

Historical Copyright Deposits to Join Library's Collection

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"The Spanish War Is Over" the *New York Times* declared on the April 12, 1899, the day after representatives of Spain and the United States gathered at the White House to ratify the peace treaty formally ending the Spanish American War. The photograph of the ratification shown here was found earlier this year amid uncataloged elements of the Copyright Office's historical deposits by student researchers participating in the Library's 2007 Junior Fellows Summer Interns Program. Shot by Wilbert Melville and registered in 1899, the photo is one of two newly discovered images documenting the war's conclusion. The images will be made available for the first time to scholars and the public through the Prints and Photographs Division.

Hostilities in the war had actually ceased in August 1898, and the parties had signed a peace treaty in Paris under which Spain had ceded Puerto Rico and Guam to the United States, agreed to the establishment of Cuba as an independent state, and accepted \$20 million in exchange for the Philippines. But U.S. enactment of the treaty awaited approval by the Senate, which did not come until February 6, 1899, following much debate about the wisdom of U.S. expansion.

Those gathered on April 11 included U.S. President William McKinley, members of his cabinet, and prominent officials. French Ambassador Jules Cambon signed for Spain; U.S. Secretary of State John Hay signed for the United States. The *New York Times* described the ceremony's conclusion:



U.S. Secretary of State John Hay, seated at the Resolute, signs the treaty formally ending the Spanish American War on behalf of the United States. President William McKinley stands to his right at the end of the desk.

The President took from the desk the American copy of the treaty, handsomely engrossed, bound in dark-blue morocco, and incased in a black morocco portfolio, and handed it to M. Cambon. At the same time M. Cambon handed to the President the Spanish copy of the treaty, also engrossed, bound in morocco, and incased in a maroon-colored morocco box.... This exchange of ratification occurred at 3:35 p.m. The President was the first to speak.

"Mr. Ambassador," said he, "I will issue my proclamation at once."

Shortly afterward, President McKinley proclaimed the war at end and appointed a U.S. minister to Spain.

The desk in the photograph, known as the *Resolute*, is famous in its own right. Given to U.S. President Rutherford Hayes in 1880 by Queen Victoria of England, it has been used by every U.S. president since Hayes except for Presidents Johnson, Nixon, and Ford.

See page 2 for a related story about the Junior Fellows Summer Intern Program. ©