a monumental effort. Thanks to the work of sailors, Marines, soldiers, and cuttermen under the direction of Lieutenant Frederick Freeman, the port facilities were saved. Even so, the delivery of aid was not a guarantee. Decades before the Federal Emergency Management Agency was dreamed of, the Red Cross was not in a position to lead relief efforts effectively. The only organization with leadership, manpower, and readily deployable stockpiles of food, tents, and field supplies was the US Army.

While Governor George Pardee certainly worked tirelessly to raise support, the monies and material donated arrived piecemeal and required logisticians to organize the distribution. Additionally, the supplies coming from outside and within the state were not enough, yet the military was able to meet the shortage with the delivery of millions of field rations. Disease and widespread epidemic were a real threat, and the military's focus on sanitation and preventative medicine was critical in curbing outbreaks of disease. Many different military, federal agencies, state agencies, and charities worked together, and the probability for interagency conflict was high. Despite the difficult circumstances and obstacles, Greely and his subordinate commands were able to achieve a unity of effort in the recovery process.

San Francisco rose from the ashes, and though highly critiqued in modern scholarship, the overall relief effort was successful. The military under Greely was a critical component of this success. The military had the means and capability that civilian organizations did not. By delivering resources, providing medical aid, and housing hundreds of thousands of people in crisis, the US Army demonstrated the competency and proficiency to turn the tide of the disaster.

One of the greatest criticisms of Greely is not his organization or administrative skills, but his lack of transparency. If this manuscript has demonstrated anything, it is that Greely's official report to Secretary of War William Howard Taft, which in turn was delivered to the United States Congress, portrayed a whitewashed version of the facts. In it, Greely found no fault in Funston's actions. The shooting of civilians, seizure of private property, and other alleged illegal acts by service members were greatly minimized. Primary sources evince Greely glossed over facts, omitted data available to investigators, ignored leaders' poor choices, and portrayed a brighter depiction than was warranted. An example of this is the thorough investigation by the Pacific Division detailing the vast quantities of supplies and modes of transportation confiscated during the fire. None of these findings were included in Greely's report.

What is more interesting is Greely's defense of Funston's action which was likely insincere; Greely regularly criticized the involvement of troops, as he expressed to city leadership, saying "it is against public interest, against public policy" for troops to patrol the streets, and was "contrary to our forms of government, and contrary to sound principles."[4] He clearly recognized the command's culpability in the first three days of the disaster, yet chose to conceal the mistakes.

Similarly, although he was a witness to corruption and conflicts of interest among the oligarchs who controlled the relief committees, he intentionally kept the problems out of the public eye. We may never know Greely's true motivation for these cover-ups. He would not be the last general officer to sweep the actions of subordinates under the proverbial rug. Analysis of Greely's life demonstrates a profound loyalty to the US Army. Perhaps he sought mainly to save the institution from ridicule and shame. We know also that he took great pride in the relief work the Army provided after the flames were extinguished, and likely had some right to those feelings. It may be just as likely that he did not want the events of three days to overshadow the months of hard work that came after.

In later life Greely reflected that the military response to the crisis "illustrated the value, in an emergency, of a trained, organized force."[5] The point is well taken and true. The need for a national military force to be ready to provide aid and coordinate a unity of effort with civil authorities is as great today as it was in 1906. Training is key. There is no doubt that the forces involved in the initial disaster relief defaulted to their training. Most of the actions of the Army during the crisis were consistent with the 1905 *Army Field Service Regulations,* had the disaster taken place on foreign soil under a military government.[6] The seizure of supplies and transportation closely mirrored the instructions for the "direct requisition" of subsistence in a hostile area found in that regulation.[7] The patrolling of the city by troops with bayonets fixed, and the shooting of suspected looters more closely resembled the instruction in the *Field Service Regulation* on security and combat action.[8] The problem is that the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906 did not take place in a foreign land under military government, or on hostile soil in wartime. The joint force did not legally "requisition" supplies, it stole them. Those shot or assaulted were not in insurrection or rebellion, they were merely suspects of petty crime, unprosecuted by court of law. The order to employ capital punishment with no trial was an order to commit murder. The first days may have gone better had the force taken heed of another set of instructions in the regulation: "Military oppression is not military government; it is an abuse of the power which the law of war confers. As military government is carried on by military force, it is incumbent upon those who administer it to be strictly guided by the principles of justice, honor, and humanity—virtues adorning a soldier even more than other men, for the very reason that he possesses the power of his arms against the unarmed."[9]

When given an appropriate mission, such as the deployment and distribution of relief supplies, the management of camps for displaced per-

son, the delivery of medical aid, and service as a coordination cell to create unity of effort with other governmental and nongovernmental agencies, the Army's training paid dividends.

There are many lessons here. A need for doctrine and accompanying training is vital. Had doctrine existed which reflected the realities of the law for such a mission, doctrine such as the Defense Support of Civilian Authorites, then it is more likely the joint force could have been trained and prepared. Just because doctrine exists, does not mean the force will be trained for the mission. Commanders and assigned units must understand the uniqueness of the Defense Support of Civilian Authorities and prepare accordingly. While the story of military intervention in San Francisco illustrates the need for doctrine and training, it also shines a bright spotlight on the need for moral leaders who can deal with uncertainty and the error of subordinates in ethical ways. When facing a crisis, military commanders' trend toward action and initiative; two positive qualities, but ones that should be directed in the right places. The military's role must be one of support to local authorities. In such disasters, friction and the fog of war are just as prevalent as on the battlefield. A shared understanding of the mission's requirements and limitations is vital for the force's success. This shared understanding must start with the threefold purpose of Defense Support of Civilian Authorites: to save lives, alleviate suffering, and protect property. Had these three principles been the mission statement of the military intervention in the earthquake and fire of 1906, more good might have been accomplished.

Notes

1. Davies, Saving San Francisco, 9.
2. Louise Chipley Slavicek, *The San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906* (New York: Chelsea House, 2008), 89.
3. Manuscript, "Lessons of the Great Fire," BANC MSS 77/1 c, Box 2, Hooker Family Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley, CA.
4. Fradkin, *Great Earthquakes and Firestorms,* 63.
5. Greely, *Reminiscences of Adventure and Service,* 223.
6. US Army, *Field Service Regulations,* 1905 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1905).
7. US Army, *Field Service Regulations,* 1905, 126.
8. US Army, *Field Service Regulations,* 1905, 266.
9. US Army, *Field Service Regulations,* 1905, 194.

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