

JOURNAL OF FLORIDA STUDIES

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL OF THE IDEA AND PLACE THAT IS FLORIDA

Volume 1, Issue 7, 2018

**The Experiment at Fort Marion:
Richard Henry Pratt's Recreation
of Penitential Regimes at the Old
Fort and its Influence on American
Indian Education**

Sarah Kathryn Pitcher Hayes,
Seminole State College

Between the Atlantic Ocean and St. Augustine's historic district stands Castillo de San Marcos, a large Spanish fortress built in the sixteenth century to protect Spanish occupied St. Augustine from British forces. The fort withstood two sieges by the British in the first half of the eighteenth century, and changed military occupation several times; it was twice exchanged between Spain and Great Britain, and in 1821 the British ceded the fort, along with all

Florida Territory, to the United States. While several nations occupied the fort at various times, it was never taken by force and never fell ("Fort Marion" 2010). The National Park Service now operates the Castillo as a national monument. Visitors to the monument are struck by the ground's ocean views and the fort's towering coquina walls. Through the fort's double entrance lies the fort's central courtyard, which is surrounded by casemates that once served as guard

rooms, storage rooms, and a chapel. A staircase to the right of the entrance leads to the terreplein and the four diamond-shaped bastions that make this fort into the shape of a star. Upon the terreplein, visitors will find original cannons and several placards describing how the fort's unique construction aided soldiers in battle. The casemates on the first floor currently house several exhibits describing the fort's history, design and construction, the soldiers' living quarters, the chapel, and the artillery housed and used during battles. There are also casemates dedicated to the history of the first Spanish period, the second Spanish period, the British period, and the American occupation.

The exhibit dedicated to American occupation primarily focuses on the United States' use of the fort as a prisoner-of-war camp for Southwestern American Indian prisoners between 1875 and 1878. At the end of the Red River War in 1875, hundreds of Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa and Arapaho chiefs and warriors surrendered to the United States at Fort Sill in present day Oklahoma. Tasked with investigating the war crimes of the surrendered was Lieutenant Richard Henry Pratt. Pratt's investigation incriminated approximately 150 American Indians at Fort Sill, seventy-two of whom were arrested and transported to the fort in St. Augustine, which the Americans renamed Fort Marion. Pratt volunteered to escort the warriors to Fort Marion, where they remained

prisoners-of-war under his care for three years. Thirty-two Cheyenne men, two Arapahoe men, twenty-seven Kiowa men, nine Comanche men and one Caddo man made the long, frightening journey by wagon, train and steamboat.ⁱ Among them were some of the most notorious: Making Medicine (Cheyenne), Lone Wolf and White Horse (Kiowa). This paper will focus on these three years of the Castillo's history, which I will henceforth call Fort Marion.

The fort in St. Augustine is predominantly remembered as a space built and used for war, and rightly so. I give credit to the curators of the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument and the National Park Service for dedicating the American Occupation casemate to the story of Richard Henry Pratt and the Southwestern Indian prisoners-of-war. The curators remember Pratt as "An advocate for American Indian education and civil rights," and mention Pratt's "program of assimilation" (American Occupation). In the anti-Indian socio-political climate of the nineteenth century, Pratt believed that American Indian survival depended on American Indians' willingness to physically and culturally assimilate into Euro-America.

Pratt began his military career as a Union soldier. After the Civil War, the military stationed him in Indian Territory to help pacify growing Indian hostilities against white settlers during

the Gold Rush. He quickly worked his way up the military ranks, and in 1867 he was promoted to second lieutenant in charge of the Tenth Cavalry, a regiment of (mostly) ex-slaves popularly known as the Buffalo Soldiers. Pratt's experience leading the Tenth Cavalry, as well as with leading American Indian scouts, informed his ideas regarding race and education. Pratt's experiences with slaves turned soldiers informed his belief that nurture, not nature, informed intelligence, and if placed in the right environment and given the proper tools, American Indians, like African Americans, could become valuable second-class citizens (Pratt "Eleventh Report" n.d.). Much of Pratt's writing, including his autobiography, *Battlefield and Classroom*, repeats this idea that "savages" can become citizens, citing African Americans as success stories and crediting assimilatory practices. Pratt used his time at Fort Marion to experiment with his idea that "savage Indians" could be transformed into proper citizens through immersion in a European-style environment, education and labor. He provided the prisoners with the tools he believed could lead them to citizenship, namely education in the English language, labor, commerce and military drill. He cut the prisoners' hair and dressed them in military regalia. The prisoners learned English quickly, attended Christian services, sold their handmade goods to tourists, and choreographed performances that drew large audiences and eventually

earned many of them an education outside of the fort. Pratt's seemingly successful experiment at Fort Marion earned him enough private donations and federal funding to begin an Indian education program at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute; however, Pratt believed that American Indians had unique needs that required an exclusively American Indian school, and he therefore opened the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1879. This transition from soldier to jailor launched Pratt into his life's work in Indian education (Adams 1995).

While the National Park Service and the curators of the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument do an excellent job telling the story of the Southwestern Indian prisoners-of-war, their story remains a minor part of the larger military history of the fort. Likewise, these three years also remain a minor plot point in the scholarship about Carlisle and the American Indian boarding schools. While Pratt's time at Fort Marion is acknowledged in histories of American Indian boarding schools, most scholars devote far more attention to Pratt's later work founding and running the Carlisle School, deemphasizing Fort Marion as a foundational period in Pratt's thinking about Indian education. I assert that the scholarship on both Fort Marion and the American Indian boarding school should pay more attention to the fort's role as a laboratory for Pratt's experiments in solving the

"Indian Problem,"ⁱⁱⁱ because of how Pratt's use of the physical space of the Fort informed the intellectual space of American Indian education. The physical space of Fort Marion became what Norman Johnston (2000) calls a "makeshift prison," which allowed Pratt to experiment with ideas of self-transformation and citizenship made popular during the second prison reform movement; a movement that occurred parallel to Pratt's tenure at Fort Marion. After examining how Fort Marion allowed Pratt the space to experiment with ideas and practices of imprisonment and education, I analyze Pratt's letters, currently archived at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University, to support my claim that Pratt was indeed inspired by the regimes of the penitentiary during the time he conceptualized his theories of American Indian education at Fort Marion. By locating and analyzing primary sources that illuminate Fort Marion's important role as prison/school, by using spatial theory to read Fort Marion as a carceral space, and by examining Pratt's letters to highlight how Pratt was inspired by the regimes of the penitentiary, this essay argues that Fort Marion deserves an elevated place in the memory of the Indian boarding school.

Fort Marion as Makeshift Prison

Norman Johnston's (2000) term "makeshift prison" offers an especially useful way to analyze how an old

Spanish fort becomes a prisoner-of-war camp and the seed of the American Indian boarding school system. Johnston argues that in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Europe and nineteenth-century America, castles (Europe) and forts (America) were no longer needed as blockades for defense and began to be used as prisons. Because these prisons were not built from the ground up for the sole purpose of imprisoning people, the structures had to be remodeled and altered over time to suit their newly intended purposes. Fort Marion had been constructed 200 years before Pratt's arrival as a structure meant to keep opposing military *out*; therefore, Fort Marion had to be remodeled into a makeshift prison, i.e. a space meant to keep people *in*.

The United States military first used the fort as a prison camp in 1837 to imprison Seminole chief Osceola and his fellow warriors during the Second Seminole War, which the American Occupation exhibit at the monument also highlights. However, some of these warriors escaped the fort through a nine-inch window placed fifteen feet above the ground in one of the casemates. While the fort repelled the British and Spanish, it proved weak fortification for its first American Indian prisoners. Because of this escape, President Grant ordered United States military engineers to secure the fort prior to Pratt's and his prisoners' arrival in 1875. Engineers fastened the windows with iron grating

and each casemate with a "heavy door and bolt...for padlocking." Therefore, the casemates acted as secure cells because windows look into the courtyard instead of the outside; At the top of each door was a "narrow slot" for ventilation, and plank floors were installed in some of the casemates for sleeping (Pratt 1964, 118). Colonel Gillmore, the man in charge of securing the fort, wrote in a letter to his post that "a strong barricade [be] erected with thick planks, across the ramp leading to the terreplein" (qtd. in Fear-Segal 2007, 15). According to *Battlefield and Classroom*, engineers completed this task, for when Pratt arrived at the fort "the ramp from the court to the terreplein had been boarded up, leaving a door with lock at the lower entrance so that their living was to be in a large pen permitting no outlook except toward the sky" (117). Living in damp, unsanitary casemates, the move from dry weather to the humid Florida summer, and the prisoners' depressed outlook, proved disastrous and deadly; three Kiowa died before the end of the first summer (Fear-Segal 2007, 16).ⁱⁱⁱ While the structure of Fort Marion allowed for it to be repurposed into a prison, the deaths of the three Kiowa men, as well as numerous illnesses, proved that the fort was never meant to be inhabited for long periods of time.

The makeshift nature of the prison-fort accorded Pratt the opportunity to create a new regime of Indian imprisonment that would also

soon inform American Indian education. Furthermore, it allowed Pratt to simultaneously practice modern penitential ideals of surveillance, self-surveillance, and labor while also experimenting with and redefining the limitations of imprisonment. After the Kiowa deaths, Pratt made several changes to the prisoners' physical appearances. He believed that altering his prisoners' physical appearance would not only improve their hygiene, but could influence their inward growth; a civilized appearance, environment and exercise could reform his prisoners into civilized selves. Pratt states in his autobiography that he removed their chains, cut their hair and dressed them in military uniforms in order to "get them out of the curio class" (1964, 118). Pratt had "before and after" photographs taken of the prisoners (and later the Carlisle students) to demonstrate their transformation from "savage" to "civilized." The "after" photos often show the prisoners standing in formation, dressed in military uniform, resembling American soldiers. Some prisoners even hold rifles. Pratt believed that if the prisoners resembled "civilized" Americans (and who more civilized than an American soldier?), then the men could become civilized Americans. He taught them to care for their clothing and their bodies like American soldiers and regularly performed army drills for exercise. To improve the air quality and the health of the prisoners, Pratt allowed access to the terreplein. Under his orders, the

prisoners built new sleeping quarters, a “large one-room shed” on the north side of the terreplein, and made beds out of scrap lumber and grass ticks (1964, 119). Pratt not only began to transform his prisoners’ physical appearance, but also their physical space, allowing them more freedom of movement throughout the fort. No longer were prisoners surrounded by four walls and only able to see the outside world by looking up, but they could now look out on the ocean and the city of St. Augustine.

In his chapter about the prisoner-of-war camp built on Johnson’s Island during the Civil War, David R. Bush (2012) implies that the two most important structural aspects of a prisoner-of-war camp were surveillance and location, and I argue that Pratt experimented with these two aspects at Fort Marion (63-4). Early on, Pratt dismissed some (and eventually all) of the United States military guard and appointed several prisoners to guard themselves and their fellow prisoners. He argues that his time commanding American Indian scouts in Indian Territory “had given me confidence in their good qualities, particularly when pledged to obedience” (1964, 119). After only six months at Fort Marion, Pratt sent a formal request to the commanding officer at St. Francis Barracks, about six miles from the fort, to “allow the organization of the younger men into company with sergeants and corporals, to loan some old guns, and to use the Indians to guard

themselves” (119-20). Allowing the prisoners to guard themselves exemplifies Pratt’s confidence that in the right environment and under the right supervision, his prisoners could become harmless enough to be given guns and guard themselves. Pratt attributes this transformation directly to his understanding of American Indian peoples as “good” from his time with the Tenth Cavalry and their natural propensity for “obedience”; however, by narrating the prisoners’ self-surveillance after the description of their physical and environmental alterations, he also indirectly attributes their docility to his imposed changes. The changes Pratt made to the prisoners’ bodies, their access and their guard could only have taken place within the makeshift prison, a space where he could create his very own regime.

While Pratt attributes the prisoners’ disposition to natural law and a modification of appearance and environment, he does not attribute his decisions to the penitential ideas of power and surveillance that the prisoners were subject to regardless of their occupational position. However, I argue that Pratt’s alteration of the prison’s space and the prison experience still adhered to penitential notions of power and discipline, including the applied regimes of surveillance, self-surveillance, and labor. These regimes had been developing in the United States since the first penitentiaries and elevated surveillance as a means of discipline

and control. Regarding surveillance and self-surveillance, Foucault (1977) argues that:

The major effect of the Panopticon: to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers. (201)

While Fort Marion was certainly not a panopticon, and was more makeshift prison than modern penitentiary, Foucault's ideas of surveillance still inform how we understand the intersection of surveillance and power at Fort Marion. The idea that power is "independent of the person who exercises it" pertains to Pratt's practice of self-surveillance. While he continued to employ some military guards at first, he placed American Indian guards in charge of daily morning inspections, when prisoners' bodies, their quarters and their workspaces were examined for

cleanliness (1964, 147). Prisoner-guards called roll, inventoried the stores, and worked alongside American soldiers of rank. Pratt assigned jobs and ranks to the younger prisoners and provided competition and incentives that "accentuated their ambition, precision, diligence, and pride" (Lookingbill 2006, 71). It did not matter whether the guards at Fort Marion were military or prisoner, inmates were still in a state of "permanent visibility that assure[d] the automatic functioning of power" (Foucault 1977, 201).

Another way that Pratt implemented surveillance with little use of military guard was through tourist visits. He welcomed visitors to the prison in order to "correct the unwanted prejudice promoted among our people against the Indians through race hatred and the false history which tells our side and not theirs." He saw these visits as mutually beneficial, as "It was just as important to remove from the Indian's mind his false notion that the greedy and vicious among our frontier outlaws fairly represented the white race" (1964, 120). Some of these visitors were significant members of American society, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe, Bishop Henry Whipple and General Winfield Scott Hancock. However, while Pratt frames these visits as a dual lesson in cultural relativism, as well as proof of his success as a jailor, allowing visitors also added white bodies and eyes to the fort that could serve as an added

layer of surveillance.^{iv} These prisoners were removed far from their home and imprisoned by a military that had oppressed and waged war on their people for generations, only to be openly observed by members of that same race of people. The presence of Fort Marion's visitors was not only a lesson in peace but also a reinforcement of power.

Regardless of whether the prisoners were watched by military officers, tourists or fellow prisoners, the fact remains that they were still prisoners subjected to constant surveillance within the confines of a makeshift prison. In other words, the very idea of surveillance within the confines of the prison acted as a constant reminder of their captive state. As Foucault might argue, the Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne and Arapahoe warriors were still confined to the prison, and therefore the architecture of the prison itself—the thick coquina walls, case-mate cells, terreplein and bastions—was a constant reminder of their captive condition. To re-emphasize the previously stated quotation by Foucault: “[the] architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it.” Foucault underscores a relationship of power in which the architecture, not the guards, maintains the power structure because confinement within a prison-space reinforces the prisoners’ subordinate status.

Moreover, the larger space of St. Augustine acted as a “machine for creating and sustaining a power relation.” As time passed, Pratt seemingly eased the carceral environs by giving the prisoners permission to camp on Anastasia Island and to work on farms, orchards and railways. They ran errands in town and sold their handmade goods to souvenir shops. Pratt even allowed a young Cheyenne man to go on a boat ride with a group of local youth. However, Pratt’s impression of trust and benevolence relies on the spaces of the fort and of St. Augustine in that its geographical location on an eastern peninsula ensured against escape or rescue, and provided an environment where the prisoners were always monitored by residents and tourists. Jacqueline Fear-Segal relates Pratt’s “leniency” to the architecture of Fort Marion: “Pratt could be compassionate and lenient in his treatment of the prisoners because he was readily able to enforce his power” (2007, 17). I argue that, for the same reason, Pratt was able to appear lenient toward his prisoners because the larger space of St. Augustine also acted as a space of imprisonment. Not only did the prisoners know they were too far from home to make a successful escape, but they also knew that they were imprisoned in a town where, despite their physical transformations, they were discernible and thus monitored.

The location of Fort Marion in St. Augustine ensured prisoner

surveillance inside and outside of the fort. Whether or not Pratt allowed the prisoners on the terreplein, on the beach or in the town, they were constantly monitored in these spaces. While the prisoners' access to these spaces may have projected a semblance of freedom, the very fact that they were subjected to constant surveillance continued to confine the prisoners to a prison-space.

The Penitentiary's Influence on Pratt's Ideology

The makeshift prison of Fort Marion allowed Pratt to experiment with alternative methods of imprisonment based on his ideas that American Indians simply needed to learn the tools of civilization in order to become civilized. As his role as jailor and the prisoners' roles within Fort Marion and St. Augustine evolved, so did Pratt's ideas regarding American Indian education. Similar to how he used and altered the existing space of Fort Marion to suit his prisoners' needs, he altered existing ideologies of the prison and of education to fit what he thought were the needs of American Indians and the needs of the American workforce. This section examines Pratt's letters, currently archived at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale, to argue that the second prison reformatory movement and Indian education policy inspired Pratt to use Fort Marion as a space to rewrite citizenship through the regimes of labor and education.

The idea that the prison could act as a space to rewrite citizenship, rather than simply a space to confine and punish, did not originate with Pratt but was a part of prison discourse since the turn of the nineteenth century. David Rothman (1995) argues that controlling crime became a fundamental necessity to America's vision of the republic and thus America turned toward the penitentiary to "transform the deviant into a law-abiding citizen" (117). Reformers believed that "transform[ing] the deviant required surveillance, labor, religious instruction, self-reflection and repentance." America's first modern prison, Auburn State, opened in New York in 1816, followed by Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia in 1829. Both prisons relied on architecture to maximize surveillance and solitude. However, by the end of the Civil War, public opinion considered the reformatory prison a failure. The Auburn and Eastern State models, which relied on solitary cells, could not accommodate for overcrowding. This overcrowding, along with resource shortages, abuse, and other problems, led prisons to prioritize cost-effectiveness over personal reformation (Rotman 1995, 170). In 1867, Enoch Cobb Wines and Theodore Dwight published *Report on the Prisons and Reformatories of the United States and Canada*, commissioned by the New York Prison Association. The report revealed numerous accounts of abuse and

cruelty toward prisoners and recommended a total overhaul of the penitentiary system. Wines and Dwight's suggestion mirrored the rhetoric of reformers one-hundred years earlier: prisons should prepare inmates for a non-criminal life. This return to prisoner reform became the focus of the 1870 National Congress of Penitentiary and Reformatory Discipline, which declared that prisoners could reform through a fostering of self-respect built through education and industry (Rotman 1995, 172-3).

Six years after attending the conference, Zebulon Brockway opened Elmira Reformatory in Elmira, New York. Elmira attempted to prepare young offenders for a lawful life through education. The institution provided general education classes, industrial training, athletic and religious instruction, and military drill. Rather than controlling prisoners through fear and punishment, Elmira sought to control prisoners through reward; excellence in classwork could be rewarded with a reduced sentence. Thus, hard work and labor was one key idea of the first prison reform movement that persisted in the second. Elmira became the model penitentiary during this second reform movement and influenced reformatories in Michigan, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio and Indiana (Rotman 1995, 174).

Notably, this second prison reformatory period coincided with Pratt's experiment at Fort Marion. Elmira opened only one year after Pratt and his prisoners arrived at Fort Marion, and the regimes of education, industry, religion and military drill of both institutions remarkably resembled one another. The shared timing and regimental resemblance show that Pratt shared the philosophy that these regimes could transform social deviants into citizens, and his letters written in 1875 reveal that Pratt considered the penitentiary the quintessential place for social deviants to learn citizenship through labor. In a letter to Adjutant General Edward Townsend dated June 29, 1875, Pratt requests the prisoners-of-war be transferred from Fort Marion to a penitentiary:

Is it not possible to dispose of them [the prisoners-of-war] at some of our Northeastern Penitentiaries where facilities for learning trades is offered and where they can be kept at work. I will answer that such a course will meet with gratifying results. I have said Penitentiaries because they offer the greatest diversity of facilities and Northeastern because of great perfection of industry, guarding them is only a secondary consideration. (1875a)

This letter reveals that Pratt saw the northeastern penitentiary as the

model institution for his prisoners to learn American trades while remaining under guard. At the time Pratt wrote this letter, he had not yet allowed the prisoners to guard themselves; yet, this letter reveals his lack of concern regarding the prisoners' behavior and implies that the prisoners would willingly remain incarcerated in exchange for learning trades. Pratt continues to advocate for sending the prisoners-of-war to a penitentiary in another letter to Townsend written a few weeks later on July 17, 1875:

We try in our state prisons to keep criminals employed and generally at trades that eventuate in placing them in a position to earn a livelihood after release, why do not do the same for these people, when they want it and they say they have never had any one to show them how to work like the white man and they say truly....If they are to be held in close confinement it seems to me that some of our Northern Penitentiaries would be the place offering the greatest diversity of labor. This is not a good place to advance them, they are simply objects of curiosity here. There are no industries worth noting. (1875b)

In both letters, Pratt focuses on labor as essential to American citizenship: knowledge of a trade would lead to the prisoners earning and accumulating capital, adopting

American lifestyles, and joining American communities. The penitentiary would not only keep the prisoners confined, but could provide them with greater opportunities to learn a trade and potentially enter the American workforce upon release. These letters reveal that Pratt subscribed to the rhetoric of the second prison reformatory movement that considered the penitentiary the quintessential place to train men for citizenship, particularly through labor. He believed that his prisoners-of-war would benefit from such training, and that the prisoners were just as capable of transforming into responsible, working Americans as any white man. As I will show below, Pratt not only thought of the penitentiary as the model institution for training individuals in citizenship, but he was inspired by the penitentiary as he recreated the regimes of education and labor most exemplified by Elmira and the second prison reformatory movement at Fort Marion.

Pratt continued to promote the idea that American Indians could learn industrial labor through a penitential setting even after he left Fort Marion and opened the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. Pratt writes in a letter to E.L. Stevens, Chief Clerk at the Bureau of Indian Affairs, dated October 8, 1881:

Mr. Hayt prior to making his recommendation in 1879 was kind enough to talk this matter over with me and I gave him my

unqualified [sic] judgment on its favor, to get the best results the establishments should be as much within the limits of civilization as possible. In my opinion they should partake of the nature of a penitentiary with the appliances for mechanical instructions abundantly provided and large agricultural advantages. I have no doubt that if properly managed all of the wagons, harnesses and many of the agricultural implements, etc. etc. required for the Indian service could be manufactured by the prisoners.

While the context of this letter is unknown, and Stevens' incoming letters missing, it appears that Pratt is reiterating advice given to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Ezra Hayt, regarding an "establishment," possibly an Indian prisoner-of-war camp as Hayt was occupied with the White River War in 1879. This "establishment" would resemble a penitentiary and supply manufactured goods for use by the Indian service, probably on reservations. Pratt's statement that this "establishment should be as much within the limits of civilization as possible" mimics his ideology that American Indians should be immersed in civilization, whether in prison or at school, and thus the "prisoners" he refers to are likely Indian prisoners because American Indian prisoners-of-war were the only

prisoners Pratt had experience with and therefore the only prisoners on which Pratt would be qualified to advise Hayt. While the details of this letter are unknown, it clearly exhibits that Pratt continued to consider the penitentiary *the* place for American Indians to learn and practice industry and agriculture. Perhaps that is also why Pratt donated \$24, nearly \$600 in today's dollar, to a New York based prison reform society, the Volunteer Prison League, in 1902 (Pratt 1902).

Pratt's letters to Townsend imply that Townsend never responded to Pratt's pleas to relocate the Southwestern prisoners-of-war to northeastern penitentiaries, so by March 1876 Pratt shifts his focus away from the penitentiary to industrial and agricultural schools. On March 21, 1876, Pratt again writes to Townsend proposing a number of prisoners be enrolled in "some agricultural or other labor school." Pratt argues, "If this can be done, and after three or four years schooling they become able to make themselves useful as helpers about their agencies and are so returned to their people the best results must follow." Pratt believed that educated tribesmen could encourage the whole tribe to become civilized, and asks Townsend "if private enterprise to this end would be sanctioned" (1964, 172). The idea that American Indians had the potential to not only transform themselves, but their whole tribes, excited Pratt so much that he proposed obtaining an education for

his prisoners regardless of government involvement.

Pratt copies this letter to General William Tecumseh Sherman one month later and it appears that his plan regarding Indian education developed in this time. Pratt writes, "I can select nine or ten from the different tribes who are quite boys, and unmarried, who can be educated and then made use of about their agencies, as I have suggested, with greatest benefit. I can conceive of no better expenditure of effort for their people. The number I have suggested will take an education rapidly. About thirty of the others can be successfully taught" (1964, 173). As Pratt's experiment at Fort Marion evolves and becomes increasingly successful, his post-Fort Marion plans for the prisoners become more specific. However, Pratt appears to be the only person interested in his early plans for Indian transformation as neither Townsend nor Sherman respond to Pratt's requests to enroll some of the prisoners in an industrial or agricultural school.

At this time, Pratt decides to take matters into his own hands and he recreates the penitential regimes of labor and education at Fort Marion. In a letter to Sherman dated May 1, 1876, Pratt writes, "I believe I see that my application for a thorough schooling for some of the young men will not meet with favorable action, and that whatever is done in this direction, for them, must be done

here." At this point, Pratt begins to focus his correspondence on the development of his own education and labor program. For example, Pratt outlines his program at Fort Marion in a letter to General H. J. Hunt dated May 18, 1876:

It [the school] was attended by an average of 50 and was in every way a success. Military drill is given sufficient to enable a handling in [?] and to keep them set up. After adjournment of school they were encamped two weeks at Matanzas, and since their return to the fort have been under instruction in building a log house. Your attention was invited to their general appearance, to their industry in the manufacture of canes, bows and arrows, polishing of sea beans, and drawings from all of which they realized considerable money to sales of visitors. They work at anything with much industry, the guard, the cooks, the baker, etc.

This letter reveals the beginnings of Pratt's experiment in education and industrial training for American Indians. Not only did he set up a school attended by the majority of the prisoners, but he did his best to simulate industrial training through the manufacture of goods and other labor. Most prisoners worked within the fort as guards, called roll, maintained the structure, or baked

bread. They also earned money selling their ledger art and hand-crafted bows, arrows and canes to tourists. Early in their imprisonment, a local curio hired the prisoners to polish "sea beans," a hard shell that could be polished, made into jewelry and sold to tourists. In just a few months, the prisoners earned \$1,600, which Pratt let them keep, no doubt as a lesson in capitalism and finance (Pratt 1964, 119). The following summer, Pratt and the prisoners camped on Anastasia Island, where they found their own sea beans. This discovery led them to collect, polish, and sell the shells directly to the Fort Marion tourists to earn a higher dollar margin (125). In addition to polishing and selling sea beans, Pratt hired the prisoners out for multiple tasks around the St. Augustine area. They helped clear an orange grove, carried baggage for the railroad, staked lumber for a sawmill, dug wells, moved a Sunday school building, and, even excavated Indian burial grounds for the Smithsonian (129-30).

In 1876, Pratt wrote to General Sheridan that the prisoners had already earned three to four thousand dollars selling their art and craft to visitors. In fact, in a letter to General John Eaton (1882), Pratt brags that the men were such successful salesmen that "a very considerable number of the laboring class and others of the community ask[ed] that I be stopped in the putting of the Indians out to labor in competition with other classes as I was taking

bread from the mouths of those who were dependent upon such labor for their living." In other words, the prisoners were so successful at selling their wares that the local vendors petitioned Pratt to limit their business activities to the fort. Seemingly, Pratt successfully recreated the regimes of education and labor exemplified by the second prison reformatory movement despite the limits of the prison camp.

Regardless of the prisoners' monetary success, Pratt continued to feel frustrated by the lack of opportunity for industrial and agricultural training in St. Augustine and petitioned various military officials to allow the prisoners to seek opportunity elsewhere. In an April 8, 1877 letter to Colonel James W. Forsyth, Pratt writes:

Mrs. H. B. Stowe, recently here, was so much interested in the advancement the younger men have made, and in their disposition to learn, that she is making an effort towards giving some of them privileges of education at Amherst Agricultural School, with Govt. aid, if that can be obtained, and if not, there by private means if the Govt. will allow it. To satisfy her inquiries I submitted the question and found that twenty three, of the most promising, would elect to remain east for education, rather than go home, if

such an alternative was offered.

Pratt also suggests enlisting prisoners as military scouts. A fair wage as a scout would allow them to build a house and have a small farm where they could learn agriculture. While it appears that Pratt may have preferred the prisoners enter an agricultural or industrial school upon release, and that the prisoners also wanted to attend such a school, Pratt's primary focus fell on sustainable labor that would keep the men in a so-called civilized environment.

While Pratt prioritized labor, he also subscribed to nineteenth-century ideology (and policy) that the English language would aid in the civilization efforts of American Indian peoples. Around the time that the army appointed Pratt jailor at Fort Marion, the United States was actively implementing policies regarding on-reservation Indian education. The United States Government, under President Grant's Peace Policy, believed that teaching American Indian children English would solve the "Indian Problem" by easing communication between American Indians and Euro-Americans, teaching Euro-American values, and classifying American Indians as a homogenous group rather than individual tribes. For these reasons, the federal government mandated English education for all American Indian children (Spack 2002, 17), which they enforced through various treaties, most notably

the treaties at Medicine Lodge Creek and Fort Laramie. These treaties, which shared much of the same language, promised peace between the tribes and the United States Government, formed reservation boundaries, and established agencies that would provide an agent, workshops and schools. The United States believed that setting boundaries and encouraging farming and education would lead these "hostile" tribes to civilization. In fact, the Treaty of Fort Laramie even promised Sioux individuals full citizenship if they "receiv[e] a patent for [unsettled] land" outside of reservation boundaries on the condition that they homestead on and improve the land over a set period of time (Article VI).

While the United States believed that land boundaries and agriculture were necessary for peace and civilization, government officials thought that American Indians could only attain civilization through education. Article VII of both the Treaty at Medicine Lodge Creek and of Fort Laramie outline the specifications for on-reservation education:

In order to insure the civilization of the tribes, entering into this treaty, the necessity of education is admitted, especially by such of them as are or may be settled on said agricultural reservations: and they therefore pledge themselves to compel their children, male and

female, between the ages of six and sixteen years, to attend school; and it is hereby made the duty of the agent for said Indians to see that this stipulation is strictly complied with; and the United States agrees that for every thirty children between said ages, who can be induced or compelled to attend school, a house shall be provided, and a teacher competent to teach the elementary branches of an English education, shall be furnished, who will reside among said Indians, and faithfully discharge his or her duties as a teacher. The provisions of this article to continue for not less than twenty years.

These treaties marked a turning point in the ways the United States Government dealt with the "Indian Problem." Rather than continuing to acquire power and land through military force, the Peace Policy, enforced through these treaties, sought to "kill the Indian" through assimilation/civilization and saw education as the ultimate way to "insure the civilization of the tribes." As Jacqueline Fear-Segal argues, these treaties exemplify how "education had been made an integral part of an aggressive policy of pacification" (2007, 5). Pacification through education, if successful, could benefit the United States in several ways: the United States could expend

its military resources elsewhere, it could gradually eliminate the reservation system and acquire Indian land, and it could gain a new working class. While the treaties do not specifically mandate children to attend school, as implied by the sentence, "who can be induced or compelled," they do assign the enforcement of education to the reservation agents.

Pratt's ideas on Indian education were set within the historical context of the Peace Policy and the subsequent treaties at Medicine Lodge and Fort Laramie, as he too believed education was the cornerstone of pacification through civilization. He believed that his prisoners could become civilized, and thus controlled, through education and labor. Thus, by the first winter Pratt had converted several casemates into classrooms and began offering English lessons. Mrs. Anna Pratt and a group of five local women taught the classes, including Miss Mather and Miss Perrit who ran a women's boarding school in St. Augustine during the Civil War. In addition, a revolving group of women volunteered during the winter season (Pratt 1964, 121). The women put up blackboards, decorated the casemates with the alphabet and spelling cards, and taught lessons in speaking, reading and writing the English language (Stowe 1877). Pratt confirms the popularity of the classes in his autobiography and explains that the women taught up to six classes simultaneously at the program's height. On some Sundays a Christian

minister would provide religious instruction to the prisoners. Bishop Henry Whipple writes to the editor of the *New York Daily Tribune* of how he “preach[ed] to them every Sunday, and upon weekdays I told them stories from the Bible” (Pratt 1964, 163). As previously discussed, education at the fort also consisted of industrial labor whenever Pratt found an opportunity. For example, Pratt hired a local baker to teach a Cheyenne prisoner how to bake bread for meals. Likewise, Pratt bought the equipment to build log houses so he could teach the prisoners how to make their own European-style homes (Pratt 1876 Letter to Philip Sheridan).

Harriet Beecher Stowe owned a vacation home on St. John’s River and visited Fort Marion with her good friend, Miss Mather. Stowe wrote a number of editorials regarding Pratt’s project at the fort. These editorials highlight the prisoners’ transformations from “savage” to “civilized” and credit Pratt’s unorthodox prisoner-of-war camp in this transformation. In an article published in *The Christian Union* in 1877 and republished in *Battlefield and Classroom*, Stowe uses Fort Marion as an example of how education can solve the “Indian Problem.” Stowe illustrates the prisoners’ dramatic transformation from the savages she saw travelling to Fort Marion on the St. John’s River in 1875, to the civilized men she now visits in St. Augustine. She argues that the young prisoners ask for an

industrial or agricultural education because they want to be “useful” to America and their own people. Stowe asks, “Is here not an opening for Christian enterprise? We have tried fighting and killing the Indians, and gained little by it. We have tried feeding them as paupers in their savage state, and the result has been dishonest contractors, and invitation and provocation to war. Suppose we try education?” Stowe calls for a re-appropriation of government funds for American Indian education and concludes her letter by asking: “Might not the money now constantly spent on armies, forts and frontiers be better invested in educating young men who shall return and teach their people to live like civilized beings?”

While the federal government did not reallocate its funding, it did eventually permit Pratt to open his own school in the then-abandoned Army barracks in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. On November 1, 1879, Pratt opened The Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the first federally funded, off-reservation Indian industrial school. Carlisle’s first students consisted of ninety-eight boys and thirty-eight girls, about two-thirds of whom were recruited from Dakota Territory to be held as “hostages” for the good behavior of their tribes (Pratt 1964, 220). The remaining students were recruited from Indian Territory by former St. Augustine prisoners. Once at the school, students were bathed, dressed in uniform, and their hair was cut. Half

of each student's day consisted of academic education, while the other half focused on manual labor training. In the summers, Carlisle hired out many students to nearby homes and farms to learn through immersion, a system Pratt called "outing." Carlisle became the model for subsequent American Indian boarding schools. Twenty-five off-reservation boarding schools opened by 1902, and on-reservation boarding schools and day schools continued to increase, spreading from the east coast to California with enrollment peaking in the 1970s (Adams 1995, 57). The off-reservation boarding schools affected generations of American Indians, as it sought for a century to erase the culture and language of whole communities of peoples. As scholar Brenda Child asserts, "for better or worse, the schools became part of our histories" (1998, 4).

Pratt's experiment at Fort Marion is remembered quite briefly at the exhibit in the American Occupation casemate at the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument: "Pratt began a program of assimilation. He believed that the adoption of white culture, language and religion were the American Indians' only chance. An advocate for American Indian education and civil rights, he sought to find a way to accomplish his goals, and his actions led to the beginning of the American Indian schools concept." Pratt's tenure at Fort Marion gave Pratt the time and space to

experiment with the ideology that American Indians could assimilate into American society if they were only taught how to look and behave like civilized Americans. While Pratt was inspired by his own experiences in the military and with African American scouts, my archival research has revealed that Pratt was also inspired by the regimes of the reformatory prison. The makeshift prison of Fort Marion allowed Pratt to turn the fort into a laboratory where he could begin this "program of assimilation" by experimenting with the philosophy of the prison reform movement: through the right environment, surveillance, labor, and education, a social deviant could transform into a proper American citizen. Or in the case of the prisoners at Fort Marion, the most "hostile" American Indians could transform from "savages" to "civilized" and "useful" men. Pratt took the lessons learned at Fort Marion with him to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, to where he removed American Indian children from the "savage" influence of their families and the reservations in order to assimilate a new generation into a Euro-American way of life.

Thus, Fort Marion should be remembered as an important nexus, where the ideologies of the military, American Indian education and the prison reform movements converged and conceived the concept of the off-reservation boarding school system; a system that transformed the lives and cultural consciousness of generations

of American Indian peoples. Elevating Pratt and the Southwestern prisoners' tenure at Fort Marion between 1875 and 1878, and emphasizing the influence of the prison reform movement on Pratt's ideology and experiments at Fort Marion, gives scholars a unique perspective on the beginning of a foundational period of American Indian education and history.

Notes

ⁱ One Comanche woman and her child (Pe-ah-in and Ah-kes), and one Cheyenne woman (Mochi) also accompanied the men. The Army never considered them prisoners of war.

ⁱⁱ The term "Indian Problem" refers to the "problem" of how to settle and expand on a land already inhabited by indigenous peoples.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ih-pa-yah, Co-a-bote-ta and Manan-ti

^{iv} Many visitors also wrote articles and letters to the editor of prominent magazines and newspapers about

their visit. This literature also acted as a form of surveillance, as it allowed a large population of Americans to also look in and observe Pratt's experiments at Fort Marion. Amelia Katanski (2005), in writing about Carlisle's newsletter articles written by Pratt, writes that "the newspaper acted as a rhetorical panopticon, encouraging student self-colonization through writing" (16). While the Fort Marion prisoners presumably never saw the articles written by their visitors, Pratt did and republished many of them in his autobiography. Therefore, Pratt and the prisoners were subjected to this surveillance.

References

- Adams, David Wallace. 1995. *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
- American Occupation, Captain Richard Henry Pratt, Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, St. Augustine, Florida.
- Bush, David R. 2012. "Johnson's Island US Civil War Military Prison." In *Prisoner of War Archeology, Memory, and Heritage of 19th and 20th Century Mass Internment*, edited by Harold Mytum and Gilly Carr, 59-74. New York: Springer.
- Child, Brenda. 1998. *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families 1900-1940*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Fear-Segal, Jacqueline. 2007. *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle for Indian Acculturation*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- "Fort Marion and Fort Matanzas: Guidebook, 1940." National Parks Service. 20 June 2010. https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/brochures/1940/foma/sec1.htm.
- Foucault, Michel. 1977. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Random House.
- Johnston, Norman. 2000. *Forms of Constraint: A History of Prison Architecture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Katanski, Amelia V. 2005. *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding-School Experience and American Indian Literature*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Lookingbill, Brad D. 2006. *War Dance at Fort Marion: Plains Indian War Prisoners*. Norman: University Oklahoma Press.
- Pratt, Richard Henry. N.d. "Eleventh Annual Report of the Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pa." Box 25, Folder 770, P 1. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1875a. Letter to Edward Townsend. Box 14, Folder 493a. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.

- . 1875b. Letter to Edward Townsend. Box 14, Folder 493a. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1976. Letter to Edward Townsend. Box 14, Folder 493a. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1876. Letter to H. J. Hunt. Box 14, Folder 493a Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1876. Letter to Philip Sheridan. Box 14, Folder 493a. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1876. Letter to William Tecumseh Sherman. Box 14, Folder 493a. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1877. Letter to James W. Forsyth. Box 14, Folder 493a. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1881. Letter to E. L. Stevens. Box 10-5 Ps 157-8. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1882. Letter to John Eaton. Box 10-6, Ps 86-99 and Box 10-61, Folder 342. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1902. Letter to Maud Ballington Booth. Box 10-50. Richard Henry Pratt Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New Haven, CT.
- . 1964. *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904*, edited by Robert M. Utey. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Rothman, David J. 1995. "Perfecting the Prison: United States, 1789-1865." *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*, edited by Norval Morris and David J. Rothman, 111-29. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rotman, Edgargo. 1995. "The Failure of Reform: United States, 1865-1965." *The Oxford History of the Prison: The Practice of Punishment in Western Society*, edited by Norval Morris and David J. Rothman, 169-97. New York: Oxford University Press.

Spack, Ruth. 2002. *America's Second Tongue: American Indian Education and the Ownership of English, 1860-1900*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Stowe, Harriet Beecher. "The Indians at St. Augustine." *The Christian Union*, April 25, 1877.