

# The History of the Twentieth Century

## Episode 129

### “Everywhere and Nowhere”

#### Transcript

[music: Fanfare]

Woodrow Wilson returned to the White House early from his Virginia honeymoon with his second wife, Edith, in January 1916. Too much was going on to allow him to stay away from Washington any longer.

Germany’s U-boat war was still challenging Wilson’s policy of neutrality, and Pancho Villa was killing American citizens in Mexico as part of a deliberate effort to force Wilson to send the US Army across the border. If all that wasn’t bad enough, it was an election year. A mishandling of either of these two delicate issues could easily lead to electoral disaster.

Welcome to *The History of the Twentieth Century*.

[music: Opening War Theme]

Episode 129. Everywhere and Nowhere.

When we last talked about Mexico, we ended in March 1916, when Pancho Villa crossed the border into the US state of New Mexico and attacked the town of Columbus. I want to pick up that thread today, but before I do, I’m going to have to reintroduce you to US Army Brigadier General John Joseph Pershing, and then we have to get caught up on events in the Philippines, because of course we do.

John Joseph Pershing was born on September 13, 1860 in the town of Laclede, in northern Missouri. His father was of Pennsylvania German ancestry; his mother’s ancestors were English. The Civil War broke out just months after John Joseph, the couple’s first child, was born. Mr. Pershing was a shopkeeper and a patriot; he did a good business during the war selling supplies to the US Army.

John Pershing was a good student, and after he graduated high school, he took a job in a local school that taught African-American students while at the same time studying at the State Normal School. (For the benefit of you young people, a “normal school” is what we now call a “teacher’s college.” Wait, do we still call them that?) He graduated with a teaching degree in 1880 and applied to the United States Military Academy at West Point. He would later confess that his interest was more in the quality and affordability of the education he could get at the

Academy than in service in the United States Army. He graduated from West Point in 1886 with a commendation from the Superintendent of the Academy, General Wesley Merritt, who would later become the first US military governor of the Philippines.

After graduating West Point, Pershing would become a cavalry officer. He served with the 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment in wars against Native Americans in the Southwest and in the Dakotas. In 1895, Pershing was assigned command of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, then stationed in central Montana.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry was one of four African-American cavalry regiments formed by the US Army in 1866, just after the Civil War. These were segregated units of African-American soldiers commanded by white officers, which is bad, but they were also the first standing units of the US Army with African-American soldiers, which is good. It was the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry that were first called “Buffalo Soldiers,” and there’s dispute over where that name comes from. One possible story is that it was Native Americans who began calling them that, because of the soldiers’ dark, curly hair, which reminded the indigenous people of the dark, curly hair on the head of a buffalo. Whatever its origin, US Army soldiers embraced it and “buffalo soldier” would become a generic term for any African-American soldier in the Army.

The expression may have been intended to be derogatory, but the proud history of these units has removed whatever negative connotations the term may have once held, and in our time, these four cavalry units are still referred to as Buffalo Soldiers. The 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, the original Buffalo Soldiers, still exists today, and they include the image of a buffalo on their coat of arms.

It tells us something about Pershing that he was willing, first, to teach African-American children, and later, to command African-American soldiers in a time when merely stationing an African-American unit in the vicinity of a white town could cause an uproar, as we have already seen. The cadets at West Point thought it told them something, too. After two years in command of the 10<sup>th</sup>, Pershing was assigned to teach at West Point. Apparently, he was a stickler and not well liked by the cadets, who gave him a racially-charged nickname that I can’t repeat on a family podcast. That nickname would later evolve into something more genteel: Black Jack, although it was still meant as an insult. Pershing would be known as “Black Jack” Pershing for the rest of his life, even among the public, although the origin of the nickname was not always known even to the people who were using it.

Pershing fought in the Spanish-American War, returning to the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry as their quartermaster, and he was present at the Battle of San Juan Hill, which earned him a quick mention back in episode 12. He also fought in the Philippine-American War. In 1905, he became the US military attaché in Japan and spent time as a military observer during the Russo-Japanese War. During this time, he married Helen Warren, the daughter of Francis Warren, a Republican Senator from Wyoming.

He caught the eye of President Theodore Roosevelt and in 1906 Roosevelt promoted him to brigadier general. That was an unusual move; it bumped Pershing all the way up from captain to brigadier general in one go, and ahead of hundreds of other, higher-ranking, officers. But Roosevelt was taken with him, and being the son-in-law of a Republican Senator no doubt helped.

In 1909, Pershing was sent back to the Philippines and he would become the military governor of Moro Province, the southernmost province in the country and home to the Philippine's Muslim minority. But before I continue with Pershing, maybe now would be a good time to get caught up on the situation in the Philippines.

We haven't talked much on this podcast about the Philippines for a while now, or about the US-Philippine relationship. Questions around that relationship had been hot topics in US political debates back at the beginning of the century. Is the United States now a colonial empire? Should the Philippines be granted independence? And if so, when and how? You'll recall that the Democratic Party pressed for Philippine independence in the Presidential election of 1900. They lost that election, and the next one, and the next one after that, but Philippine independence remained in the party platform. So what happened after 1910, when the Democrats took control of the House of Representatives? Or after 1912, when a Democratic President took office alongside a Democratic House and Senate?

To answer these questions, we first have to meet Manuel Quezon. Manuel Luís Quezon y Molina was born on August 19, 1878 in the town of Baler, on the east coast of Luzon, in what will one day be named the province of Quezon. His parents were both teachers and Manuel was a promising student. He went off to law school in Manila, but left in 1899 to join Emilio Aguinaldo's independence movement. He held the rank of major in the Philippine Army and served as an aide to Aguinaldo, but would eventually surrender, make his peace with American rule, and return to law school. He graduated in 1903 and soon got involved in politics. He was elected to the Philippine Assembly in 1907, and became one of the Philippine's two Resident Commissioners in 1909. I should explain here that the term "resident commissioner" makes it sound like a job that you would need to live in the Philippines for, but actually it means he had to move to Washington DC to serve as one of the Philippines' nonvoting representatives in the US House of Representatives.

It was a lucky break for Quezon, and the Philippines too. He had an intuitive grasp of politics, and lobbied Congress, courted the press, and attended scores of Washington dinner parties, which is where the real work of government got done in those days. He impressed the men with his war stories, used his exotic good looks to charm the ladies, and he loved to joke to Irish-Americans that his ancestors had come to the Philippines from Ireland, and the family name was originally "Casey."

And Quezon deployed all his awesome networking skills in support of Philippine independence. In his first speech on the floor of the House, he thanked America for the freedoms granted Filipinos, far more than they had ever had under the Spanish crown. But he went on to say, “Ask the bird, sir, who is enclosed in a golden cage if he would prefer his cage...to the freedom of the skies and the allure of the forest.”

One Member of Congress Quezon wooed carefully was the Ranking Member of the House Insular Affairs Committee, Democrat William Atkinson Jones of Virginia. Jones is an all-but-forgotten figure in US political history, but the Philippines have dozens of streets and parks and other public sites across the archipelago named after him, for reasons you are about to discover.

The Democratic wave in the 1910 midterms gave Jones the gavel of the Insular Affairs Committee, and he spent the next Congress drafting a bill that would grant Philippine independence in eight years, with a proviso that the US military could remain for a further twenty years to guarantee that independence against the other colonial powers. It was actually Quezon who drafted the bill. Jones’ contribution was little more than putting his name on it, since Quezon lacked the power to introduce legislation into the House on his own.

In fact, Jones didn’t introduce the bill either. With a Republican Senate, and Taft in the White House, the odds of the Jones bill becoming law were very slender. But after 1912, everything changed.

Woodrow Wilson’s election sparked spontaneous mass street demonstrations in Manila, where it was assumed that independence was now a done deal. But hang on a second. Philippine independence was never a priority for Woodrow Wilson; no matter what the Democratic Party platform said. As we have already seen, Wilson’s first two years in office were focused on domestic issues, and the next two on the Great War.

Wilson consulted with Quezon on several names for possible appointment as the new Governor General to the Philippines, until Quezon himself suggested New York Democratic Congressman Francis Burton Harrison. Wilson agreed, and the Senate confirmed the appointment in a matter of hours.

Quezon knew Harrison from the House and knew him to be committed to Philippine independence. As Governor General, Harrison purged the government he oversaw of American appointees, reducing the number from 3,000 to 600, and replacing them with native Filipinos as part of a policy Harrison called “Filipinization.”

Harrison’s haste was viewed with alarm by some Americans, who accused him of damaging good government in the Philippines by rushing to promote corrupt or incompetent Filipinos to positions of power, but the Filipinos loved him for it. The National Assembly would grant him Philippine citizenship, at his request, in 1936. Harrison died in New Jersey in 1957, but his remains were buried in the Philippines, also at his request.

Okay, that's all well and good, but what about independence? Wilson was in no rush, and even Quezon, who by this time was casting a wary eye on Japan, was suggesting that independence in 25 years would do just fine, but for now the higher priority was the establishment of an elected and autonomous Philippine government.

So the Jones bill morphed from a vehicle for Philippine independence to a vehicle for Philippine self-government. It would replace the Presidentially-appointed Philippine Commission with a Filipino-elected Senate. The position of Governor General would continue to be a Presidential appointment, and the bill gave no deadline for independence, only a preamble committing the United States to recognize Philippine independence as soon as the country demonstrated that it had a "stable government."

Republicans in the Senate tried to block the bill from passage there, and when that failed, they tried to sabotage the bill by adding an amendment setting a four-year deadline for Philippine independence. But the amendment was ultimately removed and the bill passed. Woodrow Wilson signed it on August 26, 1916.

The Jones Act fell short of the hopes of the most ardent Philippine nationalists, but even so, it was a development unprecedented in the history of Western colonialism. No other colonial power, not even the liberal British or the republican French, had granted this degree of home rule to any of their colonial possessions, and the pledge to recognize Philippine independence, vaguely worded though it might be, was also the first of its kind anywhere.

[music: "The Army Goes Rolling Along"]

Black Jack Pershing served in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War, and in late 1909, he was sent back to the Philippines and for a time he was military governor of what was then Moro Province, the southernmost province and a majority Muslim province. At this time, it was the last remaining region of the country where there was still armed resistance to American rule.

And I *really* don't want to bring this up, but I feel I have to. When Donald Trump ran for President in 2016, he told a story of how during this period of his life, Pershing ordered 49 Moro insurgents to be executed with bullets dipped in pig's blood, then told the fiftieth Moro to go home and tell everyone else what he had seen, and there never was an insurgency again and they all lived happily ever after because everyone knows that real-life Muslims react to pig blood the way housewives react to mice in early Sixties sitcoms.

The kindest thing I can think to say about this story is that it is a vicious smear against one of the greatest names in American military history. In fairness to Donald Trump, he's far from being the first person to circulate this story. Snopes.com tells me it's been going around for twenty years or so.

The truth is that this insurgency was ten years old and already petering out before Pershing got to Moro Province. His job was to disarm the locals, and he did it as gently as he could, beginning by circulating a letter to Moro villagers apologizing for Americans killing Moros and begging them to disarm peacefully. Pershing met personally with Moro village elders and encouraged them to help end the bloodshed. When a group of Moro fighters holed up for a last stand, Pershing simply ordered his soldiers to besiege the encampment and wait them out, saying, "I shall lose as few men and kill as few Moros as possible."

Pershing never ordered or oversaw any executions. His conduct in Moro Province is worth studying, but we should study the real story and not the fairy tale.

Anyway, in December 1913, Black Jack Pershing was ordered home from the Philippines and assigned command of the US Army 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade, which was then headquartered at the Presidio in San Francisco. But it was just a matter of weeks after he returned to America that the US intervention in Mexico began. As US forces steamed toward Veracruz, General Pershing and his 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade were ordered to Fort Bliss, near El Paso in west Texas.

A year went by, and more. The US withdrew from Veracruz and the fighting in Mexico went on, albeit now with a commitment from President Wilson that there would be no further US meddling in the conflict. Pershing began making arrangements for his wife Helen and their four children to leave San Francisco and join him in Texas when, tragically, in August 1915, Helen and their three daughters, aged 8, 7, and 3 were killed in a house fire. Only their six-year old son Francis survived. Pershing would never remarry.

Among those who sent their condolences to Pershing on this sad occasion was Pancho Villa, whom Pershing had previously met, but barely four months later came the Santa Isabel massacre, when Villa's soldiers killed seventeen US civilians riding a train in the state of Chihuahua.

And as you know from episode 119, relations between Pancho Villa and the United States deteriorated rapidly in the months that followed, until Villa attacked the town of Columbus, New Mexico on March 9, 1916.

News of the attack quickly spread across the US, and created a furor. Woodrow Wilson, who had long resisted calls for US intervention in Mexico, understood at once that he now had no choice, especially in an election year. Before the day was over, the President was telling the press that the United States Army would be sent to pursue and capture Pancho Villa.

The position of Secretary of War was actually vacant at the time of Villa's attack. Lindley Garrison had resigned a few weeks earlier, unhappy with what he saw as Wilson's lack of support for his plans to expand the Army. Wilson now turned to Newton Baker, an attorney and the former mayor of Cleveland. Baker assumed the office on the very day of Villa's attack.

Baker had no military experience and openly admitted “I do not know anything about this job,” but he proved to be a quick study. When he relayed the President’s orders to General Hugh Scott, the Army Chief of Staff, Scott asked him, “Mr. Secretary, do you want the United States to make war on one man?” Scott asked Baker to imagine that Pancho Villa got on a train and headed to Guatemala or South America. Should the Army pursue him? Secretary Baker said no, he would not want that. General Scott clarified. “You want his *band* captured or destroyed.” Baker agreed that made more sense.

Still, as far as the US public was concerned, the goal was Pancho Villa, dead or alive. And it was the now 54-year old General John Pershing who was tasked with the assignment. His initial force was spearheaded by four cavalry regiments, the 7<sup>th</sup>, the 10<sup>th</sup>—the original “Buffalo Soldiers” and Pershing’s own former command—the 11<sup>th</sup>, and the 13<sup>th</sup>, along with some field artillery and two infantry regiments, intended mostly to protect the supply lines. This was about 5,000 soldiers in total, and over the next nine months, until the Americans withdrew, Pershing would command a force that maxed out at 12,000, more than three-quarters of the entire active duty United States Army.

And if you don’t mind my inserting a personal note here, one of these 12,000 US soldiers would be my great uncle, Sergeant First Class Wayne Henry Shirey, who not only returned safely to Pennsylvania after the Mexican Expedition, but brought along a new Mexican wife and an infant son, my first cousin once removed.

Against this force stood Pancho Villa and the less than 2,000 fighters under his command. Villa would be hopelessly outmatched in anything like normal combat. But this wasn’t going to be normal combat; it was going to be guerilla warfare. Villa and his soldiers had been fighting in the rugged hills and deserts of Chihuahua for years now and they knew every road and every trail better than they knew their own mothers. The US soldiers seeking them out didn’t even have adequate maps.

The justification for sending US soldiers into Mexico derived from a treaty agreement between the two countries permitting the armed forces of either country to cross the border in order to pursue bandits. Pershing’s expedition was perhaps pushing the treaty terms farther than the Mexicans had ever intended them to go, but Venustiano Carranza reluctantly permitted it. He understood as well as Wilson did that Villa’s intent was to spark armed conflict between Mexico and the US for his own advantage, and therefore resisted the temptation to play Villa’s game, although he did deny the US Army the use of Mexican railways.

Pershing’s force first crossed into Mexico on March 15, six days after the attack on Columbus. Chihuahua was scorching hot by day and freezing cold at night, and unfortunately for Pershing’s units, no one in the US War Department had figured out that they would need winter coats. Hey, it’s Mexico. Right?

As they worked their way south, the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry—that's George Armstrong Custer's old unit, by the way—got word that Villa and some of his men were holed up in the town of Guerrero, about 230 miles south of the border. The Seventh Cavalry picked their way across icy mountain passes, but it took them two days to reach Guerrero, even with the help of Mexican guides. Some think those guides may have been deliberately misleading the cavalry. At last the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry reached Guerrero, hungry and exhausted, but on the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> the 370 soldiers of the regiment surrounded the town and attacked a *villista* force that was roughly the same size. The US forces gave a good account of themselves in the battle that followed, killing 56 of Villa's soldiers, including one of his commanders, and wounding 35. This was against no US soldiers killed, five wounded.

But the bulk of the *villistas* was able to escape into the mountains, including Pancho Villa himself. It was a good beginning for the expedition, but unfortunately for Pershing, this would be as close as any US soldier would ever get to Pancho Villa.

On April 12, 1916, the 13<sup>th</sup> Cavalry entered the town of Parral. The soldiers of this unit had been riding with little rest and inadequate supplies for weeks. They were dirty and unshaven and looking for a place to rest. A constitutionalist military officer they had met along the way had told them they would be welcome to stop over at Parral for a spell, but when they reached the town, the reception was less than welcoming. The commander of the government garrison in the town ordered them to turn around and leave immediately. The Americans did so, but as they left a crowd of Mexican civilians gathered and taunted them with cries of *Viva Mexico!* and *Viva Villa!* The Americans shouted *Viva Villa!* back at the crowd, which drew a few laughs, but the mood turned ugly and the *carrancista* soldiers began firing on the withdrawing Americans, who were pinned down by superior numbers until the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry rode in to relieve them.

Parral lies at the southern end of the state of Chihuahua, over 500 miles south of the US border, and this incident would mark the southernmost advance of Pershing's expedition into Mexico. When the general heard the news of the shootout with the *carrancistas*, he was livid. He contacted his superiors in Washington and requested permission to seize control outright over the entire state of Chihuahua, including the railroads.

This was way farther than Woodrow Wilson was willing to go. Relations with the Carranza government were growing tenser by the day, and there *was* a Great War going on in Europe, after all, in addition to this mess in Mexico. If the US began fighting with the Carranza government, this "punitive expedition" could easily escalate into a full-scale war between the two countries, which in turn would mean that the US military would be tied down in this war in the south, which was exactly what the Germans wanted.

General Scott, the Army Chief of Staff, concurred in this thinking. In his view, Pershing had already accomplished the mission, which was to end Pancho Villa's ability to raid US territory. To have ten thousand soldiers patrolling hostile foreign territory in pursuit of a single man, a



man the government in Mexico City regarded no less as an outlaw than the one in Washington did, was not only irrational, it was undignified.

On the other hand, this *was* an election year. To withdraw too quickly would make it easy for the Republicans to depict the expedition as a failure. And to withdraw right after the firefight with the *carrancistas* at Parral might even look like an outright defeat. Pershing offered the best solution. He would withdraw his force—slowly—to northern Chihuahua, near the US border, where they could easily be kept in supply and safe from Mexican attack. There they would guard the border and wait for Carranza's forces to deal with Pancho Villa.

There were talks between the two governments, but they broke down. The *carrancista* military commander in Chihuahua City sent Pershing a telegram advising him that if Mexican soldiers spotted US soldiers marching in any direction other than north, they would fire on them. Pershing cabled back, "I shall...use my own judgment as to when and in what direction I shall move my forces."

There would be one more battle between US and Mexican forces, and this would be fought in June 21 at the town of Carrizal, about 75 miles south of where Pershing had located his main force. Pershing had gotten word of Mexican soldiers assembling in the town and sent a troop of the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry to reconnoiter. Pershing instructed them to avoid combat with the Mexicans if possible.

The troop of less than 100 American cavalry encountered about 400 *carrancista* soldiers in the town. Their commanding officer ordered the Americans to turn around and leave. It's not clear why the US force chose to attack instead. They were seriously outnumbered and apparently under orders not to engage, but engage they did. About thirty Mexican soldiers were killed. On the US side, about 12 Americans were killed, including all the unit's officers. With no commanders and with ammunition running low, the rest of the unit fled. Twenty-four were taken prisoner; most of the rest were wounded. The Mexicans repatriated the prisoners a week later.

Again, Pershing wanted to retaliate. Again, Wilson would not permit it. By the end of July, with tensions running higher than ever, the US had called up over 100,000 National Guard soldiers and deployed them to the border region. Fortunately, both sides resisted the temptation to escalate all the way to war.

Pershing's expedition would remain on Mexican territory for another six months before withdrawing in early 1917, but there would be no other significant fighting. US forces killed close to 200 *villistas* during the active phase of the expedition, including some important commanders, but not Pancho Villa himself. Neither were Carranza's forces able to kill or capture Pancho Villa.

There's a quote. Some sources attribute it to Pershing, some to an unnamed Mexican military officer reporting to Carranza. Whoever said it, they were reporting on the search for Pancho

Villa and reputedly said something like, “It is my duty to inform you that Pancho Villa is everywhere and nowhere.”

So where *was* Pancho Villa all this time? He had been shot in the leg during a fight with *carrancista* forces back in March. When the Americans attacked at Guerrero, he was there, but he escaped into the mountains. He spent the next few months living in a cave. He had field surgery on his leg, without an anesthetic, to remove the bullet and spent the next three months hiding out in that cave, recuperating. Villa later claimed that US soldiers had once gotten so close to his cave that he could hear them singing “It’s a Long, Long Way to Tipperary” as they marched past.

[music: “It’s a Long, Long Way to Tipperary”]

Just after midnight on July 30, 1916, night watchmen at the Black Tom pier in Jersey City, New Jersey discovered that multiple fires had broken out. An alarm was sounded, and the Jersey City Fire Department was called to the scene.

“Black Tom” was the name of a rock in New York Harbor near Jersey City, and not far from Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. Its name apparently derived from its silhouette, which was reminiscent of the arched back of a cat. It was only visible at low tide, which made it a navigation hazard. New York City used it as a garbage dump for a while and by 1880, it had grown into an island of about twenty acres with a causeway to the Jersey City waterfront. After the Great War began, it was used as a place to store munitions that were waiting to be loaded aboard ships headed for Europe. Since explosives are dangerous, and accidents do happen, it made sense to store them in an isolated facility.

So the outbreak of fires on Black Tom was potentially very dangerous, and the fire department struggled for more than an hour to get the situation under control and put out the flames. It was to no avail. At 2:08 AM, a huge explosion ripped across New York Harbor. It broke windows as far away as Times Square, shook the Brooklyn Bridge, and flung shrapnel into the clock tower of the *Jersey Journal* building in Jersey City and into the upraised arm of the Statue of Liberty. Immigrants being held at Ellis Island had to be evacuated to Manhattan.

Further smaller explosions went off the rest of the night. About one thousand tons of explosives went off altogether, most of it in that first blast, so you might estimate the force of that initial explosion as something in the one-half to one kiloton range, making it one of the most powerful artificial explosions in history up to this time. It could be heard as far away as Philadelphia.

Four people were killed by the explosion, including one infant who was thrown from his crib by the force of the blast. Many injuries were reported. Property damage from the explosion was estimated at about \$20,000,000, or about US\$500,000,000 in today’s money. This included damage to the Statue of Liberty. There’s a small balcony on the torch of the statue. Access

through the arm and up to the torch was closed after the explosion while the arm was repaired, and it was never reopened.

Investigators initially focused on carelessness as the likely cause. The night watchmen had been burning smudge pots to keep away mosquitoes and it was suspected one of these was the source of the fires.

It was only after the Great War was over that German sabotage was identified as the cause of the explosion. We saw back in episode 115 how German agents in the US, in cooperation with anti-British Irish-Americans were manufacturing small bombs and smuggling them into cargo ships carrying munitions to the Allies. A few of these bombs detonated at Black Tom could have caused the fires. This has never been proved to a certainty, but in our time, it is generally accepted as the most likely explanation. After the war, a claims commission was created to calculate German reparations owed to the United States. In 1939, the commission ordered Germany to pay \$50 million to the US in damages resulting from the Black Tom explosion. The government of what by then was the German Reich refused to pay the claim, but in 1953, the Federal Republic of Germany at last agreed to pay the award, plus interest.

We'll have to stop there for today. I'd like to thank all of you for listening, and thanks to Tim for becoming a patron of the podcast. If you'd like to join Tim in support of the podcast, visit [historyofthetwentiethcentury.com](http://historyofthetwentiethcentury.com) and click on the Patreon button. Patronages start at just two dollars a month. You can also support the podcast by leaving a rating and review at the iTunes store; I also appreciate the emails and tweets and other messages of support and encouragement I get from my listeners. You folks make it all worthwhile.

I mentioned a while back that I had sold a short story to *Aliterate* magazine. The story has been published and you can read it online free at the magazine website, [aliterate.org](http://aliterate.org). Or come to the podcast website, [historyofthetwentiethcentury.com](http://historyofthetwentiethcentury.com), where I've put up a link. Let me know what you think of the story.

And I hope you'll join me next week, on *The History of the Twentieth Century* as we see what happens when Woodrow Wilson runs for reelection. He won the 1912 election because of a split in the Republican Party; what happens when the Republicans are united? *He Kept Us Out of War*, next week, on *The History of the Twentieth Century*.

Oh, and one more thing. The US Punitive Expedition into Mexico did succeed in diminishing Pancho Villa's political and military clout in Mexico, and in that sense benefited Mexican President Venustiano Carranza, though you'll never get him to admit that publicly. It is Emiliano Zapata who will be the biggest thorn in Carranza's side for the next few years, although Villa will keep up his guerilla campaign against the government for three more years before negotiating an amnesty. He will be assassinated in 1923.

Pancho Villa's historical legacy is a complicated question. The new government in Mexico City would minimize his role in the Revolution for the first decades after his death. When the great Monument to the Revolution is created in Mexico City in the late 1930s, many revolutionary figures will be interred there, including some who were enemies in life, but not Pancho Villa. His neglect of the women in his wife and the children he had with them has to be viewed as a mark against him as well, and also his many acts of cruelty toward his prisoners.

Nevertheless, Villa was always remembered fondly by the common people of the north, especially in the state of Chihuahua. Later on in the twentieth century, Villa's reputation would improve, and in 1976 his remains would be reinterred in the Monument to the Revolution.

Similarly, in the United States, Villa would be remembered at first primarily as a bandit, a criminal. I have to think that Pancho Villa has a lot to do with the US stereotype of a Mexican bandit: a scruffy fellow with a broad sombrero, black handlebar mustache, pistols on each hip, his chest criss-crossed with bullet-laden bandoliers; a man who can be playful, even comical, one moment but turn murderous the next. The person I just described *is* Pancho Villa.

But there would also be in American culture the romantic image of Pancho Villa, the heroic revolutionary outlaw who lives by his own code. The motion picture industry in the US loved the spectacle of Pancho Villa even during his own life and would continue to use him as a figure in films and television shows for the rest of the century in the United States and also in Mexico. The list of actors cast as Pancho Villa over the years includes Yul Brynner, Telly Savalas, Freddy Fender, and Antonio Banderas. The Mexican actor Pedro Armendáriz played Pancho Villa four times in four different films, though to me he'll always be James Bond's buddy Kerim Bey in *From Russia with Love*.

And by the final decades of the twentieth century and on into our time, the harder historical truths about him have faded and today Pancho Villa is mostly remembered on both sides of the border as the romanticized celluloid image, the outlaw antihero, the Mexican Robin Hood, and I suspect that is exactly how he would have wanted it.

[music: Closing War Theme]