THE PACIFIC GUANO ISLANDS: THE STIRRING OF AMERICAN EMPIRE IN THE PACIFIC OCEAN

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The Pacific guano trade, a "curious episode" among United States overseas ventures in the nineteenth century,[1] saw exclusive American rights proclaimed over three scores of scattered Pacific islands, with the claims legitimized by a formal act of Congress. The United States Guano Act of 18 August 1856 guaranteed to enterprising American guano traders the full weight and authority of the United States government, while every other power was denied access to the deposits of rich fertilizer.[2] While the act specifically declared that the United States was not obliged to "retain possession of the islands" once they were stripped of guano, some with strategic and commercial potential apart from the riches of centuries of bird droppings have been retained to this day.

Of critical importance in the Guano Act, from the viewpoint of exclusive or sovereign rights, was the clause empowering the president to "employ the land and naval forces of the United States" to protect American rights. Another clause declared that the "introduction of guano from such islands, rocks or keys shall be regulated as in the coastal trade between different parts of the United States, and the same laws shall govern the vessels concerned therein." The real significance of this clause lay in the monopoly afforded American vessels in the carrying trade. "Foreign vessels must, of course, be excluded and the privilege confined to the duly documented vessels of the United States," the act stated. Accordingly, the Guano Act of 1856 clearly conferred on the United States the mantle of empire over the sixty-odd Pacific Islands and archipelagoes appropriated almost four decades before the dra-

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matic events of 1898. In fact, with Atlantic and Caribbean acquisitions under the Guano Act, the United States acquired title to some one hundred noncontiguous island territories.[3] The sheer number of the acquisitions supports Roy F. Nichols's argument that the guano trade marked the "first small beginnings" of the American empire.[4]

The Aberration Theory

This "curious episode" arose directly from problems with Peru over Chincha Islands guano,[5] and it unquestionably involved the United States in acquisition of empire overseas long before the end-of-century incidents that spawned the interminable "aberration" debates initiated by Samuel Flagg Bemis's influential study.[6] In an elaborate and exaggerated metaphor, professors Link and Leary capture the essence of the "consensus" school with their depiction of the United States "crossing the Rubicon" in 1898 and launching a "brief and disillusioning flirtation with imperialism," thereby ending American isolationism.[7] Their thesis that the Spanish-American War brought American "control over territories and people far from American shores" is itself a critical ingredient in the "aberration" theory. Clearly there was conspicuous enthusiasm for the acquisition of these scores of guano islands back in the fifties, notwithstanding their distance from mainland America or the possibility of potential competition with rival European powers. The enthusiasm was explicable in terms of the desperate urgency of alternative sources of a raw material. From 1852 relations with Peru, the world's only other source of guano, had simmered uneasily as a consequence of America's failure to negotiate a cheaper price for the guano, with war averted virtually at the eleventh hour. Reports in 1855 of untold treasures in guano deposits on remote Pacific islands fueled interest in the acquisition of these noncontiguous territories; the actual American record in the ensuing handful of years is at variance with the consensus doctrine that 1898 marked a cataclysmic break with American traditions and aspirations. The end-of-century "flirtation" with imperialism had earlier antecedents: the guano episode was but one factor. While the protracted "aberration" debate has continued unabated for over half a century, a recent study by Joseph A. Fry argues with telling cogency that America's "territorial grab" at the end of the century was "not uncharacteristic of prior or subsequent national behavior."[8]

Eminent Pacific scholar Ernest S. Dodge has postulated that the United States "was the slowest of all Powers to take definite political action in the Pacific, even though Americans had been among the ear-

liest and most active traders throughout the area following the Cook voyages."[9] The assertion cries out for rebuttal. There is the unassailable evidence of American primacy in Hawaii after 1842, the year of de&-r$_a$tion of the Tyler Doctrine that any foreign intrusion in the affairs of "those islands" would result in "a decided remonstrance" by the United States.[10] Hawaii became the linchpin of American Pacific policy and was destined to assume even greater importance with the acquisition of a mainland Pacific seaboard.[11] There is the insurmountable evidence of American gunboat diplomacy in China and Japan, of the competition with the European powers in Samoa, of unequal force applied to Fiji, and of the constabulary and surveillance role of the United States Pacific Squadron maintaining a presence in the Pacific precisely in the fashion of the other powers. All of these suggest deficiencies in Dodge's claim as well as in the fundamental Bemis thesis. The American guano experience also appears to weaken the underpinnings of both propositions: when the nation required this resource in the 1850s, entrepreneurs were encouraged to seek it out, and legislation was swiftly and decisively enacted to legitimate their actions and relieve a desperate domestic shortage.

The U.S. Pacific Squadron and Guano

Pacific guano had been of enormous interest to the Pierce administration since the autumn of 1855, when the president himself received a report of a deserted Pacific island, later identified as Baker (or New Nantucket) Island, supposedly rich in guano. With the report from the American Guano Company was a request that it should be annexed.[12] On 20 October, mere weeks later, the United States Pacific Squadron was ordered to conduct an examination of this uninhabited island. The naval orders made reference to the "heavy tax" of Peruvian guano to American farmers and the importance such a find would be to the American economy.[13]

Much interest was manifested in New England in these new sources of the valuable raw material and the possibility of outright acquisition of the islands. For a brief period in 1852, Webster entertained the notion of annexing Peru's offshore Lobos Islands, with the Pacific Squadron actually instructed to provide the protection of its warships to American guano hunters engaged in their freebooting enterprises.[14] While outright war was averted, the dispute with Peru continued to fester as the need for the indispensable raw material continued unabated. On 15 November 1855 the New Bedford *Daily Evening Standard*

announced that an American warship had been ordered to "a newly discovered island in the Pacific to protect an American ship master who is the discoverer of the island, said to contain an immense quantity of Guano."[15] The newspaper account was well founded, Secretary of the Navy James C. Dobbin having instructed Commodore William Mervine, then commanding the Pacific Squadron, on 20 October 1855 to proceed to the island "at the earliest possible opportunity." Dobbin's motive was made perfectly clear in the official instructions: guano was an "extremely desirable" fertilizer; the price charged by Peru, the world's only supplier at the time, was "a heavy tax"; and there were "few events which would be hailed with more general satisfaction than a discovery calculated to secure it on reasonable terms to the agricultural interest" of the United States.[16]

In January 1856 the *Daily Evening Standard* drew the attention of merchants to reports that the voyage from San Francisco, Australia, and other Pacific ports to the eastern United States was "more than a month shorter via the new guano island than via the Chincha Islands."[17] Even apart from the huge cost of Chincha guano, delays in loading at both the Chinchas and at Callao, Peru's seaport, were proving vexatious to shipowners interested in the speedy return of their vessels under full cargo.[18] The prospect of an American-owned guano island was very attractive.

On 5 March 1856 the New Bedford *Daily Mercury* informed its readers of the discovery of "vast deposits" at Baker Island of guano "believed to be equal to the best ammoniated Peruvian Guano."19 Even better news was that it was "under the control of our citizens," having been discovered by an American whaler. "The Government has deemed this a subject of sufficient importance," the report continued, "to justify an order to the commander of the Pacific Squadron to detach one of his vessels to examine and survey the island and its product of guano, and to protect the owners in their territorial rights." Also in the article were details of the American Guano Company, very first in the new field of endeavor. The company had been floated in New York immediately after the island's potential was realized, with a capitalization of $10 million consisting of one hundred thousand shares at $100 par value. Of these, fifty thousand shares were to be devoted to the purchase of the island, ten thousand to finance the first expedition sent from the Atlantic the previous August, and fifteen thousand were already sold to the public. The prospectus envisaged that even half a million tons the first year would yield a handsome profit, but with the plant in full production, some two million. tons per year would be produced. At a price of

$35 per ton to American agriculturalists, there appeared to be huge savings on Chincha Island purchases at over $50 per ton. It was confidently predicted that profit in the first year would be some $4 million.[20] The president of the company was Alfred G. Benson, a New York entrepreneur who had been closely involved with the Peruvian guano trade.

In the same edition of the *Daily Mercury* there was a letter from George W. Benson, half-brother of A. G. Benson and the special agent for the American Guano Company, reporting that the Pacific Squadron was also about to "take possession" of Jarvis Island, some thousand miles east of Baker Island. Benson noted that the squadron commander planned to undertake the important mission to Baker and Jarvis islands in the flagship himself rather than to "trust it to second hands." Accompanying Mervine, with the blessing of Secretary of the Navy Dobbin, was George W. Benson. Despite the huge support for the new acquisitions in the New England press, within the Pacific Squadron itself there was much less enthusiasm. On returning to Valparaiso after his tour of duty westward, Mervine filed his report on Baker Island (confirmed as New Nantucket) on 30 June 1856.[21] It boded ill for the hopes of both guano gatherers and New England farmers. Unfortunately for Mervine, inclement weather had prevented any landing on Baker at all, and his report was based on little more than a strong hunch that no guano in commercial quantities was to be found. He skipped Jarvis altogether.

Valparaiso, the important consular outpost on the Pacific rim, was the prearranged port of call for his next naval orders. At the time, the tours of duty for the handful of American warships in the Pacific Squadron extended along the whole western seaboard of the Americas and westward to the limits of the China Squadron, maintaining surveillance over Fiji, Samoa, the Friendly Islands, Tahiti, and of course Hawaii, the pivot of United States Pacific policy. In Valparaiso, Mervine received word of the "discovery" of yet another guano island. It was Jarvis (variously known as Bunker, Volunteer, Jervis, and Brook). His response was to dispatch Commodore Boutwell (also rendezvousing at Valparaiso), whose historic mission to Fiji the previous year had seen the United States involved in full-scale constabulary duties befitting a great power.[22] On that earlier mission to Fiji to "show the flag," a mission of enormous significance to subsequent Fijian history, Boutwell had journeyed by way of Panama and Apia, unexpectedly extending his stay in Panama to quell anti-American rioters demanding a French protectorate. On 11 July 1856 Mervine instructed Boutwell to reprovision the U.S.S. *John Adams* and cruise westward' "through the Polynesian Islands" to the Marquesas, thence to Jarvis Island, "represented to con-

tain guano," to obtain full information about "this island, the quality and supposed quantity of the guano, and the character of the harbor."[23]

There was no suggestion of territory grabbing. Mervine simply perceived a different function for his vessels in this distant theater: protection of American commerce and whalers. Boutwell was instructed to conclude his exploratory mission to Baker and Jarvis islands (Mervine had probably even anticipated his findings, having visited Baker Island), then to proceed to Pitt Island in the Kingsmill group, and Hull Island in the Gilberts to investigate reports of the massacre of crews of American trading vessels and rumors of the murder of American whalers who had touched there. "You will make a strict enquiry into facts in each case," Boutwell was instructed, "and should allegations be true, you will demand and if necessary enforce the punishment due to the perpetrators of these outrages, which may prevent their repetition in future."[24] Boutwell's report on Jarvis was as unpromising as Mervine's had been on Baker. The singularly inaccurate assessments, both categorically unfavorable, are remarkable in view of the quantity and quality of guano subsequently transported from both islands.

Guano Imperialism

At home, the prospects of winning at a stroke a reduction in the price of foreign-owned guano and at the same time securing an American-owned supply exerted much pressure on the Pierce administration. In March 1856 Secretary of State Marcy was importuned by members of the Maryland State Agricultural Society to protect American farmers from the "odious monopoly" of Peru.[25] Two months later the American Guano Company petitioned the Senate to annex "all islands discovered and settled by Americans, as well as all other islands or lands which may hereafter be discovered and settled by them, and which contain guano."[26] Their motivation was not the acquisition of territory; it was the procurement of the raw material abundant in these scores of Pacific islands. Simple acquisition of the islands was a swift and decisive solution to the enormous problems associated with the Peruvian monopoly, notwithstanding that all were noncontiguous with the mainland United States. It was of "essential importance," their preamble declared unequivocally, that Congress enact legislation immediately to claim the American discoveries as possessions of the United States. Nothing short of outright annexation would satisfy them: not casual or intermittent occupancy and certainly not "occasionally raising a flag or landing for a short time on the shore."[27]

They had even anticipated arguments against their case, noting that the rights to the islands claimed were "in conflict with no other people or nation" and that without the "power of acquiring property beyond its original territorial limits" for protection, defense, or commercial interest, the United States would "present an anomaly among the nations of the earth." At the time, the company was particularly concerned with Baker and Jarvis islands, but its agents were assiduously scouring the seas for other worthy acquisitions.

On 26 May 1856 the question of Pacific guano islands was referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and within three months Congress passed the Guano Act.[28] In the ensuing three years more than fifty Pacific islands were absorbed into the Union, with the pledge of full military and naval protection. The guano traders themselves appear to have enjoyed de facto appropriation rights since Baker and Jarvis islands, the very first acquisitions under the act, had not been formally acquired by the United States Pacific Squadron until a year later. As a direct consequence of unabated interest by agriculturalists, shippers, and the press (particularly of New England, Honolulu, and California), the Pacific Squadron commander dispatched Commodore Charles H. Davis to Jarvis once more.[29] This time Davis was specifically instructed to make soundings, examine the quantity and quality of guano, verify its locality, and make "such hydrographical and barometrical observations . . . as may be useful to the interest of navigation." He was further instructed to carry out the same tasks at New Nantucket (as Baker was still identified). "You will," Davis was officially ordered, "in the event of no conflicting claims appearing, take formal possession in the name of your government."[30] The seeds of American empire were beginning to germinate.

On 1 May 1857 the American Guano Company shipped to Boston the first batch of Baker-Jarvis guano along with samples from Howland, just north of Baker Island. "The supply of guano upon these islands is reported as being almost inexhaustible, and of a quality not inferior to that of the Chinchas," the Boston *Daily Advertiser* proclaimed.[31] The extraordinary discrepancies between the reports of the squadron and the hard evidence of the material already in Boston and New York were provoking public comment. The *Baltimore American* asserted that the Pacific islands were as important as "a new El Dorado," and, although they were not literally covered with gold dust, they were covered in material that "will cover our wasted fields with golden grain."[32] The pervasive mood appeared to be enthusiastic zeal for these noncontiguous territories, a mood starkly contrasting with the antiexpansionism of

the later years of the Johnson-Seward administration subsequent to the acquisition of Midway and Alaska.[33]

With the completion of the isthmian railway, some Baker-Jarvis guano was transported across the Isthmus of Panama for national distribution. In August 1857 the *Aspasia* docked in Boston with ninety tons from Jarvis that were seen as "the forerunner of a prolific trade in that quarter," the guano identified as "fully equal to the best Peruvian."[34] This was the first batch ever transported via the Panama Railway. The Pacific Squadron, however, attracted criticism for its continuing opposition to acquisition. "Commander Mervine, it will be remembered," the *Daily National Intelligencer* informed its readers, "pronounced as worthless whatever guano might be found on Baker Island in consequence of its being saturated by heavy rains."[35] Worse was in store for Mervine. In April 1858 the *Daily Mercury* publicly rebuked him for "his superficial examination and unfounded report" on the islands that "retarded the progress of a great enterprise, and affected two or three years' crops in our country."[36]

In February 1858 fourteen shipmasters took pains to rebut the squadron findings, advising the secretary of the navy himself that the Jarvis-Baker region was "seldom if ever visited by gales" and that neither landing nor loading on the islands presented undue difficulty.[37] They also reminded him that Baker Island was particularly important, apart from its guano treasures, since it was the traditional post office depot for American whalers. The shipmasters flatly rejected the navy verdict as in direct conflict with their own experience. For the hardened mariners, anchoring outside island reefs and landing by tender were routine operations, the obtaining of a cargo of guano presenting not half the difficulty they had "often experienced in taking an old and ugly whale."[38]

In July 1858 another four hundred tons of Jarvis guano arrived, prompting the sardonic observation from one newspaper that it had come from an island where "a Government ship" had "reported that no guano existed."[39] Another report of the same delivery observed caustically, "The news from the Pacific in relation to the deposits of guano, which Commodore Mervine could not find, are favorable."[40] With each shipload from the islands there was a diminution of the importance of Peruvian guano. One report at the end of July 1858 noted that during the previous May thirty vessels with over thirty-three thousand tons of guano had departed from the Chinchas with but slightly over one thousand tons headed for the United States. England had imported eleven thousand tons and France some six thousand, but already demand in the United States was dramatically shrinking.[41]

In November 1858 the importance of the island guano to the American economy was accorded official recognition with the award of six thousand dollars, "a present from Uncle Sam," to both Captain Michael Baker, discoverer of the island bearing his name, and the estate of the late Captain Thomas D. Lucas, discoverer of Jarvis.[42] There were numerous references at the time to the new American industry. The *John Marshall* had recently carried a second load of five hundred tons from Jarvis, and the *White Swallow* was about to leave with twelve hundred tons. As well, two vessels, "each with 1200 tons of the fertilizer, were already on their way to New York."[43] There were also indications of expanding American influence in the Pacific associated directly with the trade; Apia, for example, was a reprovisioning stop before the long haul home via Cape Horn. As one correspondent put it in November 1858, the Jarvis Island enterprise had opened up "one more depot at which the commerce of the Pacific may rendezvous, and procure cargoes of this valuable article."[44]

By April 1859 some forty-eight islands had been appropriated, over twenty believed to contain "large deposits," while on the six largest--Jarvis, Baker, Howland, Christmas, Malden, and Phoenix islands--there were reported to be huge quantities of varying quality.[45] To these could be added Johnston Island, southwest of Honolulu, French Frigate Shoals, northwest of Honolulu, and Elide Island, off the Mexican coast. Elide was "nominally owned by the Mexican Government" but recognized by 1859 as "effectively owned by a company of American citizens who are now engaged in shipping large quantities of this valuable deposit."[46]

Contemporary American attitude to the Pacific policies of rival European powers can be glimpsed in public comments about the tiny island of Clipperton, a thousand miles west of Mexico. This rocky outcrop, surrounded by treacherous shoals, posed a navigational hazard for vessels plying between California and Peru (or Chile) and had been viewed as a potential prize during the enthusiastic quest for guano islands after 1856. When France "proclaimed to the world" its ownership of the island in 1859,[47] Americans angrily denounced the government for allowing the prize to be grabbed by a foreign power. "Why don't our Government announce their sovereignty over those Guano islands which our citizens have discovered?" In Massachusetts the *Daily Evening Standard* demanded to know in February 1859:

> By and by we may find ourselves not only dependent upon Peru, but France and England also, for guano. It would look

> well by and by to have the farmers of the United States pay $20 to $30 a ton royalty, for that which they might have had for nothing. It will give them a high opinion of the forecast of our rulers. The time may come when some of our whale ships would like the chance to buy cargoes of guano at low price, and make $20 to $30 a ton freight on it home.[48]

The Guano Annexations

An inside account of the early days of the industry and a detailed account of the rigors of sail are provided by one master of an American Guano Company vessel in 1859.[49] Having left San Francisco on January 19, he arrived in Honolulu nine days later and, after spending four days in hiring thirty-five Hawaiians as laborers, set sail for Jarvis. Twenty-two days out of San Francisco, he reached Jarvis. According to him, the Hawaiians were "the best kind of laborers, being quiet and good strong, fellows to work." On Jarvis, his vessel discharged six hundred tons of ballast, replacing it with fifteen hundred tons of guano loaded in the three weeks spent there. "There was no day while we were there that they could not boat off guano," he wrote. On this trip, Charles H. Judd, unofficial company "governor" of Jarvis, made the visit as well. Judd, chamberlain at the Hawaiian royal court, was the son of the celebrated Dr. Gerrit Parmele Judd, the missionary physician who had become an influential member of King Kamehameha III's cabinet.[50] Dr. Judd and his wife had arrived in the Sandwich Islands in March 1828, with the third company of missionaries, to commence his own personal crusade --taking extensive trips on remote mountain trails and "looking after the sick and studying local diseases."[51] In August 1859 the *Daily Mercury* reported: "Dr. Judd and his sons, who manage the [Jarvis] operations, are on the high road to wealth. People do not regret this as the Doctor is an able and public-spirited man, whose interests are thoroughly identified with the prosperity of the Sandwich Islands."[52]

Three years earlier, in December 1856, Charles H. Judd and Arthur Benson (son of Alfred G. Benson) had forced the hand of the Pierce administration by demonstrating that Baker, Jarvis, and Howland islands "could be landed on" and contained high-quality guano, contrary to the perception conveyed in reports by the Pacific Squadron.[53]

By the beginning of 1859 three other American companies had joined the American Guano Company in the Pacific guano trade: the U.S. Guano Company (with headquarters in New York), the Phoenix Guano Company (based in Honolulu), and the Pacific Guano Company (from

San Francisco). The U.S. Guano Company had shipped only samples from its claims, which included Malden, Christmas, Howland, and Arthur islands, plus a score of others. The Phoenix Guano Company owned the Phoenix Group (hence the name of the company): McKean, Phoenix, and Enderbury islands. The Pacific Guano Company was the smallest, its major claim being Johnston Island.

Howland was one of the few to provoke a dispute amongst the American companies themselves. Lying just north of Baker, it was originally claimed by the American Guano Company along with Jarvis and Baker, but since formal title had never been registered and the island had never been worked, the State Department registered Howland to the U.S. Guano Company in 1860. In 1868 this company sold Howland to an English company, thereby terminating its own traffic between Honolulu and Howland. The transaction in Pacific real estate between a private American company and a British counterpart suggests that Howland, substantially exhausted of its guano, was of little interest to the State Department at the time. Remarkably, with the apparent abandonment of the island by the British operators, Howland was once again claimed by the United States in a 13 May 1936 executive order by President Franklin D. Roosevelt placing it under the jurisdiction of the secretary of the interior.[54] Authority for the action was vested in the Guano Act of 1856.[55]

The United States Guano Company began operations in 1858 with the appropriation of its four main islands. Christmas Island was reported to be "covered in guano from one to ten feet deep," and since it was about forty miles long by fifteen miles wide, its annexation was a reason for exultation. An added bonus was its capacious "land-locked harbor in a lagoon" where hundreds of ships could lie at anchor and "thousands of boats work at once in loading them." The *Boston Daily Journal* applauded the government for its wisdom in "appropriating treasures of this sort."[56] Unfortunately, Christmas Island failed to live up to the extravagant expectations. During the Civil War the Pacific guano trade languished, and the Americans withdrew from Christmas Island. Since it was unoccupied and since it had been discovered by Captain Cook in 1777, the British government considered it as accruing to the Crown and granted to a Dr. Crowther of Tasmania license to dig and sell guano from the island. The venture was doomed to failure, however, as the euphoric reports of vast deposits proved groundless, and Dr. Crowther's license was revoked by the British government in 1869.

Christmas Island, located in the group sometimes referred to as the Washington group, had long been known to American mariners, even

drawing from the United States Pacific Squadron commander in 1842 the recommendation that neither the Sandwich Islands nor the Washington group should ever be allowed to fall into foreign hands. Thomas ap Catesby Jones (1790-1858) was twice commander of the Pacific Squadron, from 1842 to 1843 and from 1847 to 1850, having been relieved of the command on the first occasion in order to conciliate Mexico over his indiscretion in taking possession of Monterey in Alta California. He had actually been the first choice in 1836 to head the United States Exploring Expedition eventually led by Charles Wilkes.[57] Earlier, in 1826, when the Pacific Squadron duties concentrated largely on protecting the western flank from Tierra del Fuego to the Columbia River, Jones had been entrusted with negotiating the first treaty of friendship with the king of Hawaii. By 1842 the American squadron was vigilantly monitoring the other powers, Jones himself reporting that a huge armada of French warships had just sailed from Valparaiso, "destination altogether conjectural," possibly New Zealand, the Sandwich. Islands, the Marquesas, or even California. Jones suspected that the French target was "the Calafornias [*sic*]."[58]

Whereas it was not until 1858 that the United States formally annexed Christmas Island, Fanning Island in the same group had been claimed by Great Britain one year earlier. In 1859 the American Guano Company appropriated Palmyra Island (also known as Samarang) in the Washington group. Palmyra was subsequently annexed by the Kingdom of Hawaii in 1862, when the American Guano Company had exhausted its guano supply. In 1872 Commander Meade of the U.S.S. *Narraganset* formally reclaimed the unoccupied Christmas Island, and the United States subsequently signified its intention to retain possession. In 1879 the British ambassador in Washington sought to ascertain whether the United States had abandoned its claim to the island, as a British concern planned to resume guano mining. Secretary of State Evarts was unequivocal: Christmas Island had been an appurtenance of the United States since 11 May 1857.[59]

Malden Island was acquired by the U.S. Guano Company in 1859 but appears to have been worked but intermittently. Known also as Independence Island, it possessed "a good anchorage," and initially it was promoted as able to make immediate shipments of guano.[60] Just three months after the incident at Fort Sumter, an advertisement in New England offered unlimited supplies of Malden guano, but either its supplies were rapidly exhausted or marketing the guano proved unviable, and the company holding was abandoned.[61] In October 1861 the *Boston Evening Transcript* reported discovery of the "remnant of a

small town" on the island, supposedly "a stopping place for the buccaneers three centuries ago."[62]

The third enterprise engaged in the trade was the Phoenix Guano Company, whose operations centered on the islands due north of the Samoas. It formally entered the trade at the end of 1858, chartering a schooner to hunt out its own empire and claiming Starbuck (also known as Barren or Starve), Phoenix, Enderbury, Burnie, and McKean islands.[63] As well, the company claimed Canton (also known as Mary or Mary Balcout or Swallow), Hull, Sydney, and Gardner islands. Enderbury was the most lucrative of these; some twenty-five laborers, equipped with huts, water, and food supplies, were working there by May 1859.[64] Two months later there were twenty-nine. Honolulu expected to "reap no small benefit from this rapidly increasing guano trade."[65]

McKean, too, was profitable, its first shipment of twelve hundred tons reaching New England at the end of January 1860 and evoking the observation that the Phoenix islands were "a mine of wealth to the lucky owner."[66] Already a wooden railroad had been constructed on McKean, and the guano was conveyed from the diggings in cars drawn by horses or mules. At home it was proclaimed that McKean was a desert "with a soil so rich that a small portion of it stimulates to the highest degree of fertility the land on which it is sprinkled."[67] Its reserves were calculated at some hundred thousand tons. Enderbury, with a permanent colony of laborers, was worked by the company until its abandonment in 1878.

In March 1859 Johnston Island was formally claimed by the newly formed Pacific Guano Company, a corporation formed in California to ship guano direct to the west coast,[68] almost immediately involving the United States in brief conflict with the fledgling government of the Kingdom of Hawaii. Standing alone one thousand miles southwest of Honolulu, Johnston was visited three months later by a vessel bearing the flag of Hawaii. The American flags and crosses symbolic of American ownership were torn down, and the land was reclaimed in the name of King Kamehameha IV and Hawaiian sovereignty reasserted. It was but a trifling footnote to history, the parlous state of Hawaii's own independence in the late 1850s rendering futile such a gesture, and the Pacific Guano Company proceeded without interruption to market the guano. Boston's *Daily Mercury* lauded the acquisition of Johnston Island, emphasizing how "singularly fortunate" the nation was to have "obtained the lion's share in these valuable islands."[69]

Before the year was out, huge improvements had been effected at Johnston Island, now shown to be really two islands, one about fifty

acres in size and the other about thirty.[70] Guano was estimated to be about three to four feet deep on the larger island on which a wharf, some five hundred feet long, had been built along with a railroad track to the diggings. The conflict over ownership was speedily resolved when the company was able to prove to the United States attorney general that its ownership had been "actual, continuous, exclusive" from the time of its discovery.[71]

By far the most important of all guano annexations was Brooks Island, or Midway, actually two large islands (each about four or five miles long by two wide) and a small island. Captain V. C. Brooks came across the islands in 1859 on a routine sealing voyage and formally took possession on the basis of guano found there as well as on account of the superior "advantages for a coaling port" on the line from California to China.[72] It was but another routine guano acquisition until May 1867, when Allan McLane, president of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, requested that the Navy Department undertake proper surveys of the chain of islands stretching westward of Hawaii on the direct trade route to China and Japan.[73] Secretary of the Navy Welles swiftly concurred, instructing Rear Admiral H. K. Thatcher, commanding officer of the newly created North Pacific Squadron, to take possession of the "small island having a good harbor and safe anchorage," making a complete and accurate survey at the same time.[74] Captain William Reynolds of the U.S.S. *Lackawanna* was entrusted with the task. His official report to his squadron commander captures the pomp and pageantry of this formal extension of American empire in the mid-Pacific on 28 August 1867: "Having previously erected a suitable flagstaff, I landed on that day, accompanied by all the officers who could be spared from the ship, with six boats armed and equipped, and under a salute of 21 guns, and with three cheers, hoisted the national ensign, and called on all hands to witness the act of taking possession in the name of the United States."[75]

Aware of the historical significance of the occasion, Reynolds added that it was "exceedingly gratifying" to him to have been involved "in taking possession of the first island ever added to the dominion of the United States beyond our own shores." Was Reynolds unmindful of those other guano islands already appropriated? "I sincerely hope that this will not be the last of our insular annexations," he concluded. There was no indication in his words of dismay that the American way had been subverted, nor of abhorrence of the notion of empire. Nor had that later repugnance toward the annexation of noncontiguous territories revealed itself during the entire guano experience. On the contrary, there had been a deliberateness about the whole guano policy, based as

it was on the inexorable domestic pressure for the fertilizer, wholly at odds with the fundamental thesis of the "accidentalists."[76] Most of the guano islands had been appropriated for their deposits of urgently needed raw material. Midway (or Brooks) Island was annexed for other advantages clearly and rationally perceived at the time. The Peruvian experience had unquestionably fathered the notion that American-owned guano islands would solve the host of disputes involved with foreign-controlled resources, and the United States had simply begun to compete vigorously in the Pacific market. Manifest destiny was virtually irrelevant as an issue in this "curious episode" of the 1850s that saw a dramatic assertion of American influence in the Pacific theater. The *New York Times*, which applauded the acquisition of Midway, observed in 1868: "Our interests and our importance in the Pacific are looming up. They have gained enormously by the acquisition of Alaska, and they would gain still more by the possession of Lower California."[77] For the *New York Times*, the day was not far off when the United States would "become the great commercial and controlling and civilizing Power of the Pacific."[78] At that very time, it was certainly one of the great powers.

Conclusion

The involvement of the United States with the Pacific guano islands did not end with the exhausting of the guano deposits; the underlying question of sovereignty continued well into the twentieth century. When ownership of Clipperton was contested in 1935, the principles of discovery and symbolic annexation were enunciated to decide in favor of France.[79] The award relied not on French discovery of Clipperton in 1857 but on the symbolic act of annexation in 1858. Kingman Reef and Johnston Island were placed under the direction of the United States secretary of the navy by executive order on 29 December 1934. The justification was the Guano Act of 1856. On 13 May 1936 Jarvis, Howland, and Baker islands were placed under the jusrisdiction of the secretary of the interior, again by presidential order by virtue of the powers of the Guano Act. Canton and Enderbury islands were similarly entrusted to the jurisdiction of the secretary of the interior by executive order of 3 March 1938. All of these confirmations of possessory rights were ratified by Congress on 25 June 1938.[80] Added legitimacy, if it were indeed required, was furnished by deliberate colonization of some of these deserted islands now beginning to attract outside interest in view of a strategic usefulness. On these, "permanent" residents were

landed to legitimize occupation. On Howland, Jarvis, and Baker islands, four men were landed by the United States Coast Guard to serve as "permanent population."[81] Moreover, buildings, including a lighthouse on Baker, were erected as evidence of permanent occupancy. On Canton, which was assuming special significance as a mid-Pacific landing and fueling depot for Pan-American Airways, an airstrip was constructed, and Hawaiians were landed as "permanent residents." Howland, too, was given its own airstrip, its initial moment of fame occurring in 1937 with the planned but never achieved stopover of renowned aviators Amelia Earhart and Fred J. Noonan during their doomed around-the-world flight. Johnston Island was occupied in 1934 for defensive purposes, with a seaplane base built soon after. Today the island enjoys a dubious distinction as repository for chemical munitions and poison gases.

The roots of American empire can even today excite spirited debate amongst historians,[82] but the United States still retains sovereignty over Pacific islands acquired under the Guano Act of 1856. Midway is a special case, having been recognized from 1867 to be of critically strategic and commercial importance as a coaling station, but Howland, Baker, Jarvis, Johnston, and Palmyra islands along with Kingman Reef were recognized for intrinsic value apart from guano only in the 1930s. The new nation of Kiribati exercises ownership of most of the former guano islands, but the United States today retains unchallengeable possessory rights to these others. In a critical test case, the United States Supreme Court determined that Navassa, a Caribbean guano island, was "within the exclusive jurisdiction and possession of the United States,"[83] a judgment confirming the view of the U.S. attorney general in 1925 that "the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the United States attached to the territory embraced in the guano islands, as appeared from the list of bonded islands issued by the Treasury Department."[84] In the 1850s, in the remote Pacific Ocean, part of today's United States was born.

NOTES

1. C. Hartley Grattan, *The Southwest Pacific to 1900* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963), 460.

2. See J. B. Moore, *Digest of International Law,* vol. 1 (Washington, D.C., 1906), 556-580, for documents relative to the Guano Act and a list of known bonded islands.

3. J. S. Reeves," Agreement over Canton and Enderbury Islands," *American Journal of International Law* 33 (July 1939): 523.

4. Roy F. Nichols, *Advance Agents of American Destiny* (Philadelphia, 1963), 201. Nichols argues that with the annexation in December 1859 of Navassa, the tiny guano island in the Caribbean, "the American nation took its first step into the path of imperialism" (p. 189). His chapter 10 is titled "The Birth of Empire" (pp. 183-201). On the role of Webster in the 1852 dispute with Peru, he outlines much of the content of Kenneth E. Shewmakers finely detailed articles " 'Untaught Diplomacy': Daniel Webster and the Lobos Islands Controversy," *Diplomatic History* 1 (1977): 321-340, and " 'Hook and Line. and Bob and Sinker': Daniel Webster and the Fisheries Dispute of 1852," *Diplomatic History* 9 (Spring 1985): 113-129. Shewmaker advances the case that Webster's actions in the Lobos affair, which almost resulted in war with Peru, and in the Canadian Fisheries affair, which soured relations with Great Britain, were uncharacteristic as a consequence of "physical and psychological ailments." On Webster and the Lobos Islands dispute, see Kenneth E. Shewmaker, Kenneth R. Stevens, and Anita McGurn, eds., *The Papers of Daniel Webster*, vol. 2: *Diplomatic Papers* (Hanover, N.H., 1987).

5. See Shewmaker, " 'Untaught Diplomacy.' " See also Dan O'Donnell, "United States Pacific Policy, 1840-1870" (Master's thesis, History Department, University of Queensland, 1980).

6. Samuel Flagg Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York, 1955). Chapter 26 of this outstanding work first published in 1936 was titled "The Great Aberration of 1898." Its fundamental thesis exerted a dominant influence on American diplomatic history in ensuing decades, and its residual impact is still discernible in current literature. Bemis's thesis was developed into a virtual dogma that the year 1898 marked a stark rupture with tradition, the events themselves being aberrant and un-American.

7. Arthur S. Link and William M. Leary, eds., *The Diplomacy of World Power: The United States, 1889-1920* (London: Edward Arnold, 1970), 2. The literature abounds in similarly figurative depictions of the events of 1898. Note the following examples: A. Whitney Griswold's "dramatic turning point" *(The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* [New York: Harcourt Brace, 1938], 3); A. K. Weinberg's "plunged into the sea" *(Manifest Destiny--A Study of Nationalist Expansion in American History* [Gloucester, Mass.: Smith, 1958], 253); G. F. Kennan's "a turning point" *(American Diplomacy, 1900-1950* [New York, Mentor Books, 1959], 18); A. Weinstein's "broke with tradition and annexed an overseas empire" *(Origins of Modern America* [New York: Random House, 1970], 207); Daniel Aaron's "a breach in their traditions and a shock to their established values" *(America in Crisis: Fourteen Crucial Episodes in American History* [Hamden: Archon Books, 1971], 173); Alexander DeConde's "intensified spirit of expansion . . . based on belligerent nationalism . . . recently acquired wealth and notions of superiority" *(A History of American Foreign Policy* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971], 317); and Ernest R. May's "having been for a hundred and twenty-two years the world's leading champion of independence for colonial people, the nation suddenly became itself a colonial power" *(From Imperialism to Isolationism, 1898-1919* [New York: Macmillan, 1964], 10).

The unresolved nature of the historiographic dispute is evident in the ongoing saga of debate. See James A. Field, "American Imperialism: The 'Worst Chapter' in Almost Any Book," *American Historical Review* 83, no. 3 (June 1978): 644-668; Thomas C. Osborne, *"Empire Can Wait": American Opposition to Hawaiian Annexation, 1893-1898* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1981). Osborne, who' acknowledges a debt to his mentor Charles S. Campbell (author of *The Transformation of American Foreign Relations,*

1865-1900 [New York: Harper and Row, 1976]), argues that the end of the century confronted America "with the prospect of abandoning her hallowed tradition of continental expansion and opting for a policy of imperialism" (p. xi). The concept of a natural movement westward on the American mainland has been explored by Charles Vevier, "American Continentalism: An Idea of Expansion, 1845-1910," *American Historical Review* 65 (1960): 237-253.

8. Joseph A. Fry, "In Search of an Orderly World: U.S. Imperialism, 1898-1912," in *Modern American Diplomacy,* ed. John M. Carroll and George C. Herring (Wilmington, Del., 1984), 1. Fry himself qualifies his critique of "some historians [who portrayed] America's end-of-century as a 'great aberration,' " arguing that "never before" had territory beyond the continent been annexed (p. 1). Editors Carroll and Herring appear to concur with the view in their introductory essay, pointing out that while "a policy of aggressive expansionism was not new for Americans," what was new "was that the territories were non-contiguous lands abroad" (p. ix). Robert L. Beisner, in *Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialists, 1898-1900* (New York, 1968), had cautioned against uncritical rejection of continuity in American foreign policy: "But it would be foolish to dismiss the [end-of-century events] as an aberration, a meaningless sport in the evolution of American history" (p. xv). See also his *From the Old Diplomacy to the New* (New York, 1975).

9. Ernest S. Dodge, Introduction, in *American Activities in the Central Pacific, 1790-1870,* ed. R. Gerard Ward, vol. 1 (Ridgewood, N.J.: The Gregg Press, 1966), 50. Among the numerous works by this prodigious Pacific scholar and director of Salem's prestigious Peabody Museum are *Beyond the Capes: Pacific Exploration from Captain Cook to the Challenger, 1776-1877* (Boston, 1971), and *New England and the South Seas* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965). His unstinting help to Ward in tracking down valuable Pacific documents is acknowledged in Ward's preface.

10. On 30 December 1842 President John Tyler sent a message to the House of Representatives respecting American trade and commerce with Hawaii (U.S. Congress, H. Exec. Doc. 35, 27th Cong., 3d Sess., pp. l-4). The complete document is usually known as the "Tyler Doctrine." See also Sen. Exec. Doc. 77, 52d Cong., 2d Sess. (1892-1893), vol. 8; H. Exec. Doc. 47, 53d Cong., 2d Sess. (1893), and Sen. Rep. 681, 55th Cong., 2d Sess. (1897).

11. Secretary of State Blaine restated Tyler's "doctrine" in a message to the American minister at Honolulu on 1 December 1881: "The position of the Hawaiian Islands, as the key to the dominion of the American republic, demands their benevolent neutrality." He pledged that any change to Hawaii's "benevolent neutrality" would result in "an avowedly American solution for the grave issues presented." In 1897 President McKinley described formal annexation of the Hawaiian chain as "the necessary and fitting sequel to the charge of events which, from a very early period in our history, has controlled the intercourse and prescribed the association of the United States and the Hawaiian Islands" (Sen. Rep. 681, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 66). Hawaii's pivotal role in American Pacific policy is examined in depth in O'Donnell, "United States Pacific Policy."

12. U.S. Congress, Sen. Misc. Doc. 60, 34th Cong., 1st Sess.

13. Secretary of the Navy J. C. Dobbin to Commander William Mervine, 20 October 1855, ibid., p. 3. James C. Dobbin had become Pierce's secretary of the navy on 8 March 1853.

14. The notion that Secretary of State Webster's efforts to force Peru into line in 1852 was attributable to his mental state becomes less credible with an examination of Webster's exchanges with Peruvian officials. They were cogently and rationally argued, supported by intensive research to back up the official American stance that the offshore islands did not belong to Peru at all and that they had been discovered by an American. Sheer weight of public opinion at the prospects of war with an impotent but outraged Peru appeared to force Webster and Pierce to reconsider their position. In Peru itself, the United States chargé d'affaires desperately urged Webster not to "despoil Peru of her just rights" by annexing the Lobos Islands, describing the proposed course as a dramatic turning away from American traditions and incompatible with its dignity and honor. J. Randolph Clay to Webster, 7 August 1852, in W. R. Manning, *Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States: Inter-American Affairs, 1831-1860,* vol. 10 (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1935), 251.

15. *Daily Evening Standard,* 15 November 1855, cited in Ward, ed., *American Activities in the Central Pacific* 3:364. I have consulted the *New York Times,* the *Daily Alta California* (imperfect on microfilm, with March and April 1859 missing), *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine, The Friend,* and the *Daily National Intelligencer.* For other newspapers cited I am indebted to the monumental scholarship of R. Gerard Ward, whose eight-volume work *American Activities in the Central Pacific 1790-1870* has advanced our knowledge of the region and the period enormously. In notes below, I observe Ward's convention of referring to the *Alta California,* rather than *Daily Alta California* as proclaimed on its masthead. There was also the *Evening Alta California.*

16. Dobbin to Mervine, 20 October 1855.

17. *Daily Evening Standard,* 13 January 1856, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 3:365.

18. *New York Times,* 8 October 1852. This article reprinted from *Dicken's Household Words* (n.d.) described the huge waste of time caused by Peruvian regulations: every foreign vessel was forced to enter and depart from Callao, thereby "sailing some one hundred and fifty miles beyond the guano islands" simply to register at Callao, then to sail against a headwind to Pisco, the port of entry to the Chincha Islands. After a wait of some days, they sailed west some nine or ten miles to the islands where they loaded with guano before returning to Pisco, thence to Callao, and finally homeward. Sheer time lost in this run-around averaged about a month per vessel, an attendant problem with the inactivity being the desertion of crew in Callao.

The exasperation of the author manifested itself in such lines as "[There is] invariably more formality in petty principalities and dwarf republics than in States which are more able to enforce respect." Also, "Peru is by no means a tremendous power, and it is a token of good in the way of civilization that the huge merchantmen should let themselves be bullied by her."

19. *Daily Mercury,* 5 March 1856, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 3:366.

20. R. F. Nichols cites a capitalization of only $1 million, comprising one hundred thousand shares of $10 each. Of these, Captain Edward W. Turner, a former whaler with intimate knowledge of the region, was allotted thirty thousand and Alfred G. Benson thirty thousand (actually giving ten shares to each of seven friends), with forty thousand shares "held in the treasury for promotional purposes" *(Advance Agents,* 176-177).

21. Mervine to Dobbin, 30 June 1856, United States Pacific Squadron Letters (hereafter PSL), vol. 38.

22. Mervine to Boutwell, 13 March 1855, PSL, vol. 37. The accepted consensus, a corollary of the "aberration" thesis, is that the United States only became a great power with the War of 1898. See Archibald C. Coolidge, *The United States as a World Power (New* York, 1908, reprint 1971); Robert E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations: The Great Transformation of the Twentieth Century* (Chicago, 1953); and Ernest R. May, *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power (New* York, 1961).

23. Mervine to Boutwell, II July 1856, PSL, vol. 38.

24. Ibid. See especially G. S. Smith, "An Uncertain Passage: The Bureaus Run the Navy," in *In Peace and War: Interpretations of American Naval History, 1775-1978,* ed. K. J. Hagan (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978), 81. Smith argues that Perry's forcible opening of Japan in 1852 "symbolized the U.S Navy's persistent stimulation of American expansion throughout the nineteenth century." Consensus historians generally accept the proposition that Alfred Thayer Mahan's celebrated works on navalism at the commencement of the 1890s themselves marked the emergence of America as a naval power. See O'Donnell, "United States Pacific Policy," for an examination of the role of the United States Pacific Squadron in the much earlier period of 1840-1870, along with a survey of the literature.

25. Charles B. Calvert to Secretary of State Marcy, 14 March 1856 (U.S. Congress, Sen. Exec. Doc. 25, 35th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 25).

26. Sen. Misc. Doc. 60, 34th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 1.

27. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

28. Ibid., p. 1.

29. Mervine to Davis, 12 June 1857, PSL, vol. 38. An extremely useful account of the incident is given in Eleice Aiman, "American Acquisition and Development of Minor Pacific Islands" (Master's thesis, History Department, University of Chicago, 1944), 67-68.

30. Mervine to Davis, 12 June 1857, PSL, vol. 38.

31. *Daily Advertiser,* 1 May 1857, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 3:374.

32. *Baltimore Advertiser,* 9 May 1857, cited in ibid. 3:376.

33. See D. M. Dozer, "Anti-Expansionism during the Johnson Administration," *Pacific Historical Review* 12 (1943): 253-275. The *New York Times* by 1870 was ridiculing the "annexing humor" it perceived in the nation, describing America as "your true World's Fair, the bazaar where islands are hawked, kingdoms put up at a bargain, and republics knocked down to the highest bidder" (24 January 1870). See also Ernest R. Paolino's superb study *The Foundations of the American Empire: William Henry Seward and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), which emphasizes the importance of Seward's Pacific "way stations of empire"; and Milton Plesur, *America's Outward Thrust: Approaches to Foreign Affairs, 1865-1890* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971), which depicts the so-called Gilded Age as a quiescent period in which the "appetite for new territory" was dormant "rather than entirely non-existent" (p. 10).

34. *Daily Mercury,* 15 August 1857, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 3:376.

35. *Daily National Intelligencer,* 5 December 1857, cited in ibid. 1:200.

36. *Daily Mercury,* 1 April 1858, cited in ibid. 1:201.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. *Daily Evening Standard,* 30 July 1858, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 3:378.

40. *New Bedford Mercury,* 30 July 1858, cited in ibid. 3:379.

41. Ibid.

42. *Daily Mercury,* 18 November 1859, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 1:204.

43. *New York Times,* 29 October 1858. The *New York Times* carried a promising report from Honolulu: "The guano business appears to be making good progress. Fine clipper vessels from San Francisco are frequent visitors here on their way to Jarvis and Baker Islands to load up with the elements of corn and wheat in Eastern and Middle States land" (23 January 1860).

44. *Daily Mercury,* 20 November 1858, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 3:381-382.

45. *Alta California,* 20 April 1859, cited in ibid. 1:214-215.

46. The *New York Journal of Commerce* produced a report on the scores of islands annexed, published in the Boston *Daily Evening Traveller,* 20 April 1859. Actual lists of the islands were published by the *Alta California,* 20 April 1859, Honolulu's *The Friend,* April 1859, and the *New York Tribune,* 5 March 1859. See Ward, *American Activities* 1: 212-214. The *Alta California's* list identified Baker, Jarvis, Howland, Malden, Arthur, Christmas, Caroline, Anne, Starve, Flint, Bauman, Rogwein, Gronique, Frienhaven, Quiros, Low, Clarence, Favorite, Duke of York, Farmer, Birnick, Phoenix, Mary, Enderbury, Sydney, Penryn, Pescado, Ganges, Rierson, Sideron, Humphrey, Frances, Flint, Nassau, Danger, Mary Letitia, Kemins, Walker, Sarah Anne, America, Prospect, Samarang, Danger, Makin, Mathews, David, Barber, and Palmyra. An identical list, with minor variations in spelling and a caution that some of the islands might have been fictitious, was published in *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine* 51 (July-Dee. 1859): 476.

47. *New York Tribune,* 5 March 1859, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 1:209. See Friedrich A. F. von der Heyfte, "Discovery, Symbolic Annexation and Virtual Effectiveness in International Law," *American Journal of International Law* 29 (1935): 463.

48. *Daily Evening Standard,* 18 February 1859, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 2:195.

49. Perry B. Bowers, master of the *Black Hawk,* in a letter to *Whalemen's Shipping List,* 28 June 1859, cited in ibid. 3:391.

50. The Judds figure prominently in Hawaiian history. See particularly Ralph S. Kuykendall's valuable trilogy *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778-1854: Foundation and Transformation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1947), *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1854-1874: Twenty Critical Years* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1966), and *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1874-1893: The Kalakaua Dynasty* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, *1967); see* also Sylvester K. Stevens, *America's Expansion in Hawaii, 1842-1898* (Harrisburg: Archives Publishing Company of Pennsylvania, 1945); and James J. Jarves, *History*

of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands (London, 1843); Nichols, *Advance Agents;* and Ernest S. Dodge, *Islands and Empires: Western Impact on the Pacific and East Asia* (Minneapolis and Oxford, 1976).

51. Dodge, *Islands and Empires,* 127.

52. *Daily Mercury,* 13 August 1859, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 3:398. The other son referred to was A. Francis Judd, later to serve as attorney general and chief justice in the government of the Kingdom of Hawaii.

53. Nichols, *Advance Agents,* 191. It is noteworthy that the dispatches to and from successive Pacific Squadron commanders from 1840 until 1870 do not fully show the vigorous American quest for Pacific guano. One vital function of the squadron was to monitor the rival squadrons of both Great Britain and France and to report home. It is abundantly clear that in the disciplining of recalcitrant islanders, American gunboats exercised an efficiency in no way inferior to that of their European counterparts. See W. R. Herrick, Jr., *The American Naval Revolution* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1969), in which it is argued that "the strategic implications of naval warfare had virtually no influence on American policy prior to 1890" (p. 3). In the remote islands, punitive and exemplary action had to be taken swiftly and decisively if the lives of American traders and whalers were to be saved. In China and Japan, American gunboats extracted concessions identical to those accorded the other powers. There was keen appreciation among American naval commanders of the coercive influence of a warship's cannons and their usefulness in making treaties. Thomas ap Catesby Jones complained bitterly in 1842 about French superiority vis-à-vis his own squadron equipage (31 August 1842, PSL, roll 31). Complaints from the frontier did indeed effect updating in the equipage and size of the squadron. See O'Donnell, "United States Pacific Policy," 417-452.

54. See J. S. Reeves, "Agreement over Canton and Enderbury Islands," *American Journal of International Law* 33 (July 1939): 525; and Beatrice Orent and Pauline Reinsch, "Sovereignty over Islands in the Pacific," *American Journal of International Law* 35 (July 1941): 456-458.

55. Orent and Reinsch conclude that once the guano resources were depleted and "the islands apparently lost their commercial value," the United States considered it not worthwhile to maintain expensive colonies simply to maintain title. However, "as the strategic importance of the islands has become increasingly evident, both Great Britain and the United States have taken steps to prevent their title being questioned' ("Sovereignty," 461). The Guano Act constituted the legal basis of American claims in the 1930s.

56. *Boston Daily Journal,* 23 December 1858, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 4:107.

57. W. P. Strauss, "Preparing the Wilkes Expedition: A Study in Disorganization," *Pacific Historical Review* 28 (1959): 221-232. See also Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842* (Philadelphia, 1845). Dr. G. P. Judd had accompanied Wilkes on his voyage to Hilo, on the occasion of the expedition's visit to Honolulu in 1842.

58. Thomas ap Catesby Jones to Secretary of the Navy, 21 May 1842, PSL, roll 31.

59. Evarts to Thornton, 1 April 1879, U.S. Congress, House Exec. Doc. 517, 2d Sess., 50th Cong. 1888-1889. Included in *Papers Relating to Foreign Affairs,* vol. 1 (Washington, 1888), 714.

60. *Weekly National,* 25 August 1859, cited in Ward, *American Activities* 4:110.

61. *Lynn Weekly Reporter,* 20 July 1860, cited in ibid. 4:414.

62. *Boston Evening Transcript,* 10 October 1861, cited in ibid. 4:111.

63. *Daily National,* 19 April 1859, cited in ibid. 6:504. *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine,* June 1861, listed these islands as gazetted by the State Department as "appertaining to the United States," cited in ibid. 6:504.

64. *Alta California,* 5 May 1859, cited in ibid. 4:88.

65. *The Friend,* July 1859. Also cited in Ward, *American Activities* 4:90.

66. *Daily Mercury,* 19 February 1860, cited in ibid. 4:93.

67. *Daily Evening Standard,* 13 February 1860, cited in ibid. 4:95.

68. *Daily National,* 14 February 1859, cited in ibid. 3:424.

69. *Daily Mercury,* 13 May 1859, cited in ibid. 3:427.

70. *Mercantile Gazetteand Prices Current,* 19 November 1859, cited in ibid. 3:431-432.

71. Aiman, "American Acquisition," 49-50.

72. U.S. Congress, Sen. Exec. Doc. 79, 40th Cong., 2d Sess., p. 4.

73. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

74. Welles to Thatcher, 28 May 1867, in ibid., pp. 5-6.

75. Reynolds to Thatcher, 30 September 1867, in ibid., p. 7. See also Aiman, "American Acquisition": "Thus Midway was the first noncontiguous territory acquired by America, preceding the purchase of Alaska by seven weeks" (p. 31).

76. See the introduction to Richard W. Leopold's essay "The Roots of Imperialism," in *Origins of Modern America, 1860-1900,* ed. A. Weinstein (New York: Random House, 1970), 205-206. Weinstein distinguishes between the "accidentalists" and the "planners" in United States foreign policy. The chasm between those who perceived continuity in U.S. foreign policy and those who regarded 1898 as a cataclysmic break with American traditions and ideals is amply demonstrated in the virulence of the critiques of so-called New Left, or revisionist, interpretations of 1898. For an insight into the genre, see particularly William A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1959) and *The Roots of the Modern American Empire: A Study of the Growth and Shaping of Social Consciousness in a Marketplace Society* (New York, 1969); Walter F. LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967); L. C. Gardner, W. F. LaFeber, and Thomas J. McCormick, *Creation of the American Empire: U.S. Diplomatic History* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1973); Thomas J. McCormick, *China Market: America's Quest for Informal Empire* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967); C. Lasch, *The Agony of the American Left* (New York: Knopf, 1969); G. Kolko, *The Roots of American Foreign Policy: An Analysis of Power and Purpose* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969); and Irwin Unger, *The Movement: A History of the American New Left* (New York: Dodd Mead, 1967). Unger succinctly described the genre as pursuing flaws "in the consensus historians' celebration of the United States" (p. 19).

77. *New York Times,* 22 July 1868.

78. Ibid. See Roger Bell, *Last Among Equals: Hawaiian Statehood and American Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984), in which it is argued that in the 1890s "ideals of national mission and economic self-interest propelled America outwards' (p. 17). In another comparatively recent study, Ruth Tabrah describes 1898 as "a turning point in both Hawaiian and American history," the epicenter of the upheaval being in Hawaii itself, where a handful of ambitious oligarchs on the frontier of empire achieved a bloodless revolution *(A Bicentennial History of Hawaii* [New York: Norton; Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1980], 5). Throughout this challenging chronicle of events after Hawaii became "the first overseas possession of the United States" runs a theme of unrequited hope (p. 10). Even in 1979, the bicentennial of Cook's first Western contact, *aloha aina,* that distinctive Hawaiian ideal embodying a profound love for both the island archipelago and its Polynesian inhabitants, past and present, appears to have evaded comprehension by the nation that annexed Hawaii in that "aberrant" flurry at end of century.

79. See Orent and Reinsch, "Sovereignty," 461: "In its decision of the dispute between France and Mexico, the court was not willing to admit rights of sovereignty arising from mere discovery. The island was awarded to France on the ground that an act of possession had been performed by a French naval commander and that notification of the act was given." The authors emphasize that in the evolution of sovereign rights over uninhabited Pacific islands, "the practical exigencies of the time" prevail.

80. J. S. Reeves, "Agreement," 526

81. Ibid., 525. Orent and Reinsch also detail the specifics of colonization in the 1930s ("Sovereignty," 450, 458).

82. See particularly, John M. Carroll and George C. Herring, eds., *Modern American Diplomacy* (Wilmington, Del., 1984). In their prefatory essay, the authors argue that on "the eve of the new century, the United States embarked on a course of imperial conquest" (p. ix), and "the 'splendid little war' with Spain marked the emergence of the United States as a world power" (p. x). Also, "when conditions were ripe in the 1800s Americans willingly embarked on an imperialistic adventure" (p. x). The interpretation still begs the question of the nature and legitimacy of American expansion earlier, of "manifest destiny," of continentalism, and of the fundamental difference between America's inexorable push across the continent and the behavioral pattern of the other powers. Also unanswered are questions concerning the fundamental differences between the United States and the other powers in such distant theaters as China, Japan, Hawaii, Fiji, and Samoa. The authors maintain that, in 1898, what "was new was that the territories annexed were non-contiguous lands abroad" (p. ix). Clearly, the debate is not resolved. Alaska does not fit their interpretation. Neither do Midway and the guano islands. See also George H. Quester, *American Foreign Policy: The Lost Consensus* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), in which the author warns against a naive and self-deluding belief that Americans were somehow nobler than the other powers, recommending that a realpolitik approach to foreign policy serves "as an antidote to hypocrisy" (p. 56).

83. Orent and Reinsch, "Sovereignty," 453.

84. Ibid., 453, n. 34.