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The Pacific Cable, Hawai‘i, and Global Communication

PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION of the British and American Pacific cables in 1902 and 1903, the Atlantic submarine telegraph cable was completed in July of 1866 connecting the European continent to North America.¹ The significance of the Atlantic cable was that Europe and North America were suddenly linked in both time and space. Communication, which previously traveled only as quickly as the fastest ocean-going vessels of the time, was remarkably reduced to mere seconds—since telegraphic communication travels at the speed of light.² In contrast, on the other side of the globe at the dawn of the 20th century, the Pacific Ocean remained a vast barrier to inter-continental communication. News between the Americas and the continents of Asia and Australia, and the countries of Japan and the Philippines, continued to move only as quickly as the swiftest ships of the day.

At the beginning of the 20th century, two nations were poised to accept the challenge to traverse the Pacific Ocean with undersea communication cables, which would permit telegraphic messages to be transmitted across thousands of miles within seconds. England and its ally, Canada, sought to lay submarine telegraph cables to Australia and New Zealand, which had commonly shared political ties.

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England's younger offspring, the United States, sought to establish communication to Hawai'i, the Philippines, and its trading partners Japan and China.

The advent of the submarine Pacific telegraph cable (hereafter simply referred to as the Pacific cable) is the story of a shift in dominance between two global news agencies—from the British agency Reuters to the American agency the United Press. At the same time, the United States was expanding its political influence in the Pacific basin, through its annexation of Hawai'i in 1900 and its governance of the Philippines beginning in 1898 (a result of the Spanish-American War). This essay is a description of the history behind the American Pacific cable, and the circumstances that led to its completion in July of 1903.

As a starting point, I will examine the Atlantic cable, the forerunner of the Pacific cable. It is important to understand how the technological achievement of the Atlantic cable influenced the eventual completion of the Pacific cable. Next, we will turn to the global telegraphic communication race between England and the United States—with particular attention on the British news agency Reuters and its American competitor the Associated Press. For the United States in particular, Hawai'i became a strategic stepping stone towards the realization of its political expansion in the Pacific basin. I will show a timeline of events, which preceded the completion of the Pacific cable. I will also discuss Cable Day in Hawai'i, the day which officially marked the opening of the Hawaiian leg of the Pacific cable. Finally, I will address the implications of history, culture, and technology and how the synthesis of these elements continues to impact worldwide communication.

THE TRANS-ATLANTIC CABLE

The Atlantic cable was the world's first trans-continental telegraph cable to link North America and Europe. American entrepreneur Cyrus W. Field, who made his earlier fortune in manufacturing paper, formed The Atlantic Telegraph Company, in 1856, for the purpose of laying a cable between England and the United States.³ Field was able to convince both the United States and Great Britain of the success of the project and to secure financing. After numerous

unsuccessful attempts, in July of 1866, the Atlantic cable was finally completed, successfully connecting the two continents via undersea telegraphic communication.⁴

Commenting on the significance of the trans-Atlantic cable and the genesis of worldwide telegraphic communication, Arthur C. Clarke in his book, *Voice Across the Sea* writes:

Our civilization could not exist without efficient communications; we find it impossible to imagine a time when it took a month to get a message across the Atlantic and another month (if the winds were favorable) to receive a reply. . . . Not until the scientists of the early nineteenth century started to investigate the curious properties of electricity was a servant discovered which within little more than two lifetimes would change the face of the world and sweep away the ancient barriers of time and distance.⁵

The cable ship, the *Great Eastern*, which had laid the Atlantic cable, continued to lay two more trans-Atlantic cables between 1866 and 1869. The *Great Eastern* as a vessel was an astonishing accomplishment. According to the British Broadcasting Corporation, the *Great Eastern* “was 680 feet, with a breadth of 120 feet over the paddle wheels.”⁶ In addition, the ship was five times larger than any other ship of her time. She had an odd dual configuration which included a conventional propeller along with giant paddle wheels on each side. This greatly aided in her maneuverability, allowing her to rotate at a fixed position by reversing one of the paddle wheels.⁷ Modern cable ships also use multiple propulsion systems, with rotating fore and aft propellers. The end result is the same: It allows for extremely accurate maneuverability at sea, which is critical in maintaining the correct tension while both laying and repairing submarine communication cables.

Continued progress was made as numerous cables were laid across the Atlantic including a cable from Brazil to Europe in 1874.⁸ Cyrus Field’s persistence and determination had set in motion a communication revolution, which continues today as the Internet now links the continents through undersea fiber optic cables and satellite technology. Field, at the age of 47, reflected on the achievement in a speech that he gave to the New York Chamber of Commerce on November 15, 1866. In that speech, Field cited the socio-cultural ties between

America and England, which were further bonded through instant telegraphic communication:

America with all her greatness has come out of the loins of England, and though there have sometimes been family quarrels, still in our hearts there is a yearning for our old home, the land of our fathers; and he is an enemy of his country and of the human race, who would stir up strife between two nations that are one in race, in language and in religion.⁹

In 1870, only four years after his successful completion of the Atlantic cable, Cyrus W. Field petitioned the United States Congress to lay a telegraph cable across the Pacific Ocean. The story was covered in the Hawaiian Islands newspaper, *The Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (*PCA*). Field proposed a route which went from the west coast of the United States to Hawai'i and on to Japan and China.¹⁰ Cyrus Field was a true visionary and entrepreneur who had proven himself as a leader by completing the Atlantic cable project. Field's comments of 1870 helped to mark the destiny of the Hawaiian Islands. The course was set for a second communication revolution to breach the shoreline of Hawai'i, even though it took 33 years for the vision to be transformed into reality.

The first communication revolution in Hawai'i began in 1820, when Protestant missionaries converted the Hawaiian language to a written form and taught the people to read. In 1870, when Field made his comments about the Pacific cable, the Kingdom of Hawai'i was one of the most literate nations on earth with a 90 percent literacy rate. There was also a thriving indigenous Hawaiian press in place which reached its maximum influence in the 1890's. Hawaiian nationalist newsmen Robert Wilcox and John Bush were in favor of the Pacific cable because they saw the benefits of expanded news-gathering, and more efficient business communication with the outside world. Henry Whitney, editor of the *Hawaiian Gazette* wrote, "A cable connecting us with the outside world will make a complete revolution of the business methods in this community."¹¹ What was occurring in Hawai'i at the end of the 19th century was a reflection of the larger trend of American expansion that was simultaneously taking place throughout the Pacific basin.

THE GLOBAL TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION RACE

After the success of the initial trans-Atlantic cable and numerous others that began to tie Europe with the Americas, steady progress began to span the globe linking other continents by common nationalistic ties.¹² In the midst of this worldwide communication revolution, Great Britain desired to link itself with its former English colonies and allies around the globe. The independent child of England, the United States, also desired to link itself with foreign nations; such communication would greatly aid continued American economic prosperity. The global telegraphic communication race was on, and the lens of history now shifted to the Pacific Ocean, where tiny islands, some of them uninhabited, suddenly became highly coveted real estate. Hawai'i was now thrust into the center of a global communications race, and under the spotlight of world events.

In 1875, King David Kalākaua negotiated the Reciprocity Treaty between the Kingdom of Hawai'i and the United States. Kalākaua's efforts allowed for unrestricted trade without tariff barriers between the two nations.¹³ The greatest export from Hawai'i at the time was sugar, and so the treaty had an immediate impact upon the economic success of the powerful Hawaiian sugar plantations, which mostly were owned by American businessmen living in Hawai'i. It is important to note the long-term effect of the political and economic ties between Hawai'i and the United States which resulted from the Reciprocity Treaty. At the turn of the century, 25 years after the signing of the treaty, the United States, at a clear advantage over Britain, requested the landing of a submarine telegraph cable in Hawai'i.

REUTERS VS. ASSOCIATED PRESS

At the beginning of the 20th century, Hawai'i was regarded as a strategic landing point for telegraphic communication between the Western United States and Asia. Because of this, Hawai'i became the focus of attention of American business people on the West Coast and politicians in Washington, D.C. Prior to the coming of the Pacific cable to Hawai'i, England dominated worldwide telegraphic communication, along with the dissemination of world news. London,

England, was the socio-political center of world news. The British news agency Reuters reigned supreme as the primary vehicle which both gathered and disseminated world events—to the family of nations.

The challenger to Reuters for worldwide news coverage was the American news agency, the Associated Press. The Associated Press already had numerous international news bureaus including correspondents who were located in Japan, the Philippines, and portions of China. Unfortunately, news had to be relayed across European telegraphic connections which passed through Europe and then on to New York. The result was that Reuters, through its headquarters in London, always had the upper hand in scooping any news from Asia. This was due to the fact that Reuters had field reporters in the same locations as the Americans (Associated Press), and all news wire stories from Asia passed through London first, before being relayed to New York. The only chance that the Associated Press had to challenge Reuters's news supremacy in Asia and the Pacific was to secure an alternative route, whereby news could be transmitted directly to New York, bypassing London entirely.

The British were not interested in having their dominance of world news and global communication challenged by the Americans through the completion of an American Pacific telegraph cable. Aware of the intent of the Americans, the British tried unsuccessfully to secure permission to land a cable in Hawai'i. The British were interested in using Hawai'i as a relay point for a British-owned Pacific cable. At the end of the 19th century, the Hawaiian Kingdom was not open to the idea of a British Pacific cable terminating in Hawai'i,¹⁴ since the sovereign nation of Hawai'i did not want to jeopardize the standing Reciprocity Treaty that it had with the United States.¹⁵

THE BRITISH AND THE AMERICAN PACIFIC CABLE ROUTES

Thus the British were shut out of Hawai'i as a stepping stone for a Pacific cable. The Hawaiian sugar industry experienced over a quarter of a century of prosperity as a direct result of the Reciprocity Treaty. Both Hawai'i's private and public sectors were beneficiaries of the treaty. As a result, the British had to secure a different route

across the Pacific Ocean. Ultimately, the British decided to proceed in the following manner:

... from Vancouver to Fanning Island, thence to Suva, in the Fijis, thence to Norfolk Island, and from there it will bifurcate [split into two directions, see Fig. 1] to Southport, Queensland, and to Doubtless Bay, New Zealand."¹⁶

In contrast, the Americans chose a route which began in San Francisco, proceeded to Hawai'i, continued to the Midway atoll, through Guam, and terminated in the city of Manila, in the Philippines. The total distance was 6,817 nautical miles.¹⁷ The tiny atoll of Midway was uninhabited except for occasional squatters and had little significance until the arrival of the Commercial Pacific Company in 1902. According to F. C. Hadden, an entomologist who studied Midway Island in the 1930's and 40's, "In order to maintain and operate a submarine cable across the Pacific it was necessary to establish a relay station at Midway."¹⁸ In 1902, the Commercial Pacific Cable Com-

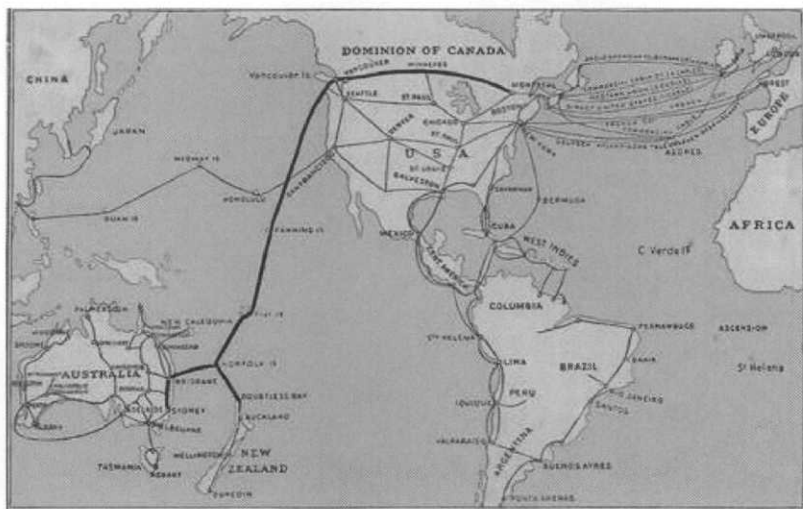


FIG. 1. Map showing the Pacific Cable route and connections, 1903. The British cable is the dark line; the American cable the lighter line in the Pacific Ocean.¹⁹

pany landed on Midway Island and began to construct facilities. Although the purpose of this essay is not to examine the history of Midway, it is a fascinating aside. As a direct result of the landing of the communication cable on Midway in 1903, the island was transformed from an uninhabited forgotten sandy island, to a cable station complete with thousands of tons of imported soil, imported trees, and living quarters for telegraph operators.

THE COMPLETION OF THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN PACIFIC CABLES

As it turned out, the British were able to complete their Pacific cable about seven months prior to the American Pacific cable. The British completed their Pacific cable on December 8, 1902, opening up traffic to the public.²⁰ An article in the *The Brisbane Courier* reported that the British cable "was open to business yesterday morning when a certain number of messages were ready for dispatch. The business has been carried on satisfactorily and without a hitch."²¹

In December of 1902, after the British had completed their Pacific cable, the American Pacific cable began to lay the final segment from the Philippines to Hawai'i. The American Pacific cable was finally completed in Hawai'i on July 4, 1903, when the cable coming from the Philippines through Midway Atoll was connected to the segment in Hawai'i, which extended to San Francisco. The next day, the *Los Angeles Times* both hailed the event and noticed that its accomplishment was not being sufficiently acknowledged in the continental United States: "No excitement marked the opening of the great wire that is acknowledged to be the grandest triumph in mechanical skill since the completion of the trans-continental railway."²² While there may not have been a tremendous amount of excitement in Los Angeles in July of 1903, the people of Hawai'i enthusiastically celebrated Cable Day in Hawai'i, earlier that same year, in January, when Hawai'i was connected to San Francisco.

Even though the British completed their Pacific cable about six months prior to the Americans, the ultimate significance of the American cable was that the British monopoly on worldwide news gathering had been broken. This is a crucial point since, according to Canadian sociologist, Robert Pike, and Canadian journalism professor,

Dwayne Winseck, “British companies dominated, maintaining almost complete control over the manufacture and laying of cables and owning two-thirds of the world’s cables by 1900.”²³ These key undersea cable routes were all controlled by the British company, Cable and Wireless.²⁴ Prior to the completion of the American Pacific cable, news,

... had to travel across the Atlantic to the Far East via Cape Town and the Indian Ocean, or via London to Russia, then across the Russian landline to Vladivostock, then by submarine cable to Japan and the Philippines²⁵

The completion of the American Pacific cable was profound in that it forever changed the worldwide dominance of British news gathering and reporting.

THE AMERICAN PACIFIC CABLE: A SHIFT IN WORLDWIDE NEWSGATHERING

In a revealing article written in September of 1904, in *The New York Times*, the press commented on the shifting locus of world news gathering, from England to the United States, as a direct result of the American Pacific cable:

... since the laying of the Pacific cable, a great change has been observable in the news distribution of the world. New York is rapidly becoming, and in many ways has already become, the world’s news center.²⁶

The article goes on to describe how prior to the Pacific cable the primary source of world news was the British news agency Reuters:

In former times—in fact, in times so recent that the word ‘former’ hardly seems the proper word to use—news from the Far East was sent from Asia to Europe by Reuter’s Agency. Reuter supplied it to the Associated Press, which cabled it across the water for American use. Now all that is reversed. The Eastern news is sent across the Pacific to the Associated Press, which furnishes it to Reuter’s over the Atlantic cable for European use. The centre of Far Eastern news, for the supply of the world, has shifted from London to New York.²⁷

Under the prior system, which was used by the British news agency Reuters, there were a total of 12 relay stations across Asia. This slowed down the transmission of the news, since each message had to be read and then retransmitted. With the advent of the new system provided by the American Pacific cable, news could reach London more quickly than it could under the old system. In an earlier article that ran in March of 1904, *The Los Angeles Times*, stated similar sentiments about the diminishing dominance of the British press agency Reuters, in comparison with its American competitor, the Associated Press:

Under the old system the British capital practically became the clearinghouse for news from the extreme East. The British papers and those in other European capitals, as well, not only had time to receive extensive news dispatches and get them into print where only the briefest account of some Far Eastern event appeared in the American papers . . . This has all been reversed by the Pacific cable, which ends in Manila, where the Associated Press has a well organized and fully-equipped bureau.²⁸

THE PACIFIC CABLE REACHES HAWAI'I—A TIMELINE

Two pivotal events occurred in Hawai'i which paved the way for the American Pacific cable to come to the Islands. First, the transfer of Hawaiian sovereignty to the United States took place in August of 1898, under President McKinley. And second, the passage of the Organic Act, by the United States Congress on April 30, 1900, made Hawai'i a territory of the United States.²⁹ In 1898, the United States won the Spanish-American War and gained control of the Philippines. Congress was therefore interested in establishing a direct communication link to the Philippines. In April of 1900, an article appeared in the *PCA* stating that the United States Congress would finance a Pacific cable between San Francisco and Honolulu, Hawai'i.³⁰ Even though the Organic Act did not actually go into effect until June 14, 1900, Congress suddenly seemed quite willing to fund the Pacific cable project. For both American citizens and Hawai'i's merchants there was great interest in being connected to San Francisco and the continental U.S.

It is interesting to note that in 1870, the first article in the *PCA* regarding the Pacific cable appeared on page two of the paper. It was not until April of 1900, thirty years later, that the topic was presented on the first page of the same newspaper. That article covered congressional financing for the Pacific cable project.³¹ Communication scholars refer to this as agenda setting, when a story is moved up in both frequency and prominence as it is presented to the public.³²

The title of an April of 1900 article in the *PCA* was, “Hawaii to Get a Cable—Three Million Dollars Appropriated.”³³ The article stated that the United States Congress had passed an appropriation bill to provide funding for the Pacific cable. Perhaps the editor of the *PCA* felt that the positive editorials regarding the Pacific Cable that had been written over a 30 year time span were about to become a reality, and thus decided to place the article on the front page. Secondly, the coming of the cable meant more timely and accurate domestic and world news coverage in the *PCA*. Certainly the editor and publisher would have been aware of the fact that the success of the Pacific cable project could have a direct positive economic impact upon the newspaper and Hawai‘i’s merchants.

What follows is a brief timeline of the Pacific cable. It is important to keep the following points in mind when reading it. First, the idea of a Pacific cable was proposed to the United States Congress as early as 1870 by Cyrus Field and others. Second, lawmakers in Washington never considered Hawai‘i as the ultimate destination of the Pacific cable. Hawai‘i was in fact a stepping stone across the Pacific, strategically necessary in order to circumnavigate the world with a submarine telegraph cable. This same opinion was mirrored by the editor of the *PCA*, in 1878. Third, there was a need for local telegraphic communication between the islands of Hawai‘i. Communication between the islands was established through undersea telegraph cables completed in August 1889, four years before the arrival of the Pacific cable from San Francisco.³⁴

Pacific Cable Time Line

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| May 1870 | A petition is made to the U.S. Congress by Cyrus W. Field to lay 8,500 nautical miles of undersea cable in the Pacific Ocean. ^{35, 36} |
|----------|---|

- Sep. 1889 The Pacific Cable company is formed, with the objective of laying a cable to Hawai'i, and continuing on to Manila.³⁷
- Apr. 1900 The U.S. Senate appropriates \$3 million for the construction of a Pacific cable from San Francisco to Honolulu.³⁸
- Sep. 1901 The *New York Times* reports the incorporation of the Commercial Pacific Company, in Albany, New York. The Pacific cable will establish a new link to both China and Japan, by way of existing cables in the Philippines. The new cable route to China should reduce cable rates 30 to 60 percent.³⁹
- June 1902 The Pacific cable lands in Waikiki, at Sans Souci Beach. The site was chosen due to an opening in the offshore reef.⁴⁰
- Jan 2, 1903 January 2, 1903 is proclaimed Cable Day in Hawai'i in celebration of the completion of the Pacific cable.⁴¹ Greetings are sent to President Roosevelt from Henry E. Cooper, the secretary of Hawai'i. The merchants of San Francisco send greetings to Hawai'i merchants.⁴²
- Jan. 3, 1903 The first news dispatches are sent over the Pacific cable, to Hawai'i by the Associated Press. One story reports that Marconi successfully completed the first radio transmission from the United States (Massachusetts) to Italy.⁴³
- July 5, 1903 On July 5, 1903, one day after the Manila cable was spliced into the Pacific cable in Hawai'i, a message sent from New York takes nine minutes to go around the world. President Roosevelt sends his greetings to the people of the Philippines.⁴⁴

After the completion of the Pacific cable, the frequency of articles relating to the cable began to diminish. The continuing impact of the Pacific cable was seen on the front page of Hawaiian newspapers, such as the *PCA* and *Hawaiian Star*, as current news (less than 24 hours old) from Europe, the Americas, Asia, and other parts of the world was reported in detail.⁴⁵ The people of Hawai'i, who were accustomed to reading world news that was two to three weeks old, suddenly became as informed about world events, as the citizens of Los Angeles and New York.

The significance of the advent of the Pacific cable to the people of

Hawai'i was astounding. Hawai'i is the most isolated group of islands on the face of the earth. Located in the center of the Pacific Ocean, the Hawaiian archipelago is more than 2000 miles from any major land mass, by any compass point. It was not until January 18, 1778 that the Western world became aware of the Hawaiian Islands, when the British explorer Captain James Cooke sighted the islands of O'ahu and Kaua'i.⁴⁶ Prior to the arrival of Cooke, news between Hawai'i and the rest of Polynesia traveled in long ocean passages by Polynesian voyaging canoes. Only 125 years after Cook's arrival in Hawai'i, the speed in which news would travel to and from Hawai'i to the rest of the world would be transformed from months to a few seconds.

CABLE DAY IN HAWAI'I

Cable Day was celebrated with much anticipation and enthusiasm on January 2, 1903, on the grounds of the executive building in Honolulu, with a celebration ball in the evening. The event was so significant that many of the merchants of Honolulu were expected to close their places of business after midday in order to join in the celebration, which was scheduled for two o'clock in the afternoon. One of the anticipated events was the receipt of a message from the President of the United States, which would be signaled by a 100-gun salute. Music by the Royal Hawaiian band was provided between numerous speeches throughout the afternoon. Henry Berger, the bandmaster composed the "The Pacific Cable March" and dedicated its performance to John Mackay, the president of the Commercial Pacific Company, which completed the Pacific cable project.⁴⁷ After sunset, there was a fireworks display from downtown Honolulu, which continued for an hour and a half.

The headlines in the *PCA* on Cable Day read: "Cable Day Will Be Celebrated with a Mass Meeting and Ball - Holiday Maybe declared in All Lines of Business and the Merry-Making continued during the Remainder of the Week."⁴⁸ Sadly, John Mackay, the founder of the Commercial Pacific Company, passed away before the Pacific cable was completed. His son Clarence, who was also involved in the project, was sent the following message by Henry E. Cooper, the Secretary of Hawai'i:

Mr. Clarence H. Mackay, President Commercial Pacific Cable Company, N.Y. We send this token of our high appreciation of the completion of the great enterprise undertaken by your company on laying a telegraph cable from the Coast of California to these Islands. Mingle with our joy is a feeling of deep regret that John W. Mackay did not live to see the completion of his project and we assure you that his name will ever be cherished in fond remembrance by our people.⁴⁹

The final chapter in the story of the completion of the Pacific cable occurred later in 1903. On the afternoon of July 4, 1903, at 5:08 PM, Honolulu was connected to the Pacific cable from Midway Island, which extended east to the Philippines and China. On that day, the Pacific cable commenced full operation between Asia and Washington, D.C. A greeting was sent from the President of the United States to the American Governor, William Howard Taft in the Philippines: "I open the American Pacific Cable with greetings to you and the people of the Philippines. [signed] Theodore Roosevelt."⁵⁰ William Taft served as the governor of the Philippines until late in 1903 when he returned to Washington, D.C. Taft was elected president of the United States in 1908.⁵¹ Clarke noted that one newspaper editor hailed the Pacific cable as the "Girdle Round the Earth."⁵² On July 5, 1903, the *PCA* ran a number of front page articles covering the extension of the Pacific Cable from Hawai'i to the Philippines:

At just eight minutes past five o'clock last evening communication was opened with Midway Island from the Honolulu end of the cable and the last link in the great American cable was complete. Half an hour afterwards the cable was flashing back and forth messages between Oyster Bay and Manila, via San Francisco, Honolulu, Midway and Guam, and *President Roosevelt's desire to use the cable on the 4th of July had been gratified* [original emphasis].⁵³

Perhaps it was destiny; perhaps it was one of those moments in history when technology, politics, and culture all seem to converge. It was President Roosevelt's desire to open the Pacific cable on the 4th of July—and undoubtedly Roosevelt was aware of the great symbolism that it represented. America had gained its political independence from England many years prior, but with the completion of the Pacific cable, America became independent from England once

again—this time in news gathering, journalistic thought, and the framing of world events. When a nation controls its news sources, and in turn is able to disseminate that news to the rest of the world, it assumes a new position of both prominence and responsibility, in comparison with other nations that are primarily consumers of news and information.

CONCLUSION

The history of the Pacific cable is significant in that it entails multiple sub-plots. The balance between two world press organizations, the extension of political and economic trade zones between nations, the annexation of Hawai'i, which provided and continues to provide, strategic communication and military positioning for the United States in the Pacific basin, are all topics for future research. In this essay, I have recounted the story from the American perspective with a particular emphasis upon Hawai'i. The story could have been told from the British perspective as well. The technological achievement of the British cable was no less significant than that of its American counterpart. I have focused on the American perspective however, which casts light on the shift of world communication flow as it moved from the once dominant British news agency Reuters to its American competitor, the Associated Press.

There are a variety of areas for further research. Additional research could be done from a sociological and communication perspective, considering how the effects of the rapid change of technology impacted Native Hawaiians. The impact upon the Hawai'i mercantile industry as a direct result of the Pacific cable could also be investigated. Finally, the Commercial Pacific Company could be further researched, including its impact upon the islands of Midway, Guam, and the Philippines.

In 1903, the strategically situated islands of Hawai'i were thrust into the middle of a global socio-political communication transformation. The Pacific cable represents the shattering of age-old space and time barriers. The cable that girdled the earth launched a communication revolution that continues to this day, in various manifestations of undersea fiber optic cables, communication satellites, and broadcast technology. It is interesting to point out that at this writing

there is a permanent undersea cable repair vessel stationed in Honolulu Harbor owned by the Tyco Corporation. The ship is on call year-round to repair telecommunications cables anywhere in the Pacific Ocean.

Human history seems to demonstrate that certain cultures strive for technological dominance in order to extend their influence around the world. Most modern communication technologies find their roots in telegraphy. Prior to the 20th century, wars had been fought for geographical sovereignty. The example of the Pacific cable demonstrates that the future may continue to be a battleground for technological communication supremacy and access to information. These are bloodless battles, as seen in the example of the Pacific cable. Yet, similar battles persist to this day in the field of communication. Multi-national corporations compete daily on a global scale for dominance in the areas of satellite distribution of news and information, undersea fiber optic cable access and bandwidth, land-based telecommunications networks, and cellular transmission frequencies.⁵⁴

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- ³⁵ This writer would like to acknowledge columnist Bob Krauss of *The Honolulu Advertiser*, who graciously allowed me to use his personal index in order to research articles in the *PCA* and *Hawaiian Star* related to the Pacific cable.
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- ³⁷ "The Pacific Cable Company," *PCA*, Sep. 4, 1889:2.
- ³⁸ *PCA*, Apr. 24, 1900.
- ³⁹ "A Submarine Cable to the Philippines," *The New York Times*, Sep. 24, 1901:7.
- ⁴⁰ "Cable to Land at Sans Souci," *PCA*, Jun. 26, 1902:1.
- ⁴¹ "Cable Day will be Celebrated with a Mass Meeting and Ball," *PCA*, Jan. 2, 1903:1.
- ⁴² "Hawaii Exchanges Greetings With The World Over the Pacific Cable," *Hawaiian Star*, Jan. 2, 1903:1.

- ⁴³ "First Cable News Report to Hawaii," *Hawaiian Star*, Jan. 3, 1903:1.
- ⁴⁴ "The President Sends the First Cable Message," *PCA*, Jul. 5, 1903:1.
- ⁴⁵ Chapin, *Shaping History* 117.
- ⁴⁶ Kuykendall and Day, *Hawai'i a History* 14.
- ⁴⁷ "Berger Gives his Cable March," *PCA*, Dec. 31, 1902:1.
- ⁴⁸ *PCA*, Jan. 2, 1903.
- ⁴⁹ *PCA*, Jan. 2, 1903.
- ⁵⁰ *PCA*, July 5, 1903.
- ⁵¹ "William Howard Taft," *Microsoft Encarta Reference Library 2002*. CD-ROM. Redmond: Microsoft (2001).
- ⁵² Clarke, *Voice Across The Sea* 102.
- ⁵³ "Pacific Cable completed to the Far East—Last Link in the All-American Line Completed at Honolulu Yesterday," *PCA*, 5 Jul. 1903:1.
- ⁵⁴ Erik P. Bucy, *Living in the Information Age: A New Media Reader*. 2nd ed. (Belmont: Wadsworth Thomson Learning, 2005) 94–95.