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Paul J. Rainey: Northeast Mississippi's Hidden Legend

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By

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INTRODUCTION

“The gifted hand of Paul [J. Rainey] ironed out all friction ... the heart and soul of our subject was an inspiration to those who knew him ... No figure in history combined rarer qualities of moral and physical courage, in fact, he was a superman, possessing great vision and creative ability. His scientific achievements and contributions to the world at large, in the form of wild animal and bird life, from the frozen Arctic wastes to the trackless jungles of Equatorial Africa, constitute an eternal monument to his memory.”¹

Paul J. Rainey - big game hunter, Arctic explorer, photographer, filmmaker, spy and legend - has been largely forgotten by history. Few remember who brought Silver King, the giant polar bear, to the Bronx Zoo, or who first successfully hunted lions in Africa with dogs, or who first created a wildlife film that ran for fifteen months in 1912. Rainey headquartered his adventures in his Tippah Lodge in Mississippi and made a name for himself in the worlds of sport, film, and wildlife. His accomplishments may have been overlooked by many, but Rainey's significance to film, wildlife, and hunting history is important to historians, because his influence and legacy reached further than the northeast corner of Mississippi. If it were not for Paul J. Rainey, there may never have been the capture of Silver King, a Universal Studios, the Rainey Gates at the Bronx Zoo, or photography from the American Intervention in Russia. Rainey fills in gaps of big game hunting and a Teddy Roosevelt competitor, early Hollywood history, Russia and the Bolshevik Revolution, and the gaps left through his local history legacy in Tippah County, Mississippi - Rainey's life opens the door for history unexplored and fills in pieces that make the study of history all the more intriguing and exciting.

¹ George Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds* (Cynthiana, KY: The Hobson Book Press, 1947), 166.

History is a world in which discoveries and new challenges can lead to changes in perspective with a research find. Sometimes even a short letter or historical discovery can prove an event happened that once was questioned. With each new revelation comes even more questions and the desire to find answers. Paul J. Rainey is a research discovery that answers questions that have not been asked. His connections to world leaders and early 20th century history show a forgotten hero and someone who was able to change the course of history through his own life. Rainey's life covers early 20th century history and events surrounding the rich and famous of the day, World War I, and the American Intervention in Russia and he played an important role in the history of these events. While from a wealthy family, Rainey used his wealth and influence to leave a mark on the world in various forms. Through literature, his own private letters, and connections, Rainey's legacy opens historical doors that before now have been overlooked. While the world may have missed the gaps that Rainey fills, the time has come to swing open the door of history a bit wider and fill the gaps of history with the life of Paul J. Rainey.

Rainey was the son of a coal tycoon who made millions through his coal mines in Philadelphia. Rainey came from wealth and influence and his family background shows the importance of where he originated. The family was originally part of the Huguenot tradition. Having fled France in 1685, the family settled in Ireland and then in the Americas in 1796, a few years after the American Revolution. From there the original "Reigney" family changed over to Rainey and settled in Ohio. Nearly one hundred years after immigrating to America, the Rainey family welcomed Paul in 1877². Paul's father owned coal mines in Philadelphia; at the height of his business, WJ Rainey was operating over 2,000 mines, the largest landowner of coke and coal

² Various Authors, *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography Volume 19* (University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 1925), 144-145.

production in the nation.³ By the 1890s Rainey was king of the coke industry. In 1900, WJ Rainey died from a failed surgical procedure. Upon his death, Paul Rainey received a small fortune. Due to his father's distrust of his son Paul received only a small amount in comparison with his siblings; because of that, he was called "Poor Paul" by his family.⁴ Rainey's family lived in wealth, but with a desire to serve those around them who were less fortunate and to make a difference in their world. One example of this is that after his father's death, Rainey's mother helped found a school in Ohio. Known as the Rainey Institute, the school trained children from Eastern Europe in the ways of America. Today that school still operates, but as an art school.⁵ Other contributions of the Rainey family included an art museum, financial donations to the American Museum of Natural History, and other places of significant research and public museums.

Paul's family was well respected in Ohio, New York, and Newport, Rhode Island. Rainey himself was a real-life Great Gatsby and a rich playboy. He stood tall at slightly over six feet and was strikingly handsome. Famous enough to be regularly mentioned in the *New York Times* in his day, Rainey was a top socialite not just in New York City, but also in London and in his hometown in Cotton Plant, Mississippi. His sister Grace Rainey Rogers and his brother Roy Rainey, while lesser known, also had their share of adventurous tales and interesting ways of spending and using their father's fortune. Due to their status and fortune, the Rainey's rubbed shoulders with some of the well-known and respected business and political men of the day.⁶

³ Grace Rainey Rogers and Rainey Family Biography, 1943, Grace Rainey Rogers Clipping Files, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio.

⁴ Bill Miles, "The Mysterious Paul J. Rainey," The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

⁵ "Our History" Rainey Institute" Last Modified 2019, <https://www.raineyinstitute.org/our-history/>.

⁶ Peggy Miller Franck, *Prides Crossing: The Unbridled Life and Impatient Times of Eleonora Sears* (Beverly, MA: Commonwealth Editions, 2009), 70.

The periodical *Town Topics: The Journal of Society* mentioned Rainey in several of their issues.⁷ In one such issue, Rainey is associated with Marion Fish, a prominent single lady. It appears that Rainey's intentions were to marry her, but Mrs. Fish would have nothing of it and told Rainey not to call on their summer home. Not too long after that, Marian Fish was married to Albert Gray.⁸ Their marriage was mentioned in the *New York Times* and the guest count at the wedding was upwards of 5,000.⁹ Rainey's associations with people of high society and prominence reveal how well known and respected he was in his day.

Due to his wealth and family status, Rainey was well connected to people like John D. Rockefeller, Edmond Heller, J. C. Hemment, the Vanderbilt family and others. Through his connections, Rainey provided a ship to explore the Arctic, personally photographed and filmed wild game in Africa, and headed up Red Cross propaganda during The Great War. All his accomplishments throughout his forty-six years of life reveal a well-traveled man who journeyed across the continents to discover and explore new regions, to photograph places and animals never seen before, and to serve America on the Eastern Front in Russia.

Another connection of Paul J. Rainey's was Carl Akeley, known as the Father of Modern Taxidermy.¹⁰ Akeley corresponded with Rainey regularly even writing to him, "What are you doing? What are you going to do? How about your plans for a motion picture tour of the world? Do you ever come to New York, and if so, why the devil don't you show up?"¹¹ Rainey's

⁷William D'Alton Mann, "Town Topics," *The Journal of Society*, 1907, 2.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "Miss Marian Fish to Wed Albert Z. Gray: Announcement of the Engagement a Surprise to Their Friends. Will Marry This Summer Wedding Will Probably Take Place in Newport, With a Reception At 'The Crossways.'" *New York Times*, Mar 16, 1907, 9.

¹⁰ "Carl Akeley," Field Museum, accessed December 8, 2021, <https://www.fieldmuseum.org/about/history/carl-akeley>.

¹¹ Carl Akeley to Paul Rainey, March 20, 1920, Paul J. Rainey Papers Notebook Volume 3, Union County Heritage Museum Archives and Special Collections, Union County, Mississippi.

connection with Akeley gave Rainey an opportunity to have many of his big game specimens taxidermized, after which he showcased the animals at his home in Tippah County or sent them to the American Museum of Natural History.

On top of being a prominent socialite, Rainey was a multi-millionaire. Rainey's father left Rainey \$20 million at his death.¹² Being the businessman he was, Rainey amassed more millions over his lifetime.¹³ With money at his disposal, there was nothing lacking for Rainey. His flamboyance is seen in his purchases. To travel on his Arctic expedition, Rainey spent \$500,000 outfitting the ship that was to take him there.¹⁴ He also spent \$919.79 on the purchase of hunting dogs.¹⁵ While he had high spending habits, he also had the mind of a businessman; by the time he died in 1923, he was worth nearly \$60 million.¹⁶

Rainey's most prized possession was a pack of dogs for hunting and breeding. Within his notes he outlined detailed instructions for the care of his dogs. His particulars were extravagant and reflected a man who could afford to kill a cow a day to feed his dogs.¹⁷ When he died his dogs were split up and sold, worth nearly \$4,000 in total.¹⁸ His dogs traveled with him to Africa to hunt big game and, at his death, were sold to other big game hunters across the United States.¹⁹ These dogs were well trained and were a part of Rainey's life in small town Mississippi.

¹² Lynn West, "There is Much We Don't Know about Millionaire Paul Rainey" *New Albany Gazette*, July 28, 2016, https://www.djournal.com/new-albany/news/there-is-much-we-didnt-know-about-millionaire-paul-rainey/article_70a2269b-67d2-567c-87ba-7585f6c374d4.html.

¹³ "Paul J. Rainey" Net Worth Role, accessed December 8, 2021, <https://networthroll.com/blog2/paul-j-rainey-net-worth/>.

¹⁴ "A Millionaire Arctic Hunter," *Hampton's Magazine*, October 1910, 688.

¹⁵ McIlhenny Company to Paul J. Rainey, March 31, 1922, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Union County Heritage Museum Archives and Special Collections, Union County, Mississippi.

¹⁶ "Paul J. Rainey" Net Worth Role, accessed December 8, 2021, <https://networthroll.com/blog2/paul-j-rainey-net-worth/>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Paul J. Rainey Papers, Union County Heritage Museum Archives and Special Collections.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Paul J. Rainey came to Tippah County, Mississippi, with Dr. F. M. Rogers, who had invited Rainey down to Tennessee for a fox hunt.²⁰ After seeing the area, Rainey decided to purchase land and made his first land purchase in Mississippi in 1901. Having bought an old home and rebuilt it, Rainey began to establish his estate in Cotton Plant, Mississippi.²¹ As a millionaire playboy, Rainey attracted the curiosity of the local Tippah County community. The community, being poor, had never seen some of the lavish living Rainey incorporated into his Tippah Lodge. One of the attractions was a heated indoor swimming pool.²² Servants would boil water and pour it into the pool to heat it. After much boiling of water and trips to carry the buckets, the pool was thoroughly warmed and ready to use.²³ “The fabulous place would have been a fairy’s castle to many...”²⁴

Rainey pumped money and enterprises into the local community of Tippah County, inspiring others to do the same. In 1900, before Rainey decided to build his Tippah Lodge, Northeast Mississippi was a small struggling community. The Civil War had ravaged the area and left many poor. After reconstruction, Tippah County was divided into other counties leaving the county small, poor, and its strength broken.²⁵ After the building of the railroad in the 1880s, Ripley and other surrounding areas in Tippah County began to gain more traction and become a bit of a thoroughfare.²⁶

²⁰ Mitch Stennett, “Rainey: The Man Who Knew no Fear” *Southern Sentinel*, May 19, 1977, The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

²¹ Andrew Brown, *History of Tippah County: Mississippi* (Ripley, Mississippi: The Tippah County Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc. Publisher, 1976), 304.

²² John Knott, “The Fantastic Paul J. Rainey: Mississippi Millionaire Shunned Work, Loved to Lasso Bears, Chase Tigers,” *The Commercial Appeal*, August 22, 1965, The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi. David Helms, “Guest Lecture to Focus on Extravagant Life of Paul J. Rainey,” *Pontotoc Progress*, April 2018.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Brown, *History of Tippah County*, 205.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 279.

Rainey threw lavish parties for his guests and invited many locals to his Fourth of July picnic.²⁷ Some of his parties included the W. C. Handy Band who came down from Memphis.²⁸ W. C. Handy was the “Father of the Blues” and was an international sensation with his blues music.²⁹ Due to the high class people coming to visit with Rainey at Tippah Lodge, Rainey commissioned that a side track of the railroad be built up to his land for guests to arrive in style with pullman train cars.³⁰

Pullman cars were luxurious first class sleeping and entertaining cars for guests willing to pay a price. These train cars were nothing new, but had been perfected by George Pullman, who became the biggest seller of train cars for the wealthy and those wanting to travel first class.³¹ Rainey’s wealth and influence allowed his guests to travel in the Pullman train cars to his estate in Tippah County. When Rainey’s own 12-bedroom house was filled with his guests, Rainey had to find other places for his guests to stay. This frustrating experience of finding places to lodge his guests, led to Rainey opening his own hotel in New Albany, not too far from Cotton Plant, establishing a luxurious place for his guests to sleep, eat, and entertain.³²

Not only was his hotel an economic force in Northeast Mississippi, but Rainey also established other forms of business in New Albany and surrounding areas. Some of his economic pursuits included factories and plants that enhanced the opportunities of those living nearby. These plants and factories provided jobs for people in New Albany and surrounding areas. His

²⁷ Ibid., 305.

²⁸ Duane Bullard, *Images of America* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2012), 8.

²⁹ “W. C. Handy” *Memphis Music Hall of Fame*, <https://memphismusichalloffame.com/inductee/wchandy/>.

³⁰ Brown, *History of Tippah County*, 305.

³¹ Robert Khederian, “Before Private Jets, there were Luxurious Private Train Cars”, February 1, 2018, <https://archive.curbed.com/2018/2/1/16943216/pullman-private-railroad-car-history>.

³² *Hotel Rainey, New Albany, Mississippi*, 1909, photograph, Union County Historical Society, <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/bf/d7/1e/bfd71e306bab6ca599082616d9f895bf.jpg>.

pants factory was later transformed into a shirt factory and the building is still standing today in 2022 and is now an antique store. In addition to these pursuits, Rainey also helped to provide banking opportunities to those in the area. His economic influence was seen with the M&F Bank in New Albany as well as the Bank of New Albany.³³

One of the interesting investments of Rainey was a local ice plant. This plant provided ice to those in the community as well as to Rainey and his lavish guests. Ice was important to those living in Northeast Mississippi before refrigeration was an option. Rainey provided this commodity with his icehouse; and while the icehouse is no longer in operation, it stood the test of time and provided for many needs throughout its long history.³⁴ All of these economic pursuits helped breathe life into Union and Tippah County. Rainey did more for these two counties and the surrounding areas with his economic pursuits than any other entrepreneur of the early 20th century.

While making money was important to Rainey, he also sought to help those who were less fortunate than him. Rainey helped to finance the Methodist Church in Shady Grove, Mississippi; the church was called Rainey Chapel in honor of his contribution. Rainey also donated pews and an organ to the Ebenezer ARP church in Cotton Plant, Mississippi. The pews are still used today, even though the building has relocated.³⁵ These churches and likely others experienced the influence of Paul Rainey and his desire to donate and be a part of his new community in Tippah County, Mississippi.

While Rainey certainly spent his money on outrageous items and financing local businesses in Mississippi, he was generous with what he had. Ruby, a girl who lived on the

³³ Jill Smith, interview by Peyton Holliday, New Albany, June 9, 2022.

³⁴ Chris Elkins, "New Albany Ice- house Lives on in Memory," *New Albany Gazette*, November 18, 2008.

³⁵ "Ebenezer APR Church Celebrates 175 Years," *New Albany Gazette*, October 3, 2017.

Rainey estate, recalled that Rainey would gather each child's name who lived on the farm: each Christmas, they would come to the big house to collect their presents.³⁶ Each bag the children received was packed full of toys and candies His generosity was not only for those children who lived around him, but also for children in boarding schools and other learning institutions. Among his correspondence were letters from children's homes thanking him for sending them the moving picture machine and telling Rainey what a splendid time they had watching his films and learning more about African wildlife. While worth millions, Rainey sought to share his abundance with those who were less fortunate.

In his generosity, Rainey provided houses for those working for him and folks in the surrounding areas. The houses formed a little village called "Pershing Village". A girl who grew up in "Pershing Village" stated that Rainey was a generous man and always helped those around him in Cotton Plant. This generosity from Rainey was a small gesture that meant the world to those who lived close to the estate.³⁷

Rainey's generosity was not always financial, but also of his time and his willingness to reach out to those who needed a job. One of his hunting buddies was Roy Stewart, a local Mississippi boy who traveled with him to Africa. Stewart handled Rainey's dogs and assisted Rainey's trainer Er M. Shelley.³⁸ Locals from the Mississippi area, where Rainey had his Tippah Lodge, were hired for various adventures led by Rainey. One girl whose father worked for

³⁶ Ruby Richardson, "She Remembers Life on the Rainey Estate," Union County Heritage Museum Archives and Special Collections, Union County, Mississippi.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Er M. Shelley, *Hunting Big Game with Dogs in Africa* (Columbus, Mississippi: Beckett, 1924), 158.

Rainey spoke of these workers, and how Rainey would give big dinners and invite those who lived on his farm to be part of the celebrations he would host.³⁹

Rainey chose Mississippi because he liked the location and the ability to buy thousands of acres of hunting grounds. He hosted hunters and other big name hunting games on his land, as well as trained, bred, and sold his Mississippi hounds to other hunters around the world. Rainey was exceptionally talented at training dogs; because of this talent, he was elected President of the National Foxhound Club.⁴⁰ The club was planning to meet in Cotton Plant for the foxhound trials when Rainey unexpectedly died.⁴¹

Foxhound hunter George Garrett records in his book *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds* about the adventures of his time with Rainey in Mississippi. He stated, “On my arrival I discovered an assembly of fifty hunters representing many states.”⁴² These men were given access to lavish food and living quarters. Rainey commissioned a chef from the Peabody Hotel in Memphis to come down and provide the food. The Peabody Hotel was considered one of the finest hotels in the south,⁴³ and Rainey was sure to provide the best for his guests at Tippah Lodge. Garrett continued, “When Belshazzar was king of ancient Babylon the sumptuous feast, he gave could not have excelled the elaborate dining program served to Rainey’s invited hunting guests during the foxhound trials.”⁴⁴ Apparently one of the dishes served was peacock livers boiled in champagne.⁴⁵ At the Rainey hotel, Rainey served the finest food known in the area. The

³⁹ Ruby Richardson, “She Remembers Life on the Rainey Estate,” Union County Heritage Museum Archives and Special Collections, Union County, Mississippi.

⁴⁰ Brown, *History of Tippah County*, 305.

⁴¹ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 147.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ “Learn More About One of the Most Iconic Historic Hotels in Downtown Memphis,” <https://www.peabodymemphis.com/history>.

⁴⁴ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 148.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

menu consisted of dishes such as, “Calf’s liver, Hamburger Steak, Shrimp Salad Bowl, Top Sirloin Butt, Fillet Mignon.”⁴⁶ These fine foods provided by Rainey for his friends and guests helped to make Rainey even more of a local legend.

The legends that Rainey left in Tippah County have echoed through the local newspapers and oral history of the area since Rainey’s death. Talk consisted of stories as wild as the fact that Rainey never died of that his ghost still walks around the old estate grounds. Rumors also abound about his plane that he flew both in war and in peace. George Garrett backs up the rumors in his book about Rainey flying his plane over enemy lines in World War 1⁴⁷. One local newspaper clipping states that Rainey’s servants would all run to greet him as he landed his plane in Cotton Plant.⁴⁸ As the years passed, Rainey's legacy lasted in Mississippi, but not so much in other parts of the world where he was involved.

Rainey’s life depicts an important part of history that scholars may have overlooked. His involvement in various aspects of history that took place throughout his lifetime, show the importance of Rainey as a historical topic. One of the areas in which Rainey was involved was that of World War 1 and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

The historiography of World War 1 has been limited to why the war started and a focus on key battles. Minimal research has been conducted on other World War 1 topics until modern day. Recently more research has been done on the Eastern front of the war, race and war relations, and other topics that expand World War 1 research. One of the best books written for a concise history of World War I is Hew Strachan’s *The First World War*. Outlining the history of the war, this book gives a brief overview of what was happening in the world. Adding to the

⁴⁶ “Rainey Hotel and Coffee Shop,” Union County Heritage Museum.

⁴⁷ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 167.

⁴⁸ Bill Miles, “The Mysterious Paul J. Rainey,” The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

lacking historiography, Strachan gathers information about the war to present history filling in gaps that have been left behind in previous histories. One of the earliest works was *Politicians and the War 1914-1918* by Lord Beaverbrook. Focusing on the political side of things Beaverbrook follows the tradition of focusing on why the war started and the politics of the European countries involved. With the changes in the world, the focus of political structures and how the war started is the main coverage that histories have focused on until recently. Recent research was conducted on race and published in *Race Empire and First World War Writing*. This research opened a new wave of interest in topics related to World War One and how the war affected people groups and instituted change in Europe.⁴⁹ While Rainey was heavily involved in the European and Asian theater, he also had a hand in the African theater.

African history is somewhat sparse and still many areas that are yet to be explored. One of the biggest historical studies for Africa is that of Kenya. Kenya was a place for hunters and others to gather in the early 20th century and many people made a difference in the world over there. The history of hunting in Kenya has been left untouched in various aspects. Even though the rich and famous made their way to Kenya for hunting, the history there has yet to be fully uncovered. One important book for big game hunting history is *White Hunters* which covered the history of hunting and the key players. There is still much to be uncovered on big game hunting.

Rainey chose to spend his time and effort in the great state of Mississippi. Known in history as a key player in the Civil War, Native American history, as well as music and racial divides, the state of Mississippi has a past like very few other states in the United States. Places like Natchez, Biloxi, and Tupelo have been around for centuries and helped shape Mississippi into what it is as a state today. When Rainey chose Cotton Plant, Mississippi, he was looking for

⁴⁹ Heather Jones, "Historiographical Review: As the Century Approaches: The Regeneration of First World War Historiography," *The Historical Journal*, September 2013, 857-878.

land and hunting grounds, but years after his death, Mississippi can link economic success back to the money that Rainey pumped into the state. Mississippi history is covered in various ways, but the earliest histories covered early explorations in the state and people such as Hernando DeSoto. *The Annotated Pickett's History of Alabama: And Incidentally of Georgia and Mississippi, from the Earliest Period* was the first major history written in 1851. Most of the history that was written about Mississippi ended up being after the Civil War. The focus was on the losses that Mississippi endured, carpetbaggers, and other morale killers throughout the state.

Silent film has recently become more of an intriguing phenomenon here in the modern age. The history of silent films has been a long time coming but is slowly making progress. In the 1980's there was a small rush of historical analysis on silent films and their impact with books like *The Parade Goes By*, but not many topics were covered in silent film until more recently. There has been a movement in the film industry to recover lost films and release films to the public. Modern history has sought to look for ways in which silent films broke the barriers of society and laid out new forms of entertainment as never before seen. Written in 1998, *American Silent Film* has been noted as one of the best surveys of silent film in the modern day. The rise of interest in silent film has helped to gain more historiography for the silent film genre.

The primary sources for Paul J. Rainey are sparse but can be found mainly in *The New York Times* of the early twentieth century. While no single source focuses directly on his life and accomplishments, there are sources that directly relate to him and certain aspects of his life. His time in Africa, his time operating a camera, and his time serving during World War 1 are all covered in *The New York Times*.

The main books involving the biographical details of Rainey come from various sources and places covering all sorts of topics in which Rainey was involved. With Rainey's hunting

White Hunters presents the history of African hunters who flooded the open plains of Africa during the early 20th Century. Covering a wide range of people and places, Brian Herne tells the tales of African Hunters. Pulling from first-hand accounts and researching local African history, Herne brings alive the world in which these men lived and hunted. Each story is filled with uncertainty and excitement and read as a true-life adventure. Searching a time period that is clouded by more recent events, Herne helps to further the historiography of hunters in Africa. Within his book, he covers Rainey as a second character, but advances Rainey's historiography through the eyes of others. While the men who hunted with Rainey received the preference, Rainey's stories live on through the work of Brian Herne.

While Rainey as a big game hunter was respected, and he was an absolute hunting legend in Tippah County, Mississippi. *The Story of Tippah County Mississippi: The First Century* was written by a local historian who collected local information about Tippah County, Mississippi. The colorful past of Tippah County is discussed through legends and facts. Judge Andrew Brown spent years gathering information and stories to compile his history. Writing about the first century of Tippah County, Brown provides true accounts of locals and how they were impacted by those around them. Using local papers, deeds to land, and other items, Andrew Brown adds to the biographical details of Tippah County and Paul J. Rainey.

While a legend in Tippah County, Mississippi, he was also well known in the early film industry. *The War, The West, and the Wilderness* gives an overview of silent film and the history of how film was created and eventually became what it is today. Starting with World War I, Kevin Brownlow covers cinematic history from the early stages. This book covers historiography of early film and the technology changes that were made with each new era and experiment. The technology changes included cameras, film, and the people behind them.

Brownlow takes readers through history revealing previously unknown or researched information to write a well-balanced history about early film. Rainey was a key player in early film and is mentioned in Brownlow's book. Using magazines, newspapers, and other artifacts related to film, Brownlow's book details what few other books cover with film history.

Film took Rainey several places, but one exciting adventure was his spy mission into Russia. *America's Siberian Adventure* is a firsthand account of the American experience in Russia in 1918. General Graves outlines his time in Russia and shares what life was like for the Americans and others involved in the Siberian Adventure. Rainey was working as a spy during this time and his accounts line up with Graves's account. Graves sought to write an account and give historians a firsthand look at what was occurring, troop movements, and how the American public perceived post World War I Russia. In a difficult situation, Graves did what he could to follow his orders, but also kept under wraps everything that was unfolding.

Part of Rainey's wealthy life is depicted in a book on the life of Eleonora Sears: *Prides Crossing: The Unbridled Life and Impatient Times of Eleonora Sears*. This book presents the early 20th century American times through the eyes of a woman that Rainey once dated. Eleonora was ahead of her times with women's sports, rights, and had the attention of the press with her exorbitant behavior. As a swashbuckling woman who rolled up her sleeves to play tennis - a man's game, Eleonora caught the eye of Rainey and other men of the day. Explaining her life and times, Peggy Franck provides readers historiography of events and lifestyles in the early 20th century for those who had money and fame. This book portrays what life was like for the wealthy and helps readers to understand the history of a time period in which Rainey lived.

Rainey's time in Africa has the most sources available. His friends sought to memorialize his life by writing about his hunting expeditions and the accomplishments for which he was

known. His friend Er M. Shelley wrote about their hunts together in Africa, in *Hunting Big Game with Dogs in Africa*. His book examines their time together and focuses on Er M. Shelley's experience training the dogs used to hunt lions. Shelley's previous book was *Twentieth Century Bird Dog Training*, in which he outlines how to handle dogs and train them for bird hunting. Shelley's book on Rainey's time in Africa and the training of the dogs to hunt lions is a valuable source nonetheless, as it is one-of-its-kind, and a foundation to the biographical details of Paul J. Rainey's life.

Rainey's other friend, George J. Garrett, mentions Rainey in three chapters of his book *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*. In the back of his book Garrett also discusses big game hunting with Rainey and covers some of Rainey's adventures in the Great War. Garrett details more stories about Rainey's life than does Shelley, but it is far removed from Rainey's death - written thirty years after Rainey died. Stating in his book, "The psychology of Paul Rainey reflected a spiritual background ... differentiating between right and wrong. [He] was a mosaic of talents that reflected his versatile charms ... unpolluted on its mission to the sea. The noble heart of this sportsman pulsated so graciously with the milk of human kindness ... in [the] total round up [of his characteristics] reflect[s] a model of God's noblest work."⁵⁰ Garrett also shared details on Rainey's accomplishments in the Arctic, in Africa, and in other parts of the world. Garrett gives detail to Rainey's big game hunting and photographs. Since Garrett spent time with Rainey and heard first-hand stories of Rainey's time in the Great War and in Africa, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds* is an excellent source on Rainey.

Teddy Roosevelt's book *African Game Hunting*, while never mentioning Rainey, gives a view of hunting in Africa and what life was like for those in the bush hunting big game. Edmund

⁵⁰ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Dogs and Hounds*, 164.

Heller used his book *Life-Histories of African Game Animals* to detail the hunting trips with Roosevelt and Rainey. In this book Heller provides scientific details of African animals. Rainey's time in Africa is also spoken of in Judy Aldrick's book *Northrup* only once, but she recognizes the impact that Rainey had on African hunting and wildlife filming. Roosevelt was the first to take big game hunting to the big screen with film and publicity, but Rainey took the audience that Roosevelt gained and expanded that audience to include everyday people. Rainey outspent and outperformed Roosevelt in various ways throughout their parallel careers.

Multiple books grant readers an idea of big game hunting, one of them being Llewelyn Powys's book *Black Laughter*. Powys details his life in Africa and mentions the importance of Rainey to the colony of British East Africa. Another African writer, H. K. "Pop" Binks mentioned Rainey in *African Rainbow*, which covers his filming expeditions. Lastly, Rainey is mentioned in Carl Akeley's book, *In Brightest Africa* where Akeley discusses Rainey's adventures with Akeley in Africa. Rainey's historiography within big game hunting is abundant and accessible.

Rainey's time in Africa is also mentioned in several periodicals and local stories. *The Outlook Magazine* from 1923 contains a photograph of Rainey with an African animal; the writer also touches on Rainey's experience as a captain in the British army in British East Africa, and how Rainey chased the Germans out of the British territories.⁵¹ Rainey's time in Africa was not only spent in big game hunting and chasing Germans, but also in filming.

Film in the early twentieth century was a new phenomenon. Paul J. Rainey was one of the first to take his camera to Africa and film the wildlife. Because of his filming and the success of his first major film across the nation, Rainey is remembered as a trailblazer in wildlife

⁵¹ "The Career of an Outdoors Man" *New Outlook*, March 1923, 171-172.

filmmaking.⁵² His moving pictures opened the world to a new type of exciting film and inspired filmmakers for generations. *The Bowery Boys* provide Rainey space in their magazine concerning his “bloody blockbuster” and how his movie changed the industry.⁵³ His achievements were discussed in local papers, across *The New York Times*, and even in magazines. George Garrett mentions going to see the films with his brother in *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*.⁵⁴ Author Jean Hartley mentions Rainey in a couple of pages in his book *Africa’s Big Five and Other Wildlife Filmmakers*, where he detailed how Rainey’s film inspired others to film their own wildlife experiences. Rainey’s influence can be seen in wildlife filmmaking, bringing exotic animals to life for the everyday person. Another book, *Environment and History: The Taming of Nature in the USA and South Africa* gives Rainey credit for his film and recognizes the impact his film had on the future of other wildlife films. *Reel Nature: America’s Romance with Wildlife on Film* mentions the influence that Rainey had on other early day wildlife filmmakers. Those in wildlife filmmaking recognize Rainey as the leader in the industry, and as the one who started it all. *The War, The West, and the Wilderness*, offers Rainey credit for his film as well, but also mentions the camera men that worked alongside Rainey, specifically Carl Akeley and the film’s distributor Carl Laemmle, who started Universal Studios with the profit from Rainey’s wildlife film.⁵⁵ Martin and Osa Johnson made mention of Rainey in their book *I Married Adventure* and he is further detailed in their biography *They Married Adventure*. His influence on their work was massive. The impact of Rainey’s film has been

⁵² “Scene from the Paul J. Rainey African Hunt Pictures,” *Morning Enterprise*, December 22, 1912.

⁵³ “Rainey’s African Hunt: A Bloody 1912 Movie Blockbuster,” *The Bowery Boys*, September 7, 2012.

⁵⁴ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 147.

⁵⁵ *Carl Laemmle*, directed by James L. Freedman (Blind Date Productions, 2018).

recognized in numerous books, magazines, and is his most recognized accomplishment in history.⁵⁶

While hunting and wildlife are Rainey's top history memories with the easiest resources to find and document, Rainey had other accomplishments documented in local newspapers. Within local history in Cotton Plant, Mississippi, the newspapers are rampant with articles on his life for those seeking to understand who he was and all that he accomplished.⁵⁷ One local history book, *History of Tippah County Mississippi: The First Century* gives an entire section to the Rainey Estate and the life of Paul J. Rainey. Another local history book that mentions Rainey is *Images of America: Tippah County* and the images surrounding his influence include his Tippah Lodge, hunting expeditions, as well as some of the locals like May Peters Graham. Local newspapers, magazines, and even students seek to memorialize and document his accomplishments locally and around the world. Local museums like the Union County Heritage Museum, the Tippah County Library, and Blue Mountain College Archives, collect many of the written articles about him for public consumption. The Union County Heritage Museum showcases an entire exhibit on Rainey, including some of the animals he hunted. They also have a collection of ten binders containing personal papers and receipts of Rainey. These personal papers include his dealings with dogs, horses, and other animals collected either for himself or for hunting purposes. Rainey's mistress left handwritten notes about Rainey and his time at Tippah Lodge. She wrote about how he could hunt one day in the Arctic and then be in the jungles the next.⁵⁸ Also within the papers were descriptions of Rainey - his physical appearance,

⁵⁶ Tina Balio, ed. *The American Film Industry* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), 156.

⁵⁷ The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

⁵⁸ Paul J. Rainey Papers, Union County Heritage Museum Archives and Special Collections.

his character, and what locals thought of him. Union County Heritage Museum has worked hard to preserve the life and legacy of Paul J. Rainey.

Another local place is the Pink Palace Museum in Memphis, which had a section of the museum devoted to Rainey's hunting trophies and taxidermy collection. The Pink Palace Museum has since lost most of their Rainey collection to time and other factors. The Wonders of Wildlife Museum in Springfield, Missouri, has the old Head and Horns Museum from the Bronx Zoo collection in which is showcased Rainey's hunting trophies. In Ripley, Mississippi, not too far from Cotton Plant - where Rainey lived - locals have writings and printed information about Paul J. Rainey. From videos, pamphlets, and some of Rainey's own papers, the Ripley Library has preserved his memory. Fortunately, local history and writings have kept his memory alive to this day through museums and libraries.

The local history that preserves Paul J. Rainey's memory leaves out some of his lesser-known accomplishments. A local newspaper might mention his time in World War I, but the sources that provide in-depth details are few and far between.⁵⁹ Betty Miller Unterberger mentions "The Rainey Report" in her book *The United States, Revolutionary Russia, and the Rise of Czechoslovakia*. Her book covers a history of the United States largely forgotten about by modern-day Americans. "The Rainey Report" outlines the actions of the Czech Legion along the Trans-Siberian Railroad in Russia. Rainey reported the movements of the troops and what life was like for those on their way out of Russia in his own *General Observations on the Situation in Russia*, which Unterberger supports in her book.⁶⁰ Another source that mentions Rainey's time in Russia is *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. This source specifically states that

⁵⁹ The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

⁶⁰ *Notes Concerning Siberia* (1918) in the Wichita State University digital collections, accessed September 3, 2021, <https://cdm15942.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15942coll45/id/414/rec/1>.

Rainey was on a secret mission in Siberia.⁶¹ Rainey himself wrote about his time in Russia and his *General Observations on the Situation in Russia* gives historical context to Rainey's time in Russia. The resources touching on the Czech Legion in Russia paint a picture of the American intervention into Russia during 1918. One important source on this topic is General Graves' book *America's Siberian Adventure*, in which he presents a detailed report of the time that America spent in Russia and seeks to understand why America intervened in Russia. A great resource on photography and Russia during 1918 is the book by Carl Ackerman *Trailing the Bolshevik: Twelve Thousand Miles with the Allies in Siberia*. Providing a detailed account of Ackerman's time in Russia helps to paint the picture of what life would have been like for Rainey along the railroad. Diving into why the United States was in Russia is another book, *Wolfhounds and Polar Bears: The American Expeditionary Force in Siberia, 1918-1920*. All of these resources offer readers a snapshot of the world in which Rainey found himself in late 1918 and early 1919 as he traveled in Russia along the Trans-Siberian Railroad.

During World War I, Rainey was a photographer for various groups. Whether that be for the Red Cross in France, the Czech Legion in Russia, or just himself as he photographed the areas around him, Rainey's photographs are an important part of his story.⁶² Sources are abundant on photography during the Great War. One source is *Shooting the Great War* in which the author provides a detailed account of his time in Europe with a camera. This firsthand account gives perspective on how cameras were used to document what was happening around

⁶¹ Various Authors, *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography Volume 19*, 144-145.

⁶² Jun 1917 - May 1919. *Correspondence and reports to and from Major-General John J. Pershing*. Available through: Adam Matthew, Marlborough, Medical Services and Warfare, http://www.medicalservicesandwarfare.amdigital.co.uk/Documents/Details/hoover_xx482_bx70_fl11 [Accessed October 04, 2021]. Rainey, Paul J. *Photographs from Paul Rainey's Asiatic Expedition (1918-1919)*, in the Wichita State University digital collections, accessed September 3, 2021. <https://cdm15942.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15942coll45/id/375/rec/7>.

those involved in The Great War. Covering not just cameras, but also life for those who wanted to carry cameras and the dangers involved in the process. Another source is *A Doctor in the Great War* which paints a picture of Great War photography, and how one doctor used his camera on the battlefield. Using images and personal letters, the book tells the story of how a camera influenced the war and documented important battles and events through a lens. Both of these sources give readers an image of what life was like for Rainey on the battlefield with a camera. Another source that mentions Rainey directly is the book, *History of American Field Service in France, Friends of France, 1914-1917*. Gathering personal letters, stories, and poems, this book is a primary source of Great War information. The detailed documents show the harsh conditions and rough atmosphere that those involved in battle experienced. Together, these sources piece together what Rainey experienced on the battlefields of France.

Peering into Rainey's time in Europe, he is documented in the letters an ambulance driver writing home to family. The writer of those letters had his letter published: *With a Military Ambulance in France*. This resource contains information about Paul J. Rainey and his time as the head of the ambulance drivers. Another source that notes Rainey's time on the Western Front is *America in the War: The Vanguard of American Volunteers*. From this source come the letters that the soldier from the Harvard section wrote. Primary sources like this help to create Rainey's story in Western Europe during 1914. *Gentlemen Volunteers. The Harvard Volunteers of World War I*, and *Eyewitnesses to the Great War* both give an account of what Rainey experienced in Europe as an ambulance driver, and as he traveled by ship to Europe. While these sources make no mention of Rainey, they do give an overview of life on the front for those volunteers who helped with driving ambulances.

Newton Baker's *Why We Went to War* outlays the policy and story behind why the United States entered into the war. The United States saw the Great War as a European conflict that they had no need to involve themselves in. Baker gives the reasons that the United States ultimately entered the war. The sentiment in America was divided and one book that covers it well is *Over Here*. *Over Here* explains what Americans thought of the Great War and how they influenced the political decisions of staying out of the European conflict. These sources show the times in which Rainey lived and the American sentiment during the European conflict known as the Great War.

Local newspapers from the Blue Mountain College Archive cite Rainey flying a plane in Europe during World War I.⁶³ There are also reports that Rainey used his plane in Africa as well.⁶⁴ One local paper mentioned how Rainey worked alongside the British to remove the Germans from Kenya. The Germans were destroying Rainey's hunting lands and caused him to join the British in order to remove them from his land. Another article mentions that Rainey chased down the Nazis who were blowing up railroads.⁶⁵ Doing further research, several magazines reference Rainey as a captain in the British army who helped to push the Germans out of British East Africa.⁶⁶ Rainey's time in Africa during World War I is sparsely documented, but resources surrounding that time period fill in the gaps that are missing with Rainey's own accounts.

While on the hunt for sources and facts about Rainey, the biographical details are sometimes hard to follow, due to the legends and local stories which have added fiction to fact.

⁶³ The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

⁶⁴ Bill Miles, "The Mysterious Paul J. Rainey," The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

⁶⁵ The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi. This story is untrue, as Rainey died in 1923 before the Nazis were blowing up any railroads anywhere in the world.

⁶⁶ Paul J. Rainey Papers, Union County Heritage Museum Archives and Special Collections.

Time affects what parts of history are remembered correctly and which ones are in need of revision. There remains a vast amount of unstudied material that can help to paint an accurate picture of his life. All that is mentioned in these local papers are Rainey's time as an ambulance driver and his time in Africa. There are no secondary sources that have been found which mention Rainey and his time in Europe. Forgotten to history, his service is not mentioned in World War I books, or resources written in the modern day. Encompassing the historiography of Rainey and his service is limited to archives and local newspapers as well as local history.

While Rainey's life was just a short span of forty-six years, he was an experienced traveler, big game hunter, and World War I serviceman. His life is memorialized by a few of his friends and local papers, but much of his life is hidden deep in archives or lost to time. The historiography that depicts his life is that which paints the bigger picture of the times in which Paul J. Rainey lived. He did go on to influence wildlife filmmakers, big game hunters, and is mentioned in books, magazines, and histories, but only in passing. Not one resource details his life in total and not one resource shows his prominence during World War I and his service overseas.

Another part of his life lacking in biographical details are his Arctic, Asiatic, and African expeditions⁶⁷ in which he helped to collect animals, hides, and other wildlife paraphernalia for the American Museum of Natural History. While sources can be found written by Rainey himself,⁶⁸ no major secondary sources give credence to Rainey and his expeditions. His time in the Arctic was documented by *The New York Times* and the *Cosmopolitan* magazine of 1910. Pulling from those resources, we see that Rainey spent time with Wilfred Grenfell in Labrador.

⁶⁷ Paul J. Rainey, "The Royal Sport of Hounding Lions," *The Outing Magazine*, November 1911.

⁶⁸ "Raising Of Horses Thrives in Africa: Paul J. Rainey Tells of Value of Thoroughbred as An Army Mount -- Races Popular," *New York Times*, October 08, 1916.

Grenfell wrote several books about his time as a missionary, such as *Forty Years for Labrador* and *A Labrador Doctor: The Autobiography of Wilfred Thomas Grenfell*. Grenfell's books mention Rainey and his visit to Grenfell. These books also present to readers an image of life in the colder regions of the world.

Working with noteworthy people like Edmond Heller, Carl Akeley, J. C. Hemment, and others, Rainey established himself prominently during his lifetime. Known well enough across the world to have his obituary published in world-wide magazines, newspapers, and other prominent places, it is regrettable that the biographical details of his life was never recognized and established. Few pieces of history remain in the public eye, but with knowledge and research they can be found.

After his death, Rainey was memorialized in various ways. One such way was with the Paul J. Rainey Wildlife Reserve. Because of this land donation to the Audubon Society, Rainey plays a role in some of the historiography of the Audubon Society and the impact that his posthumous land donation had on establishing a place for wildlife refuge. While only a small portion of the Rainey historiography, this encapsulates further the legacy of Rainey and his family.

One unusual aspect about Paul J. Rainey is the recognition he received not just in history, but also in pieces of literature. William Faulkner in his book *The Reivers* mentions Rainey as a character in the story. Faulkner writes, "Mr. Paul Rainey just a few miles down Colonel Sartoris's railroad toward Jefferson - hound men both who (I suppose) among these mere pedigreed pointers and setters, called themselves slumming; the vast rambling hotel booming then, staffed and elegant, the very air itself suave and murmurous with money. Littered with colored ribbons and cluttered with silver cups." While forgotten by modern historians, he is

remembered in literature thanks to William Faulkner. Another example of literature is the poem “Priscilla” written by the Canadian poet Robert William Service who worked with Rainey on the battlefields of France. Service’s poem memorialized the work that Rainey accomplished on the battlefield of France while driving an ambulance.

Another important part of Rainey’s historiography is oral history from those who lived near his Tippah Lodge and those who interacted with either him, or people close to him. Within the local archives are handwritten and typed material presenting the local people’s thoughts on Rainey. Local oral history is helpful in gaining a perspective of the local historiography and the oral stories of those who never gained his attention but lived close enough to gain a firsthand account of his life at Tippah Lodge. All of these stories help portray a picture of Paul J. Rainey through the eyes of the locals.

As time marches on, the sources and the histories fade. People are slowly forgotten, and those that made splashes in the world in their time seem to fade away. Addressing the history of Paul J. Rainey and gathering the resources on his life and gaining a perspective of who he was, his accomplishments, and his place in the greater history of the world requires the careful investigation of history, local newspapers, friends that knew him and wrote about him, as well as the sources that document his time traveling the world and his time serving in World War I.

As noted, Paul J. Rainey lived a storied life and was able to accomplish noteworthy ambitions. Hunting big game across the world, taking photographs and film reels, serving in the Great War, and becoming a local legend in his claimed state of Mississippi, Rainey influenced not just the United States but the world. He traveled across continents and sought to bring parts of the world to those who had never seen it through his camera and big game specimens. While mostly forgotten to time, Paul J. Rainey took traveling and adventure to new levels that had

never been reached before. He was a pioneer in the time of moving pictures, flying in planes, and automobiles in new roads. His pioneering spirit paved the way for other adventurers to further explore the Arctic and Africa.

While Big Game Hunting is well documented in books by Teddy Roosevelt, Er M. Shelley, Northrup, and others, the story of Paul J. Rainey is largely unpublished. In his time, as seen through many local newspapers of the day, Paul J. Rainey was almost a household name. When he died in 1923, his death was recorded in numerous major worldwide papers of the day.⁶⁹ After his death, his sister Grace Rainey Rogers sought to leave his legacy through various means,⁷⁰ but over time he was forgotten. Paul J. Rainey became more of a local legend in Cotton Plant, Mississippi, where his Tippah Lodge was located, than the historical figure that he is. While film and Big Game Hunting were his most widely acclaimed activities in newspapers, his time in World War I was one of service and dedication to a cause he fiercely believed. Much of his service has gone unnoticed and unrecognized by historians. Serving on both the Western front and the Eastern front, Rainey played an important role in World War I. Traveling across the continents, Paul J. Rainey left his impact on many corners of the world, but he has become a legendary figure in his hometown of Cotton Plant, Mississippi.

The Rainey Estate in Cotton Plant, Mississippi, is admired by locals, and can still be seen from the highway nearby his house. While privately owned, the estate is of definite interest to those who have heard of Rainey or have local connections to him. Within his estate, Rainey had many amenities that people today only dream of. His well-stocked polo barn hosted polo games, and his land hosted fox hunting events. Having an estate of this sort in Mississippi was the talk

⁶⁹ Leslie Criss, "Mississippi Millionaire Adventurer Dies off of African Coast," *Daily Journal* October 2008.

⁷⁰ Paul J. Rainey Wildlife Sanctuary

of the town for those who lived nearby. Rainey's many guests intrigued the locals and led to newspaper articles about him and his estate.⁷¹

The importance of Rainey's life can be seen throughout the sources documenting his life. His adventurous, dangerous, outrageous life showed the abilities of the human man and the abilities of someone willing to test the limit of humankind. Traveling from place to place, Rainey went across the world in pursuit of adventure. With his money and his connections, he went on many adventures that people only dream of being a part. His travels across the continents, while lost to time and history, are important to the scientific world, the political world, and the greater story of mankind here on this earth.

⁷¹ Ibid.

CHAPTER 1: Big Game Hunting

“Wouldn’t it be royal sport to hunt African lions and leopards with these dogs?”¹

Paul J. Rainey was a big game hunter in Africa and around the world. As a rival to Teddy Roosevelt, Rainey and other big game hunters sought to bring the world of big game hunting to unprecedented numbers and challenges. Experimenting with all sorts of wild ideas and yielding success in a way that intrigued the public, Rainey was able to further publicize the sport in Africa. Big game hunting requires stealth and tenacity, but also a level of bravery due to the swift loss of life if something goes wrong. While Roosevelt brought big game hunting to the big screen and the public through his African adventures, Rainey seized what Roosevelt did and expanded it. Rainey outspent and outdid Roosevelt by a wide margin and sought to try new experiments which led to the most successful hunting ever done or ever done since.

Big Game Hunting, especially in Africa, was a pastime for the rich and famous in the early twentieth century. Paul J. Rainey was able to afford the time and the money necessary to hunt for mammals of varying sizes and caliber. Not only did he hunt in Africa, but also in the Arctic regions. While hunting was his main goal, he also brought back wild animals for the public to behold. His hunting expertise was celebrated within the local newspapers of the day. Rainey positioned himself for adventure. He made plenty of money and worked with those willing to buy the animals he brought back or to buy the furs and other expensive items from the animals he hunted. Rainey was a larger-than-life big game hunter and brought to the public

¹ Shelley, *Hunting Big Game with Dogs in Africa*, 1.

animals and scenes that had only been read about in books. Starting in the Arctic, Rainey traveled around the world as a big game hunter and a respected American.

Paul J. Rainey, the big game hunter, financed his first major recorded trip in 1910. *The New York Times* announced that Rainey would be taking a hunting trip with Harry Whitney. This hunting trip would whet Rainey's appetite for adventure and big game hunting. Many more trips followed after his trip in 1910 as Rainey tried new techniques and adventures for big game hunting all across the world. With his wealth and status, Rainey was able to take his ideas into the heat of Africa, the cold of the Arctic, and many other places across the world.

Rainey's trip into the Arctic in 1910 was hailed by the local papers as a success. One of Rainey's major accomplishments while hunting was the capture of the polar bear, Silver King. Paul Rainey wrote the story himself in the December 1910 edition of the *Cosmopolitan* under the title "Bagging Arctic Monsters with Rope, Gun, and Camera."² Rainey mentioned that on this particular trip he reached the 79° parallel, which was 640 miles from the pole.³ His friend George J. Garrett tells part of the tale as well in his book *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds* stating that "Captain William Peary, Paul J. Rainey, and Doctor Cook are the three figures who undertook the perilous and freezing task of unfolding the secrets surrounding the North Pole."⁴ While on this adventure, Rainey captured Silver King and brought him back to the Bronx Zoo. Silver King was the largest polar bear ever seen.⁵ Rainey went to the Arctic with Captain Robert Bartlett who was the commander with Robert Peary. Robert Peary traveled north on expeditions desiring to reach the North Pole. Having departed in 1908, Peary once again was on his way to the famed

² Paul J. Rainey, "Bagging Arctic Monsters with Rope, Gun, and Camera," *Cosmopolitan*, December 1910, 91.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 262.

⁵ Ibid., 283.

Pole and on this trip was successful. Rainey's expedition included several fellow travelers who went with Peary in 1908. Rainey's goal was to bring back some of the big game alive and to take photographs.

Dr. Marius Johnson, who traveled with Rainey kept an extensive day-by-day journal of the expedition. His journal outlined the hunting numbers and what each day held, as well as some of the more intimate aspects of life on board the ship. His journal outlined what life was like for the men on the ship, including notes on the arguments between Rainey and Whitney. Dr. Johnson himself expressed his opinions on the trip in his journal and provided a more private perspective of what happened than the public account Rainey published. Both Rainey's account and Whitney's account present a full picture of the expedition and the big game hunting that took place.

Rainey's northern expedition was reported by *The New York Times* from start to finish. *The New York Times* reported: "Mr. Whitney together with Paul J. Rainey of Philadelphia and H. C. Inman of New York came on the *Beothic* and left for New York this afternoon."⁶ Rainey organized a trip with Captain Bob Bartlett, Dr. Marius Johnson, and Harry Whitney to go big game hunting in the Arctic. While hunting was their main goal, Rainey also sought to bring back live animals for the Bronx Zoo in New York City. The goal of the trip was purely hunting, and Rainey himself stated that he, "Merely [wanted] to visit the arctic with a well-equipped expedition in the hope that I might bring back alive some of the northern big game."⁷ Rainey and Whitney were well equipped for their trip and bought "bladder harpoons, shaft, and line[s]".⁸

⁶ "The Beothic at Boston: to Ship Supplies to Arctic Trip - Whitney to Sail June 20th," *The New York Times*, June 12, 1910.

⁷ Rainey, "Bagging Arctic Monsters with Rope, Gun, and Camera," *Cosmopolitan*, December 1910, 92.

⁸ Marius F. Johnston, *Diary of an Arctic Expedition*, Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives, Bowdoin College Library, Brunswick, Maine, 27.

Rainey left Boston Harbor on the 19th of June with a ship abundant in supplies that would last an entire year, as well as items to give to the Eskimos. Their ship, the *Beothic*, was built to withstand ice; *Beothic* could hit three feet of solid ice and go four knots an hour through it.⁹ From Boston to Greenland, Rainey and his crew stopped at Byron Bay, Labrador, and Turnavik. In Labrador, Rainey visited Wilfred Grenfell. Grenfell, a missionary in the cold Newfoundland area of Canada in the early 20th Century, was a doctor and sought to help the people around him get medical help and also find the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Grenfell was originally from England, had studied as a medical doctor, and moved to Labrador where there was little medical knowledge to minister to the people there. His basic medical treatments saved the lives of many locals. One such example was a boy with a toothache and a lopsided face due to lack of treatment. Stories such as these are examples of the love that Grenfell had for the people of Labrador. Rainey's ship stopped to see Grenfell and was noted by Grenfell himself.¹⁰ While only a brief mention, the question arises if Grenfell had any religious conversations with Rainey.

Another religious encounter was that with the Moravian missionaries. Rainey commented that the Moravian missionaries were surprised at how little ice there was during the time Rainey was making his way north. His companion wondered if the reason might have been due to the strong winds which moved the ice further north.¹¹ Trusting the Moravians to give him guidance, Rainey interacted with the missionaries, but only for information that was needed to navigate the icy waters. At one point during the journey after a stressful hunting night Rainey stated, "Well, boys here come some Eskimos... I'll bet they're going to church, and if they don't mind, I think

⁹ Rainey, "Bagging Arctic Monsters with Rope, Gun, and Camera," *Cosmopolitan*, December 1910, 92.

¹⁰ Wilfred Thomas Grenfell, *A Labrador Doctor: The Autobiography of Wilfred Thomas Grenfell* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923), 254.

¹¹ Rainey, "Bagging Arctic Monsters with Rope, Gun, and Camera," *Cosmopolitan*, December 1910, 94.

I'll join them. It's the first time in ten years, but well, I'll take a chance."¹² If Rainey was impacted by them, there is no evidence; one can rightly assume that God and religion was not a priority for Rainey or for those on Rainey's expedition to the North Pole.

By July 5th, the crew had passed the Arctic Circle and began shooting various game, from walrus to auk.¹³ Soon after passing the Arctic Circle though, they hit pan ice. Rainey describes the pan ice as "[A] process to which, however exciting it may be at first, one soon becomes accustomed to the point of irritation."¹⁴ The process is "jarring, lengthy, continuously monotonous, and altogether nerve racking."¹⁵ Finally, Rainey and his men decided they were stuck with nothing much they could do. Meanwhile, Rainey prepared for hunting, as it was a relief from being stuck. The next day, the crew used dynamite to free themselves.¹⁶

Rainey directed the boat toward some walrus sitting on an ice pan. His goal was to capture some of them to bring back to the United States. A secret of walrus hunting is that when you kill one it sinks, so Rainey and his men had to ensure that the walrus they shot would fall onto ice and not into the water. Rainey got tangled in a wire and managed to wrestle free just as he was about to go overboard, stating "It was an exciting moment."¹⁷ From there, Rainey and his men killed the walrus that nearly dragged him overboard, and also captured the two baby walrus.

As the weather began to change, the men headed back to the boat. Rainey speaks of the top of the world as a lonely and empty place and how all they could see was the ship's smoke

¹² "Paul J. Rainey Sportsman," Union County Historical Society Archives. Paul J. Rainey Papers Murray Collection 1, 2019.01.06.

¹³ Marius F. Johnston, *Diary of an Arctic Expedition*, Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives, Bowdoin College Library, Brunswick, Maine, 30-39.

¹⁴ Rainey, "Bagging Arctic Monsters with Rope, Gun, and Camera," *Cosmopolitan*, December 1910, 94.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

and scattered black dots of men, dogs, and flocks of birds. “Everywhere is stark white desolation; as far as the eye can see there is nothing but ridges and hummocks of glaring ice with narrow veins of black water between.”¹⁸ He describes the fog that rises and blocks the sun; “suddenly the world is covered in gray, and the sweat begins to freeze on your face.”¹⁹

As they continued northward, the crew arrived at Cape York on July 12th. Kap York, the official name, is on the northwestern side of Greenland. On the cape was an island colony of Eskimos to which Rainey’s men gave them gifts. Rainey was impressed with the people and with how they lived and worked, considering the conditions of the Arctic. On high alert for danger, they almost had a sixth sense; their physical abilities were more than what Rainey was used to within himself. These Eskimos ran after bears for hours, harpooning narwhals, and hauling out animals that were ten times their own weight. Rainey even noted the women were not “bad-looking”.

After leaving Cape York, Rainey continued northward to Etah - here they found the ruins of Dr. Cook’s igloo. The companion of Cook from the local village stood in the ruins for a photograph.²⁰ Dr. Cook had traveled north around the same time as Peary during the famed race to the North Pole. This race was hotly contested after it happened; rumors abounded speculating whether Cook had actually reached the true North Pole. Rainey reported in his firsthand account that no one had entered the igloo of Dr. Cook, and that Dr. Cook’s papers were not disturbed. Rainey stated: “I refrained from touching or opening it.”²¹ According to Rainey, it was not his intention to get involved in the controversy. While Rainey stated publicly in his report about

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰ Marius F. Johnston, *Diary of an Arctic Expedition*, Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives, Bowdoin College Library, Brunswick, Maine.

²¹ Rainey, “Bagging Arctic Monsters with Rope, Gun, and Camera,” *Cosmopolitan*, December 1910, 97.

leaving the igloo alone, his companion Dr. Marius Johnson had a differing perspective. Dr. Jonson stated in his journal, “I should have had to go with Rainey who wanted to open it and photograph the contents. This Whitney objected to. Then too Rainey did not know of the removal of the contents by Ou’ta’.”²²

Since the ice was thick, Rainey and his crew decided to stop and do some hunting. The big game was plentiful, and Rainey sought to hunt as well as bring back live animals for the various museums and zoos he worked for. Rainey’s desire to keep animals alive was a source of contention throughout the entire trip. According to Dr. Marius Johnson, “This morning there was trouble. I was not present at the beginning, which was when the three were forward to shoot the first bear. Now Rainey says that he is going to manage the Esquimeau himself and he wants Whitney to leave it to him.”²³ While there were tensions on board the ship, Rainey was still able to gather what he needed for his museum and zoo collections.

At one point, a native named Kulitinguah, helped them find a bear. Rainey wanted to take it alive. They chased her around an ice pan until Bartlett urged Rainey to get the rope around her, and they played a game of sorts for about thirty minutes working to get the noose over her head. Once that was achieved, the polar bear pulled the boat near the edge of the ice and tore at the rope around her neck. From there, they maneuvered the boat back into the water and away from the ice. The bear dove back into the water and came up on the other side. This frightened a passenger so much so that he dropped everything and ran to the other side as the others laughed at him. By this point, the bear and her captors were both exhausted. Rainey then hoisted her on board and lowered her into the hatch. Everyone calmed down until they realized they needed the

²² Marius F. Johnston, *Diary of an Arctic Expedition*, Miscellaneous Manuscript Collection, George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives, Bowdoin College Library, Brunswick, Maine, 102.

²³ *Ibid.*, 162.

coal down there in the hatch, and no one wanted to go get it. After struggling through possible solutions, those on board finally knocked the bear out and went down for the coal. The morning of the thirty first of August, the crew began to make their way back home. The grand adventure of big game hunting in the Arctic was nearly over, but the story continued with the captured bear, Silver King.

On September 6th, 1910, *The New York Times* not only reported the return of Rainey and his crew, but also the fact that they were bringing live bears. They reported, “Mr. Rainey is to present two polar bears to the Bronx Zoo in New York and perhaps some of the other animals.”²⁴ These polar bears, upon arrival at the New York Harbor, quickly became the talk of the town. Within a few days of Rainey’s ship sailing into the harbor, the decision of how to get Silver King to the zoo had to be made. *The New York Times* reported, “conquered only by chemicals the King was shoved into an empty cage in the lion’s Summer house.”²⁵ Another report stated that Rainey used chloroform to keep the bear intact until it arrived at the zoo. Rainey and Shelley, Rainey’s dog trainer, pulled the bear onto the back of a flatbed truck and took him to the zoo. “I think he [Shelley] rode on the back with a rag and a bottle of chloroform and Rainey drove.”²⁶ The nearly twenty-seven-mile drive left an adventure and whatever the actual adventure was, Rainey was able to get Silver King to the Bronx Zoo.

The entire Arctic adventure wetted Rainey’s appetite for more. While this was the first of his recorded and nationally reported adventures, Rainey would continue to hunt in other places around the world. Although he went to Africa, India, Mexico, and other places across the United

²⁴ “Rainey’s Live Bears Coming.; Arctic Hunter Has Two for Bronx Zoo - - Musk Oxen Aboard,” *The New York Times*, September 7, 1910.

²⁵ “Beat Fighting Bear with Ammonia Gun; Five Thousand Spectators see another Strenuous Battle in the Bronx Zoo,” *The New York Times*, September 25, 1910.

²⁶ Audwin McGee, “Paul J. Rainey, Just Down the Road,” *Sons of Savages*, June 10, 2011, <http://sonsofsavages.blogspot.com/2011/06/paul-j-rainey-just-down-road.html>.

States - Rainey's favorite place to hunt big game was in Africa. Big game hunting in the Arctic was a cold and lonely experience for the hunters; other places in the world offered warmer and more socially enjoyable experiences. One of those places was the wastelands of Africa.

Africa was an unexplored continent to the Western world until David Livingston ventured deep into Africa on missionary work. His explorations and notes enticed people to come see for themselves an uncharted land. Having died in 1873, Livingston left a legacy of new places to explore. Not too many years after his death, African big game hunting became a popular pastime. One of the most famous big game hunters was former American President Theodore Roosevelt.

When Theodore Roosevelt adventured on his African Safari in 1909, he sparked among Americans a desire for the exotic and the adventurous. Some Americans pursued that desire and became a part of the history that made the early twentieth century the golden age of African Safaris.²⁷ Roosevelt took with him photographers and filmmakers publicizing his safari and allowing the American public to also enjoy the adventures he was having through film. Rainey took the opportunity to finance his own African safari with cameramen and used some of the same talented cameramen and adventurers as Roosevelt did; Rainey, however, was younger and much more adventurous than Roosevelt. Rainey's dog trainer Er M. Shelley stated about him, "That man had a terrible driving urge, and he would not let anything stand in his way. He could only get it out of his system by galloping full tilt after a pack of hounds and he rode like a lunatic."²⁸

²⁷ Brian Herne, *White Hunters: The Golden Age of African Safaris* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1999), Title Page.

²⁸ "Lion Killer" Interview with Er M. Shelley, Union County Heritage Museum Archives.

Rainey was known for not just hunting animals but trapping them and bringing them back alive. His animals would go to the Bronx Zoo for the public to see. He would also hunt and kill animals and have his assistant Carl Akeley taxidermize them and then send them to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. From there, the animals went on display for the public to see. As Rainey's hunting skills continued to surmount, he brought back more and more specimens to museums with which he was connected. While he mainly worked with the American Museum of Natural History, he also had a hand in collecting specimens for the National Head and Horns Museum at the Bronx Zoo.

Big Game Hunting in Africa has been a part of the hunting world for years, but the early twentieth century saw an influx of American and British big game hunters. Big Game hunting was difficult and dangerous. Carl Akeley, father of modern taxidermy, recounted in his book about becoming ill and being unable to hunt for a month before continuing on with his elephant hunt.²⁹ Fritz Schindler was killed in the line of action on Rainey's crew; while trying to film charging animals.³⁰ Fritz fell out of the saddle trying to get a lion to charge the camera. With his rifle in his hands, he crouched as the lion charged at him. The lion straddled Fritz and tore into his stomach. "Fritz rolled in the dust in agony as a solution of permanganate of potash crystals was dissolved in water and squirted into the gaping stomach wounds and torn bowels."³¹ Nearly two days later, Fritz died.

Another companion of Rainey's, Carl, also died while working with Rainey. As Binks described him, "I remember Carl - I almost said loveable Carl, for he endeared himself to

²⁹ Carl Akeley, *In Brightest Africa* (New York: Doubleday Page and Company, 1924), 146.

³⁰ Herne, *White Hunters: The Golden Age of African Safaris*, 92.

³¹ *Ibid.*

everyone with whom he came into contact.”³² Carl would return from hunts, “clothes torn, hair matted, shoes flopping around his ankles and a month’s accumulation of grime hiding his...Figure, but by evening he was clean... in facetious laughter dispelling the cares and worries of everyone else.”³³ Carl, having been trained by Rainey, was eager to go for a hunt. Having spotted a lion, Carl rode in all aglow ready to capture his first lion. As he moved closer, the lion sprung on Carl and struck him in the chest. Before Carl hit the ground, the lion seized him with his mouth and repeatedly tossed him into the air. Rainey grabbed his gun and charged toward the lion, but Carl was already too far gone. Too much damage was done to his internal organs, “and so debonair Carl went on his last adventure.”³⁴

Even Rainey himself ran into dangers while hunting for lions in Africa. On one occasion, Rainey noticed the dogs had cornered an animal of some sort in the bush. Uncertain of what the dogs had found, Rainey crept near on foot to see the commotion. Upon arrival, Rainey was unable to see the lion, but kept cautiously walking around the area. Seeing the flicker of ears, Rainey realized he was so close to the animal he was nearly touching it. He fired his gun into the lion and stated, “Gee... that was the nearest thing ever.”³⁵ After looking all over the area where Rainey had fired at the lion, there was no trace of a lion being there. Rainey knew he had fired and knew he had seen a lion, but where it was, no one had any idea. After some time, “there, on a shadowy ledge about thirty feet down was the motionless body of the lion.”³⁶ The unknowns of

³² Herbert Kay “Pop” Binks, *African Rainbow* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson Limited, 1961), 128.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Binks. *African Rainbow*, 130.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 114.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 115.

hunting in Africa and the easy mis-spotting of animals, made it a dangerous sport for all involved.³⁷

As dangerous as the sport was, there was something about Africa that intrigued the hunters. One hunter told a local, “the two sounds of Africa he loved the most were the wild whistle of this bird and the moaning of the wind through the ant-eaten thorn bushes of the Laikipia plains.”³⁸ Rainey said that Africa, “[Africa] is one of the most beautiful countries I have seen in my life. It was indeed a great surprise as I think you will see from the pictures.”³⁹ The vast wastelands and discovery of new places and animals led hunters deeper and deeper into Africa. The big game hunters sought to find rushes of adrenaline deep in the African brush.

Paul J. Rainey was a popular name among big game hunters in Africa. He is mentioned in various memoirs and notes from that time period. Llewelyn Powys dedicates an entire chapter in his book on stories in Africa with Rainey. Powys states how he can remember Rainey coming back from a hunt on his pony, “in all vigour of his prime, good-natured, insensitive, and with his mind as innocent of thought as any of the animals he hunted.”⁴⁰ Rainey lived a life mirroring that of Allan Quartermain, a fictional character in a book about white hunters. Quartermain’s description fits that of Rainey well: “courageous, sportsmanlike, respectful of game, and endowed with endurance, resourcefulness, and physical strength. He is the ideal gentleman hunter who transports the ethics of the English hunt to the African bush.”⁴¹

Rainey’s vigor and determination being perhaps too well-known, he struggled to find people to employ. Allen Black, one of his cameramen, backed out of an opportunity to work with

³⁷ Ibid., 113-115.

³⁸ Llewelyn Powys, *Black Laughter* (Bristol, England: Redcliffe, 1983), 165.

³⁹ “Paul V. (sic) Rainey’s South African Lecture” *The Motion Picture News* 1912, 16.

⁴⁰ Powys, *Black Laughter*, 162.

⁴¹ Pascal James Imperato and Eleanor M. Imperato, *They Married Adventure: The Wandering Lives of Martin and Osa Johnson* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 95.

Rainey. After hearing that Rainey wanted to film a charging lion, Black stated that he thought Rainey's plan suicidal. Despite his wild way of living and filming, Rainey was able to contract workers, albeit more locals to the hunting sites than those from other places.⁴²

Rainey took big game hunting closer to near death experiences and adventure; whether or not his goal was to outspend and outpace Roosevelt in his African travels cannot be known, but Rainey did indeed outperform the former President. While Roosevelt made the news reporters swarm his safari, Rainey took the Roosevelt hunts from safaris to action. Bringing along many men who traveled with Roosevelt, Rainey seemed to put up a competition to see who could go bigger and better. If there was any competition in his mind it was unknown, but clearly Rainey sought to outdo those who had gone before him. In essence, Rainey was preparing his own Wild West show with the money he had inherited from his father. According to his plan of spending over \$250,000 on his three-year expeditions, Rainey outspent Roosevelt. There is no evidence of whether or not Rainey was in competition with Roosevelt, but Rainey certainly outdid himself in the financial and adventurous areas of hunting. Along with Rainey came an assortment of people, hunting gear, and animals. He brought along his Mississippi bear-dogs and dog trainers, such as Er M. Shelley. His goal as stated in the *New York Times* was to bring back animals alive. Having been to Africa before, Rainey wanted to find exotic wildlife different from what had previously been hunted. He stated a desire to look for monkeys and birds and other creatures not normally seen or discussed in the literature and film of the day. Since Rainey contributed to American institutions such as the American Museum of Natural History, he was endorsed by them for these expeditions. Before he left on his adventure, Rainey made a large contribution (the largest up

⁴²Herne, *White Hunters: The Golden Age of African Safaris*, 85.

until that point) to the American Museum of Natural History to help pay for the museum's own expedition into Africa.⁴³

Upon arrival in Africa, there were mixed thoughts as to what he was doing. One article state that Rainey arrived and “moved like a column of army ants... killing virtually every mammal in its path.” Killing all sorts of animals and critters, filming their killing, and working with people like Akeley who preserved these killings, Rainey did indeed make a scene across Africa. *The New York Times* reported that Rainey had essentially “abandon[ed] [the] sport to the dogs,” stating that what he did was butcher work.⁴⁴

The locals had mixed thoughts on Rainey as well. Rainey interacted with all sorts of people during his time in Africa. While he was there to hunt and film, he left an impression on many of the locals and foreign immigrants. One of those was H. K. Binks - an Englishman who had moved to Africa in search of adventure in 1900. Binks was known by the name of “Pop” among those who knew him best. Seeking ways to make money, Binks would hire himself out as a photographer for the big game hunters that came into town. Under this occupation Binks met and began working with Paul J. Rainey.

Working with Rainey was no easy feat. With his wild ideas and thirst for adventure, Rainey pushed his hired men hard, and while they were paid well, many of them would rather forfeit the money than have to work with Rainey's crazy ideas. One of the wildest ideas Rainey had been that of using hound dogs to hunt lions.

The hound dogs that Rainey bred, trained, and used for his hunts were bred in Mississippi. These dogs were a part of Rainey's business known as Tippah Kennels. Keeping

⁴³ Ronald B. Tobias. “Notes.” In *Film and the American Moral Vision of Nature: Theodore Roosevelt to Walt Disney*, 197–230 (Michigan State University Press, 2011), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/j.ctt7ztdj0.18>.

⁴⁴Ibid.

careful records of his dogs and their background and breeding, Rainey soon amassed a collection of some of the finest hunting dogs in the world.⁴⁵ Rainey communicated with the then-first-class big game hunting dog breeders and trainers to have the best. Several of his letters in his collection come from H.C. Trigg, Scott Teague, and other well-respected names of the day.⁴⁶

His records show that Rainey was detailed and careful about his dogs. A letter to the Red Ranger Publishing Company suggests that Rainey ordered stud books from the past to keep up with his dogs and the dogs of others whom he might be competing against. Rainey stated in his letter, "Let me know what the cost of the missing volumes of the American Fox Hound Breeders Stud Book will be, to bring my set up to date."⁴⁷ In the 1922 version of the stud book "TIPPAH FARMS LADY (65954). P. J. Rainey, Cotton Plant, MISS. Breeder, owner. Whelped June 22, 1918. White and lemon bitch. Sire, Big Six (39036); dam, Mable Bell (49242)"⁴⁸. Rainey's attention to detail shows the importance and value he placed on his dogs and their breeding. One of his evaluations read thus, "Lee and Mat considered by Trigg and Elliot to be first-class foxhounds. In the same class with Hustler and Waxie."⁴⁹ Rainey's dogs passed inspection each time and this attention to detail was instrumental in Rainey's crazy idea that had never been done before - to hunt for lions with his dogs.

With his first-class pack of hounds, Rainey was able to put into place his wildest idea. While resting in his Tippah Lodge one night, Rainey brainstormed the idea of taking his hound dogs out to hunt for lions in Africa. His idea was scoffed at by his friends and many said it could not be done. This did not deter Rainey in the slightest. One of his hunting buddies stated, "Your

⁴⁵ Union County Historical Society Paul J. Rainey Papers Vol. 2 Pedigree Records

⁴⁶ Union County Historical Society Paul J. Rainey Papers Vol. 2 2010.427

⁴⁷ Union County Historical Society Paul J. Rainey Papers Vol. 2 2010.478.01

⁴⁸ *The Field Stud Book* (Chicago: American Field Publishing Co., 1923), 391.

⁴⁹ Union County Historical Society Paul J. Rainey Papers Vol. 2 2010.524.01

dogs would all be wiped out, probably by the first lions they tackled. Then too it would be a big job training them. They would tongue every game trail they ran across.”⁵⁰ But Rainey thought otherwise, proclaiming, “I’ve got the African hunting itch, and I would like to see these dogs in action over there in the big game country.”⁵¹ Rainey’s idea, once stated, became his obsession. He started putting together the pieces that would make hunting lions with dogs a reality - beginning with his hire of Er M. Shelley.

Rainey hired Shelley to train his dogs for the African hunt. Shelley, excited about the adventure, was quick to jump on board. Not too many days after Rainey’s comment about wanting to use his hounds to hunt big game in Africa, Shelley traveled to New York with the dogs to begin the African adventure. He said that “much credit is due Mr. Rainey who went into this country with a pack of dogs, contrary to the advice of those who are supposed to know.”⁵² Once all the dogs arrived in Africa, the training began. Shelley and Rainey, with money at their disposal, bought out horses, rented an entire racetrack facility, and pumped thousands of dollars into the venture.

The training began with lion cubs bought by Shelley. Arriving at the station to retrieve them, Shelley discovered they had escaped their crate and were lost in the baggage cart. No one was brave enough to open the door, so Shelley and another big game hunter, George Outram, got the cubs back into their cages and away from the luggage. Training the lion cubs to be led, Shelley would lead them to their food each day; over time, they were leading as well as the

⁵⁰ Shelley, *Hunting Big Game with Dogs in Africa*, 11.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, 13.

dogs.⁵³ From here, the dogs entered the training. Rainey arrived by this time and assisted with the training.

The dogs were taken to a field and sent on a “hunt” of sorts. This training was to give the dogs a chance to sniff out game, but also to train them on what was important to sniff for - lions. Whenever the dogs would chase after the wrong kind of game, the trainer would ship the dog back towards Rainey, who was riding along the field with some of the dogs. Shelley continued this until all the dogs understood that they were not to be sniffing for another game. From here, the trained lions came into play.

The lion cubs were let loose and led to the starting point several miles away from the cages the dogs were trained to run towards. The trained lions were led among other game to their cages to see if the dogs would catch the scent. White flags lined the path where the dogs would run and chase the lion cubs as Rainey, Shelley, and Roy Stewart (Rainey’s Mississippi dog hand) flanked the flags. If the dogs ran outside the flags, they were reprimanded. Once the dogs made it to the lion cubs in the cages, they were allowed to fight through the bars with the cubs to catch their scent. This training session was how the dogs were trained to fulfill Rainey’s crazy idea of hunting lions with dogs.⁵⁴

Rainey also explained how he used his dogs to hunt lions by stating they did not tackle lions. The hounds would track the lion and show Rainey where the lion was hidden. If the lion decided to move, the dogs would whip themselves into a circle around the prey. From there, Rainey went inside of the circle and had an opportunity to get a good shot. When Rainey was not able to see the lion, he had some local boys throw rocks to draw the lion out of hiding. If that did

⁵³ Ibid., 17.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 18-19.

not work, Rainey rode into the edge of where the lion was and made the bush move. Suddenly dashing away, Rainey enticed the lion to come out of his hiding spot. By the time the lion came out, Rainey was poised and ready to shoot. From there, Rainey shot the lion as the dogs raced alongside the lion until the lion was dead. By hunting with dogs, Rainey revolutionized the world of big game hunting in Africa.⁵⁵

Big game hunting with Rainey was not just for the hunting of animals, but also for the collecting of scientific details about the natural world. One of his hunting companions was Edmund Heller; Heller later left an account of his experience hunting with Rainey. His handwritten account also gives details of the training of the hounds, and how Rainey hunted lions. Heller was there to enjoy the hunt, but also to collect specimens for the Smithsonian Institute. Collection was Heller's contribution to science and traveling with Rainey gave him ample opportunity to collect all sorts of animal specimens, plants, and other natural science materials to be studied.⁵⁶

Rainey's success with big game hunting, especially in using dogs to hunt lions, was unprecedented. His records were increasingly higher and higher than anyone before him or anyone after him. Within a thirty-five-minute time frame, Rainey was able to kill nine lions.⁵⁷ Rainey's top accomplishment was to kill 110 lions, a feat that has yet to be matched.⁵⁸ His hunting skills and shooting skills enabled him to accomplish this record. Before long, Rainey was banned from hunting lions in British East Africa. Once banned from hunting, the locals rose in protest. Locals in Nairobi relied on Rainey to rid their lands of lions. The lions would eat their

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Union County Historical Society Archives Paul J. Rainey Papers Murray Collection Volume 1 2019.01.12

⁵⁷ Mitch Stennett, "Rainey: The Man Who Knew no Fear" *Southern Sentinel*, May 19, 1977, The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

⁵⁸ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 162.

livestock and destroy their farmland. Specifically, the ostrich farmers successfully protested to have the ban recalled; Rainey was once again allowed to hunt lions with his hound dogs. While the ban was lifted, Rainey was only allowed to hunt within the parameters of private land. This greatly diminished the joy of Rainey's hunting; after the ban, the hunts were never the same. After his stint in Africa during the year of 1911, Rainey decided to return to his Tippah Lodge and pursue other interests.⁵⁹

One of Rainey's pursuits was that of film and photography. While on his trip in Africa to hunt lions with his hound dogs, Rainey was able to capture motion pictures. Upon arrival back in the States, Rainey threw himself into this new hobby and career. This next step in Rainey's life proved successful as well.

Rainey's big game hunting days were far from over when he left Africa in 1911, however. His ideas and plans grew. With his lodge in Cotton Plant, Mississippi, Rainey settled into his home and continued the work he loved - adventuring. His specimens for the American Museum of Natural History, the Bronx Zoo, and other places were well regarded by the scientific community. While big game hunting was his favorite pastime, Rainey sought to share his findings with the world. One way he shared was through film, as Rainey was able to produce and star in one of the greatest wildlife films of the day, going on to inspire many other filmmakers of the future.

⁵⁹ Paul J. Rainey Papers, Union County Historical Society Archives.

CHAPTER 2: Wildlife Filmmaking

“My two brothers and I secured admission tickets in the dress circle of a large theater to view these marvelous scenes of wild animal life on its native heath.”¹

In 1912 and 1913 people flocked to go see the latest motion picture, which was a new phenomenon. The earliest film was in 1891. By 1912, film had been around long enough to where the average American knew what a film was. While still a pastime for those who could afford the luxury, a growing number of people began to go see films. Rainey, took a camera to Africa, developed and produced the first ever wildlife film available to the public on a mass scale.

Paul J. Rainey's African Hunt was like nothing seen before and was all the rage. Rainey sought to bring his sport of big game hunting to the big screen. Working with locals and other film operatives of the day, Rainey was able to produce and star in a world class film. The film's distributor, Carl Laemmle, was able to take the film to new distribution levels. This film was the talk of the town in the newspapers across the United States. *The Baltimore Sun* stated, “The baiting and trapping of hyenas and jackals, the hunting of leopards and lions are shown from the beginning of the chase to capture or killing.”² *Paul J. Rainey's African Hunt* set the groundwork of wildlife filmmaking in the United States and around the world.

With the rise of African Safaris came the rise of the camera. People could now *see* what was in Africa, instead of just hearing about it. A key player in the role of African hunting and wildlife filmmaking was Paul J. Rainey. While Rainey was the ringleader of this film, he was not able to accomplish all the work singlehandedly. Rainey, with his wealth, was able to hire the best

¹ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 147.

² “Wildlife in Pictures: Paul J. Rainey's "African Hunt" is Shown at Ford's," *The Sun*, April 29, 1913, 5.

photographers and filmmakers of the day to be a part of his expedition and film the journey. On his trip that became his motion picture, Rainey teamed up with cameraman J. C. Hemment, taxidermist Carl Akeley, and naturalist Edmund Heller. All of these men were well known for their respective abilities. J. C. Hemment was known for his photography in the Spanish - American War, Carl Akeley was respected for his work, which Rainey financed, on the Akeley camera, and Edmund Heller traveled with Roosevelt and was a part of filming some of Roosevelt's adventurous safari.

Rainey involved not just well-known people, but locals also. His cameramen and local hire made Rainey the talk of the town as he moved throughout British East Africa. Paul J. Rainey's Wildlife film took the motion picture world by storm, helped to finance Carl Laemmle's Universal Studios, and set new records in the film industry. With the records that Rainey was accumulating, he did not set these records alone, but with a crew of people at his disposal. Hiring all the men willing to work with him and risking the danger of the sport, Rainey made his way across Africa filming all sorts of scenes.

One of Rainey's cameramen, H. K. Binks spent a significant amount of time in his book relaying his memories and thoughts on Paul J. Rainey; this provides a great primary source for those studying African history in the early 20th century. Binks also traveled occasionally with Teddy Roosevelt. Not every season of year was the ideal time to be hunting, and often the time with Roosevelt was spent sipping coffee and having conversation instead of embarking on new, exciting hunting expeditions. During some of the slow seasons at his store, Binks would close shop and join a crew deep into the wilds. Binks stated, "a great slab of a fellow walked into my shop one day and introduced himself." This man was Paul J. Rainey. Rainey heard about the work Binks did with the camera and wanted to have Binks on his team. Rainey pulled out the

cameras he had with him and showed them off to Binks. Binks asked, “And what if she runs out when a lion is charging?” Rainey responded by saying, “Why, then you throw the camera at the lion and get the hell out of it.” If the camera ran out of film while they were filming a charging lion, the decisions of those running the camera were life or death. Both Binks and Rainey knew that this was dangerous business, filming a charging lion and capturing wildlife in the wild required skill beyond an average cameraman. Rainey knew how important it was to have talented men behind the camera when filming these dangerous scenes. Binks decided it was worth the risk and stated, “I could see that Paul J. was a man I would enjoy working for.”³

Filming wildlife with early camera technology was no easy task. Carl Akeley, the inventor of the Akeley camera stated, “In order to have even a fair chance of following the action with a camera you need one what you can aim up, down, or in any direction with about the same ease that you can point a pistol.”⁴ In 1909, there was no camera like this, but Akeley was determined to change that. Rainey himself eagerly helped to finance Akeley’s work to produce a workable camera. This camera was a new idea and was able to rapidly follow the movements of animals without creating a blurry image.⁵ Akeley’s camera looked a bit like a machine gun and a pancake. His camera, once patented and sold, was a popular camera in the movie industry as well as with expeditions around the world. In his own book, Akeley stated, “To a degree at least, the camera is accomplishing the purpose for which it was designed.”⁶

With a love for adventure and a camera, Paul J. Rainey set out for Africa to bring to life the scenes around him. Rainey brought with him his cameraman, J. C. Hemment. Hemment was

³ Binks, *African Rainbow*, 129-131.

⁴ Akeley, *In Brightest Africa*, 166.

⁵ Kevin Brownlin, *The War, the West, and the Wilderness* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 406.

⁶ Akeley, *In Brightest Africa*, 167.

well known for his work as a photographer in the Spanish American War. His work was considered one of the unofficial photography accounts of the war. Respected as a cameraman, Hemment was the man behind much of the camera work in Rainey's film. Bringing with him 100,000 feet of film, Hemment was ready to capture whatever Rainey placed before the camera. Rainey boasted of bringing along extra-long focus lenses to picture the animals clearly.⁷

Due to film, Americans had direct access to animals from Africa. Throughout the late 19th century there was a desire for customers to buy books with adventure tales of hunting and new experiences, but filmmaking soon took over the demand for books. Instead of reading about the action, now one could see the action. This gave viewers a way to be a part of the action, the challenge, and the ultimate death of the animals on the screen. In 1912, Paul J. Rainey capitalized on that action with his own film.⁸

Filming was a grand adventure for the people involved, and for those filming wildlife not the least of which involved constant creative innovation of technology and experience. Since the animals were camera-shy, Rainey and his crew had to patiently implement creative ways to capture footage. The photographer once spent three days in a tree waiting for the animals to come to the waterhole.⁹ Trained to film with blinds and using the carcasses of dead animals as lures, the filmmakers were able to get closer to their prey than others had. The most famous footage was that of the waterhole in the desert. All sorts of animals gathered to drink from the water, and Rainey captured them on film by the use of blinds. Blinds were a form of shelter used by hunters to hide themselves from the animals. These blinds were built using native trees and

⁷ Tobias, "Notes." In *Film and the American Moral Vision of Nature: Theodore Roosevelt to Walt Disney*, 197–230, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/j.ctt7ztdj0.18>.

⁸ William Beinart & Peter Coats, *Environment and History: The Taming of Nature in the USA and South Africa* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 80.

⁹ "Paul V. (sic) Rainey's South African Lecture" *The Motion Picture News*, 1912, 16-18.

brush. The success of filming animals with blinds was where Rainey stood out among other filmmakers of the time, because Rainey's films provided his audience with an up close and personal engagement. Much patience was required to wait and film each shot.¹⁰ The talent and patience led one author to state, "Film-making initially replicated the literary hunting saga, placing a premium on action, challenge, death and charismatic protagonists, both human and animal."¹¹

Rainey's films of wildlife had more than their share of adventures. Binks recorded a story of a python Rainey was trying to capture alive, which he also caught on film. Upon seeing the python, Binks asked if Rainey wanted it. By the time Rainey came over to the python, it had slithered into a hole. "At eighteen feet of five-inch diameter python takes a lot of hiding, we soon found him in a hole in the rocks playing 'possum'."¹² Pulling out the camera, Binks and Rainey prepared to capture the python on film. Rainey tried to pick up the python by placing his arms around a loop in the python's body, but to no avail. "[i]t never once opened its mouth and seemed to enjoy and submit to the fondling of Paul and his friends."¹³ Ultimately, it took six men to pull the python from its hiding place. After the removal of the python, Rainey and his crew continued on for the day. That night as Binks was developing the film, he noticed that the camera had not been rolling properly and that the entire scene of the python capture was blank. Binks suggested to Rainey, "Take the python back, put him into his hole and go through the whole thing again."¹⁴ Rainey and his crew did just that. While filming wildlife could be unpredictable, there were camera failures as well. Rainey and his film pursuits showed his attention to detail

¹⁰ Imperato, *They Married Adventure: The Wandering Lives of Martin and Osa Johnson*, 95.

¹¹ Beinbart and Coats, *Environment and History: The Taming of Nature in the USA and South Africa*, 80.

¹² Binks, *African Rainbow*, 111.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 113.

and demonstrated how important it was for Rainey to capture the dramatic and the exciting for the big screen. The python scene showed Rainey's desire for a well-produced film; he was willing to go back and redo the footage that had failed turn out the first time. Filmmaking in the wild was definitely uncertain and involved risks and dangers for everyone involved.

The *New York Dramatic Mirror* described the film and discussed the risks those within the film encountered. "The dangers encountered, the obstacles combated, and the patience required to procure these ... motion photos ... can be appreciated by none save he who has ... felt the tiny electric shudders chasing up and down his spine as he confronted ... a lion." The document described the miles traveled to bring the motion picture to life and how Rainey's motion pictures were so much better than any others at that time.

Each film was produced in the silent form; then either Rainey, Hemment, or someone else would explain what was on the screen to the audiences. Rainey himself was the main spokesperson lecturing on the films and the photographs. This style of movie was popular in the early twentieth century, and really energized the motion picture industry. Hemment was the more popular lecturer on the film. Once, Hemment gave a speech on the motion pictures and it was stated that, "His talk is a whimsical mixture of humor and exposition, delightful to listen to because the speaker is so intensely in earnest."¹⁵ Rainey's speech was placed in full in the *Motion Picture News*.

The film started where the hunt began, with the preparation to hunt. Rainey was joined by many companions, including locals hired to help with the hunt and the filming. When they started the hunt, Rainey mentioned how the locals and those going on the hunt enjoyed blowing horns and shouting as they went on their way. The film shows Allan Black, Dr. Johnson, and

¹⁵ "Reviews of Special Feature Subjects," *New York Dramatic Mirror*, April 24, 1912, 27.

Rainey as the actors and focus of the film. From there, Rainey discussed the seasons and the grass, and how the film was tinted so that scenes were not as well-produced as they could have been.¹⁶

The next scene is the watering hole which is considered to be “the greatest contribution to natural science in the past decade.”¹⁷ The natives told Rainey about this waterhole and explained that all sorts of animals would gather there during the dry seasons. George Garrett, a hunting buddy of Rainey’s stated, “There was a large-bodied tree near the entrance of the waterhole that was scaled by the English photographer, whose camera was mounted on ball bearings; from this spot the greatest screen views of all times were taken.”¹⁸

The viewer saw from the scene, the animals all come together to drink. A sense of understanding and togetherness among the animals was observed as different animals respected each other’s peace and right to drink the water. Other scenes around the waterhole gave audiences a laugh as the lecturer, J.C. Hemmett, explained in detail for audiences what was going on in each scene.¹⁹ Elephants made their way to the waterhole, and all the other animals withdrew to let them make their way through to the water. Garrett notes that the monkeys would slip through the larger animals to get to the water, and each animal stood waiting their turn to drink from the watering hole.²⁰ In the scene various desert animals gather to drink - animals that many Americans had never seen before on the big screen: zebras, monkeys, elephants, giraffes, and others.²¹ Rainey then discusses in his lecture about the attitudes of the animals and how they

¹⁶ “Paul V. (sic) Rainey’s South African Lecture,” *The Motion Picture News*.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 270.

¹⁹ “Paul V. (sic) Rainey’s South African Lecture,” *The Motion Picture News*.

²⁰ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 270.

²¹ “Reviews of Special Feature Subjects,” *New York Dramatic Mirror*, April 24, 1912, 27.

are not truly understood until one studies film footage of them. Stuffed animals can be seen at a museum but offer no way to understand how an animal acts and treats other animals until seen on this film.

Rainey described the sweeping landscapes of Africa, and how he was impressed by the beauty that he saw there. Calling the watering hole, a “Noah’s Ark”, Rainey tells the audiences about all the different kinds of animals that come to the watering hole. He describes each animal and its place within the animal kingdom, captivating audiences with his film footage.²² Off to the side of the watering hole is another hole in the sand where the animals have dug down to find water. The scene of the watering hole stood out among early wildlife filmmakers as a standard for wildlife film footage.

Years after Rainey’s film debuted, Osa and Martin Johnson stopped by the watering hole as a tribute to Rainey and the film that he produced. Osa stated, “We paused at the places where Paul Rainey had camped.”²³ The Johnsons were both heavily inspired by Rainey and sought to follow in his footsteps and take their own filming even further than Rainey had.

After the watering hole scene, there is the infamous chase and capture of a cheetah. Rainey had with him his Mississippi hounds, trained to chase down lions and other big game animals. These hounds chased down the cheetah that Rainey and his men were pursuing. The cheetah, running for his life, climbed up a tree to safety from the hunting hounds. The scene is a thrilling show of a wild cheetah trapped in a tree looking down at the dogs below.²⁴

Other scenes in the movies are from their camp as well as the actual hunt of lions and other animals. The shots are longer than other films of the day, and one author believes they

²² “Paul V. (sic) Rainey’s South African Lecture,” *The Motion Picture News*.

²³ Osa Johnson, *I Married Adventure* (Camden, NJ: Haddon Craftsman, Inc., 1940), 231.

²⁴ “Reviews of Special Feature Subjects,” *New York Dramatic Mirror*, April 24, 1912, 27.

were shot at a focal point of 100mm at most. The number of animals that come to the water hole is more than one might expect. One viewer stated, “To see all these creatures together in one picture is a remarkable sight: one that will interest any man, woman, or child.” In the film there were also pans of animals and scenery that are surreal, lifelike, and beautiful. A dramatic scene shows a hyena in a tree hanging on for his life. Rainey’s men try to capture the hyena in a box to bring it back to the American Museum of Natural History alive. Once inside the box, the hyena ceases struggling and is safe from biting or hurting the men.²⁵

Another scene in the movie featured Rainey’s dogs chasing a female lion with cubs. As the lioness runs, one of the hunters picks up a cub and shows it off, infuriating the female lion. The lion broke through the dogs and plunged straight for the camera. With a lion charging towards the camera, Rainey noted the situation, took aim, fired at the lion, and hit her lungs. A second shot rang out and pierced the brain, at which the lion dropped dead right near the camera. This scene showed the extreme danger for those filming the scenes, and how important it was to be ready at any time to take aim and fire if the lions decided to charge at the camera or anyone else from Rainey’s film crew.

The action of the film is directly in front of the camera and all the scenes are shot live on location, in Africa. The talent of the filmmakers and Rainey, capturing these scenes, is obvious when watching the footage. Each scene builds on the next as the animals are being hunted and filmed. The scene in which Hemment is behind the camera as the lion is charging became a standard cliché for films in the future. Due to that iconic scene, Hemment is generally considered the first American who brought wildlife film dramatically alive with the camera. Hemment framed Africa as more than just a place, but as a community. Not focusing only on the big

²⁵Palle B. Petterson, *Cameras into the Wild: A History of early Wildlife and Expedition Filmmaking 1895-1928* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, 2011), 70.

picture, but the smaller pictures as well, Hemment was able to capture Africa in a whole new way for viewers.²⁶

Hement was able to capture Rainey's sporting ability and produce it for the big screen. One magazine reported, "A battle between a cheetah and a pack of dogs is described as most exciting, being shown from start to finish, when the dead animal is hung up by the tail, with the dogs viewing the victim of their conquest." Another reported that it was a bloody blockbuster.²⁷ Each report released about the film praised the work, and kept the public interested in the work that Rainey did in Africa. Each theater across the United States gathered a crowd of interested onlookers who wanted to see and hear the adventures of Paul Rainey's African hunt. Each scene built in climax to develop a film increasingly exciting as the viewers continued to watch.²⁸

Much of what Rainey filmed was watched by the locals in Africa. Powys was a local who worked with Paul J. Rainey on Rainey's African hunts. His account discussed how they started early in the morning, before the sunrise. "[A] beauty cool and translucent had fallen for a moment across the haggard features of the Equatorial landscape." Not far from them were a herd of zebras; upon seeing them, Rainey stated, "I would like ... to send a bullet into that little outfit." Further on, the herd of hounds accompanying them came across a lion. Rainey addressed the lion by stating, "I sees you; I sees you." Powys recounts: "The highest form of happiness that Paul J. Rainey was capable of experiencing was in its essence identical with that of the simplest farm boy, whose joy it is to dig out badgers in a midnight copse." Since Rainey had the money,

²⁶ Tobias, "Notes." In *Film and the American Moral Vision of Nature: Theodore Roosevelt to Walt Disney*, 197–230, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/j.ctt7ztdj0.18>.

²⁷ "Rainey's African Hunt: A Bloody 1912 Movie Blockbuster," *The Bowery Boys*, September 7, 2012, <https://www.boweryboyshistory.com/2012/09/raineys-african-hunt-bloody-1912-movie.html>.

²⁸ "Reviews of Special Feature Subjects," *New York Dramatic Mirror*, April 24, 1912, 27.

there was not much of earth where animals were safe from Rainey's desire to hunt and film for his wildlife film.²⁹

Paul J. Rainey's African Hunt opened in April of 1912 in New York City. During the first opening, J. C. Hemmett, the cameraman behind the film, gave the lecture. The film and lecture ran non-stop in New York City. From there, the film moved to other theaters around the country. "The film was a staggering success, running for fifteen months in New York and earning a fortune for its distributor, Carl Laemmle."³⁰ Within the film there were dances from the natives, animals, and "a fearsome scene as Rainey's Mississippi bear-dogs corner a lion, hold back, snarling and barking, and then close in for the kill."³¹ Rainey assembled his film from footage from Hemmett and Binks, as well as some from Akeley who was under financial stress at the time and needed some income. The footage from these cameramen is what formed the film *Paul J. Rainey's African Hunt*. His film, creating quite the sensation, made half a million dollars. Rainey filmed other films as well, but none were as popular as his first one. "Eventually [Rainey] used his African films for philanthropic purposes, giving numerous benefit lectures illustrated by [the films]."³² Rainey even gave a motion picture machine to an orphanage in order for the children to be able to enjoy watching his films. The children wrote Rainey, "We enjoy ourselves very much at the picture shows and have a good time. We thank you very much for being kind to us, and a good friend."³³ "Rainey gave the public a vivid and thrilling pictorial account of his own travels and narrow escapes."³⁴

²⁹ Powys, *Black Laughter*, 128-129.

³⁰ Brownlin, *The War, the West, and the Wilderness*, 406.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Imperato, *They Married Adventure: The Wandering Lives of Martin and Osa Johnson*, 97.

³³ "Department of the Interior: Office of Indian Affairs" Letter to Paul J. Raney, Dec. 26, 1922, Union County Heritage Museum Archives.

³⁴ Imperato, *They Married Adventure: The Wandering Lives of Martin and Osa Johnson*, 97.

Into 1913, the film was still making circuits in theaters and in lecture halls. This film was shown not only to an American audience but also made its way to other parts of the world.³⁵ With the huge success of Rainey's film in America, the film made its way to England as well. Having been presented to the King and Queen of England, the film became a success there also. Rainey even received a silver platter from the King and Queen in recognition of his great accomplishment with film, bringing to the screen his adventures in Africa.³⁶ Rainey's film hit a "record run" in England and in other places as well. *The Motion Picture World* stated that the film ran for forty weeks in England. On top of that, the film was shown at the palace to the King and Queen. In Germany it was shown to the emperor. Not only was Rainey's film shown to those in leadership, but also was accessible to people all across the United States, Europe, and Korea.³⁷ While the success of the film was partially due to Rainey's film footage and scenes on the screen, the greatest success came from the creative advertisement and distribution of the film and its distributor Carl Laemmle.

Rainey's distributor, Carl Laemmle stated, "I understand Paul J. Rainey has sold an independent concern his African pictures at an enormous price. Rainey is a Cleveland millionaire, who spends his leisure time in hunting big game on the Dark Continent. These pictures will run 5,000 feet."³⁸ Laemmle tried a new form of advertising on Rainey's film. As its distributor, Laemmle had an opportunity to make the film a success not just for Rainey, but for himself as well. On the Rainey posters Laemmle "crowded more wild beasts onto a one-sheet

³⁵Richard Abel, *Americanizing the Movies and "Movie-Mad" Audiences, 1910-1914* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006), 178-180.

³⁶ Mitch Stennett, "Rainey: The Man Who Knew no Fear," *Southern Sentinel*, May 19, 1977, The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

³⁷"British Notes," *The Motion Picture World*, 1393.

³⁸"Paul V. (sic) Rainey's South African Lecture," *The Motion Picture News*.

than are to be found at a half-dozen water holes.”³⁹ Using the success of the circus picture, Laemmle decided to try his hand at the circus way of advertising with Rainey’s film. His advertising was a success.⁴⁰ Laemmle also tried the circus technique of a roadshow. His first strategy was to book the movie to play in big city theaters and depending on the success, sell it to smaller theaters across the country. This first time with the roadshow idea helped gain momentum for Rainey’s film.⁴¹

With the use of circus advertisement, Laemmle also pitched the film to the wealthy and those able to bring in more than the normal charge for a fiction film. Linking the wealthy people to churches, one advertisement had a minister quoted in it as encouraging the film for learning purposes.⁴² With these methods of advertising, Laemmle gathered an unprecedented amount of people to come watch the film and pay top dollar for the entertainment and the learning experience. Laemmle’s ability to gather quotes and statements about the film advanced the film to places all across the United States and the world. Rainey succeeded in getting his film endorsed by key people around the globe.

One of the reasons the advertisements for the film worked so well was the content of the film. The film was, “simultaneously entertaining, educationally and morally uplifting, and last, but not least, profitable.”⁴³ The film hit all the points to make money and promote natural science and new adventures for the people to watch. As one advertisement stated, “One touch of nature

³⁹ Tina Balio, ed. *The American Film Industry* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), 156.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Mark Garrett Cooper, “Universal’s Names” In *Universal Women: Filmmaking and Institutional Change in Early Hollywood*, 9–24 (University of Illinois Press, 2010), 17.

⁴² Gregg Mitman, *Reel Nature America’s Romance with Wildlife on Film*, Weyerhaeuser Environmental Classic ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), 19-20.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 19.

makes the whole world kin. That is the secret of the extraordinary success of this picture.”⁴⁴

Laemmle’s creative distribution and advertising, as well as the content, made Rainey’s film a blockbuster success.

Another advertising strategy was that of a roadshow. The movie was first shown in the big cities; after a successful run in the cities, the plan was to take it on the road. The film distributors booked a venue and then had people buy the right to show the film in that state or region. Rainey’s film was the first time to try this strategy, bringing about a huge amount of success.⁴⁵

One key person who endorsed Rainey’s film was President of the American Museum of Natural History, Henry Osborn. Osborn stated that Rainey’s film was, “the greatest contribution to natural science of the decade.” Others stated that these moving pictures were just “cheap thrills that catered to the baser instincts of an audience eager for violence.” Another article stated that, “Rainey’s film is literally and figuratively unleashed. Rainey’s dogs are the dogs of war.”⁴⁶ Rainey’s film was not a film of quiet peaceful animals in the wild, but an action-packed hunting movie with live animals running for their lives. Hemment excellently captured Rainey’s sporting ability and focused on Rainey for drama on the big screen.

The comments and news reports surrounding Rainey’s film were exciting and gave people a reason to go to the theater and see the latest sensation. Each report that appeared intrigued those who saw the quotes and the posters, which helped to make Rainey’s film the rage

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Cooper, “Universal’s Names,” In *Universal Women: Filmmaking and Institutional Change in Early Hollywood*, 9–24, 17.

⁴⁶ Tobias, “Notes,” In *Film and the American Moral Vision of Nature: Theodore Roosevelt to Walt Disney*, 197–230, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/j.ctt7ztdj0.18>.

of the town. With footage never seen before, advertised in the circus format, Rainey garnered unprecedented success with his film.

The success of *Paul J. Rainey's African Hunt* can be seen in a modern conversion of profit. Ranking 13 out of the earliest films, the film is estimated to have made over \$14.5 million in 2022 dollars with inflation calculated.⁴⁷ The film went on to make \$500,000.⁴⁸ Garrett, Rainey's hunting buddy, states that Rainey told him, "Korea paid him \$50,000 a year royalty; the city of London paid \$75,000; and the United States paid a million and a half dollars."⁴⁹ Martin Johnson, a famous wildlife filmmaker stated of Rainey: "He was a thorough sportsman and left behind him in Africa a clean and splendid record... Rainey .. accomplished in Africa with film what Jack London had with words in Alaska and the South Seas."⁵⁰

Film was a new way of bringing the world alive to people who would otherwise never see the world beyond their own home. Rainey fit into the mold of action-packed, animal death, and hunting sagas. Bringing his hunting expeditions to the big screen saw an influx of interest and money in the silent films. His distributor Carl Laemmle profited greatly from the film; and with the finances he received from that success, he opened Universal Studios - a studio that would produce thousands of films and is still in action today. Laemmle was able to open his studio in California in 1912 right after the release of Rainey's film. By 1914, when the proceeds had fully come in from the Rainey film, Laemmle began work on his Universal City.⁵¹

Rainey's work in the film industry and eagerness to try new things elevated his status in the world around him. People flocked to see his films released across the country. After his 1912

⁴⁷ Michael Gebert, *The Encyclopedia of Movie Rewards* (New York: St. Martin's Paperback, 1996), 51.

⁴⁸ Beinart and Coats, *Environment and History: The Taming of Nature in the USA and South Africa*, 80.

⁴⁹ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 171.

⁵⁰ Imperato, *They Married Adventure: The Wandering Lives of Martin and Osa Johnson*, 97-98.

⁵¹ John Drinkwater, *The Life and Adventure of Carl Laemmle*, (New York: G.P. Putman's Sons, 1931),

success, Rainey went on to make another film in 1914. While this film was not nearly as successful, it did capture the same idea as the first film. Rainey set the bar high and influenced filmmakers that came after him. The standard he set in 1912 can still be seen throughout wildlife films today.

The early wildlife films were a small sampling of the African world, but intrigued audiences enough to begin an industry of wildlife filmmaking that brought about huge financial successes for those involved. The early influence of motion pictures by Rainey that placed excitement, violence, and controversy on the big screen for audiences across the world, shows his influence on the filmmaker's recipe to attract the public to see these types of films even today.

Rainey's wildlife film sparked ideas and led to other early filmmaking contributions. One such early example of silent film that Rainey inspired was *Colonel Heeza Liar*, one of the first animated films and the absolute first animated film to retain a character throughout a series of cartoon films.⁵² The first film in the series was called *Colonel Heeza Liar's African Hunt*. This small, animated film was the first in a series of films about Colonel Heeza Liar. While the film is loosely based on Rainey's film and the character of Rainey is a loose representation as well, the connection is not difficult to make. The film shows a man in Africa going after an egg and shooting animals with a gun. This is only a small example of how Rainey's film sparked ideas for other forms of creativity and innovation in a new industry.

Paul J. Rainey, as with other things that he did, took filmmaking to new heights and distribution levels both in camera form and also in the scenes he produced. Knowing the dangers involved and being close to death multiple times himself, Rainey pressed on and was able to

⁵² "Colonel Heeza Liar's African Hunt," *International Movie Database*, 1914, <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0003784/>.

capture moments on film that awed those watching the big screen. His accomplishments encouraged others to join the world of filmmaking, bringing to life animals that could only be drawn in books or heard from stories. Those who worked with Rainey understood the risks and sought to do their best work for Rainey and the world.

While Rainey accomplished far more in his life than just a moving picture, Paul J. *Rainey's African Hunt* was a hallmark of wildlife filmmaking. Taking success to new levels and showing others the dangers of the African animals, Rainey encouraged others following his journey after wildlife and films that essentially changed the world of film forever. Thanks to Paul J. Rainey, Universal Pictures was able to get off the ground, the Akeley camera was financed, and film footage was captured that has stood the test of time; the world of filmmaking has never been the same after these three major accomplishments. Rainey was praised for his film in the United States, and also across the world. Rainey's legacy of film is one that has stood the test of time and influenced generations of filmmakers across the world.

With the fame that came with his successful motion picture, Rainey brought in more money and more accolades for his work in natural science. Hailed as a success, Rainey sought to capitalize on that success and continue filming, taking photographs, and being involved in the world of cameras. Rainey's involvement with cameras led him to places all around the world and helped to garner his reputation as a photographer and a filmmaker.

Once Rainey had garnered a reputation in the film world, global events began to take a turn. In 1914, war broke out in Europe. With this change, Rainey had an opportunity to use his skills as a photographer and filmmaker to help with the war effort. In addition, Rainey was well-positioned to assist around the world with his camera and with his working knowledge of

governments, land holdings, and other details that he learned while big game hunting across the world.

CHAPTER 3: The Great War

“This letter will introduce you to Mr. Paul J. Rainey, a distinguished traveller, big game hunter, explorer and lecturer. He has undertaken to make a series of motion picture films to be used in Red Cross propaganda in the United States.”¹

With all the fame and fortune that Paul J. Rainey gained through his big game hunting, films, and other pursuits, Rainey strove to live a life of adventure no matter where that adventure would take him. This time his adventure swept him into the service of not just his country, but the world. Throughout his lifetime, Rainey sought adventure and adrenaline while hunting in the field or behind the camera capturing a scene unfolding in front of him. When World War I broke out in Europe, volunteers from the United States made their way overseas to help with the war effort. The volunteers worked in the hospitals and fields of France. Rainey was one of those volunteers; he also used his own resources for the war effort. The influence of Rainey throughout Europe and the world during the Great War is the least researched and least known part of his life. Some of his services were considered spying on the enemy and other high-level secrecy-style work. One of his services included motion picture work with the Red Cross. Since he was known throughout the world for his films on wildlife, Rainey used cameras in the Great War to help the Allied efforts. Even though America did not enter the war until later, Rainey was on the frontlines before many Americans were. As the war continued and the United States entered the conflict, Rainey was employed to do more of the work he began in Europe and other places across the world. In between his services for the war effort, Rainey continued to hunt and make headlines for his expeditions. One of his expeditions, the Third Asiatic Expedition, was used as a

¹ John T. Greenwood, *John J. Pershing and the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I, 1917-1919: April 7-September 30, 1917* (University Press of Kentucky, 2021), 166-167.

cover to work alongside the Czech Army in Russia. Throughout his service, Rainey remained in the headlines as a big game hunter, while his spy missions were kept concealed from the public eye. Rainey's service during WW1 included work with the Red Cross, photography, airplane flying, and spying in Russia.

When war broke out in Europe, Rainey tried to join in the effort but was denied for health reasons.² While health reasons was the public comment on why Rainey did not go to war, some people wonder if he was denied due to his status and his wealth;³ however as a young man, he could not sit idly by and not contribute to the war in some way. Denied his offer of service for the United States, Rainey went to Britain and had better success there. Rainey commissioned himself out to work with the ambulance drivers and hospitals as well as the Red Cross in Europe. Serving on the field for Rainey was another way to pursue adventure in the world; while he was not big game hunting, he was dragging bodies and people out of dangerous situations and bringing them to hospitals where they received medical attention.

As early as 1914, Rainey was in Europe working alongside the Red Cross driving ambulances. Due to the lack of supplies and Rainey's station in life, he financed several ambulances and drove his own ambulance across the Western Front. His financing of ambulances helped the war effort and also encouraged others to do the same.⁴ While financing ambulances was a major contribution to the war, he also financed a war hospital in France.⁵ These financial incentives gained Rainey a reputation on the field and aided him in leading the way for others to work in the hospitals and driving the ambulances in France.

² "The Career of an Outdoors Man," *New Outlook*, March 1923, 171-172.

³ Jill Smith, interview by Peyton Holliday, New Albany, June 9, 2022.

⁴ James William Davenport Seymour, *History of the American Field Service in France: The Ambulance Sections [ten-seventy-two] Field Service Haunts and Friends* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), 440.

⁵ David Helms, "Guest Lecture to Focus on Extravagant Life of Paul J. Rainey," *Pontotoc Progress*, April 5, 2010.

Rainey's efforts landed him with Clarence V. S. Mitchell. Mitchell, who roomed with Rainey, wrote letters home and documented some of his adventures with Rainey. Mitchell worked with the ambulance corps in France and was directly under the leadership of Rainey. According to Mitchell, Rainey was the boss of the ambulance group and trained the men: "We stood by our ambulances and saluted the old boy in rare style."⁶ Mitchell wrote home, "I've got a bully room with Paul Rainey; It looks across a little pond into some very pretty woods and just now I can see two areoplanes [sic] going to reconnoitre (sic)."⁷ Clarence describes the daily work in his letters home. He mentions that there were four Packards and that each day men go out close to the trenches and pick up the wounded who are then taken to the doctors.⁸ The research is unclear exactly whom Rainey's employer was, but he did help the war efforts through the Red Cross.

Robert Bacon was the president of the American Military hospital in Paris, and employed people to drive the ambulances throughout the Western front.⁹ The French were cautious about the Americans working too close to the front since America was neutral during the years before 1917.¹⁰ Therefore, many American ambulance drivers transferred the wounded from place to place.¹¹ Before drivers began working, they had to pass a driver's exam in France.¹² A. Piatt Andrew wrote home to his parents about obtaining a license, "I had to take my ... examination ... with a fussy and pompous old French official ... who made me so anxious ... that I nearly

⁶ Mitchell Clarence Van Schaiak, *With a Military Ambulance in France, 1914-1915*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1915), 28.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 34.

⁹ Edward Klekowski and Libby Klekowski, *Eyewitness to the Great War: American Writers, Reporters, Volunteers, and Soldiers in France 1914-1918* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co. Publishers, 2012), 27.

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

ran over, first a tram car, and then a flock of sheep. In the end he ‘passed’ me, but it took the greater part of an afternoon ... turning here and there according to his orders.”¹³ Once a license was obtained, the drivers began traveling across the battlefields of France. Driving an ambulance was not an easy job: as one driver said, “As we waited a broken-down horse appeared with a cart load of what looked like old clothes - *Les Morts*. I had never seen a dead body until that moment. It was a horrible awakening ... We were asked to group ourselves around the car ... I managed to do it. I felt like being sick.”¹⁴ These ambulance drivers worked long hours to save thousands of lives from dying on the front lines. Through the grueling work and long hours, those working to save lives dealt with death on a daily basis and in horrid constitutions. Rainey was right in the midst of with these men working hard, smelling death, and doing his part to rush dying men to hospitals for treatment.

Rainey worked with a host of people. One of the men he worked with was the Canadian poet Robert William Service. Service worked alongside Rainey in the field and trenches of driving the ambulances. As a poet, Service used his power with words to create a poem detailing the time that Rainey worked in France. His poem opens as follows:

Jerry MacMullen, the millionaire,
 Driving a red-meat bus out there --
 How did he win his Croix de Guerre?
 Bless you, that's all old stuff:
 Beast of a night on the Verdun road,
 Jerry stuck with a woeful load,
 Stalled in the mud where the red lights glowed,
 Prospect devilish tough.

"Little Priscilla" he called his car,
 Best of our battered bunch by far,
 Branded with many a bullet scar,
 Yet running so sweet and true.
 Jerry he loved her, knew her tricks;
 Swore: "She's the beat of the best big six,
 And if ever I get in a deuce of a fix

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., 29.

Priscilla will pull me through."¹⁵

Reliving the time that Service spent with Rainey on the field, the poem continues to tell the story of Rainey's hard work and dedication in the field of France making sure wounded men made it to the hospital where they received treatment.¹⁶

By April of 1915, American ambulance drivers went directly to the front lines, and worked alongside the French ambulance drivers.¹⁷ The drivers received more of a firsthand look at the battlefield. One driver stated that the men in the trenches were covered by those either rotting, half-dead, warm, or wounded.¹⁸ The ambulance drivers picked these men up and carried them back to the rear post, where they were checked by medics and had their wounds dressed.¹⁹ From there the men were divided into "slightly wounded" or "needing an operation" and then taken to the respective hospital.²⁰ Within the hospitals, many injured men died. One surgeon, the *medecin en chef* at Fort de Vaux, had so many piles of dead bodies that he asked ambulance drivers to take the bodies back to Verdun. The idea of hauling stacks of bodies was considered a waste of the gas and time for ambulance drivers, so the compromise was to take fresh bodies back to the field and not the ones that were "cold and stiff".²¹

Ambulance drivers were instructed to only pick up men in need of a hospital, or the dead.²² Preston Lockwood recounted a story of a man on the side of the road waving frantically

¹⁵ Robert William Service, "Priscilla," *Internet Poem*, <https://internetpoem.com/robert-william-service/priscilla-poem/>.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Klekowski, *Eyewitness to the Great War: American Writers, Reporters, Volunteers, and Soldiers in France 1914-1918*, 27.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Arlen J. Hansen, *Gentlemen Volunteers: The Story of the American Ambulance Drivers in the First World War* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 2011), 61.

²² *Ibid.*, 59.

at him to stop. When Lockwood knew that his orders were only to pick up those in need of a trip to the hospital, nevertheless, he slowed down to see what the man desired, in order to discover the man was simply thankful for the American being there and aiding the wounded.²³

While Mitchell writes home of the hard work he endured as an ambulance driver, he also mentioned that Rainey was the “most interesting and essentially a man, and what he doesn’t know about hunting isn’t known. He talks by the hour every night after supper and it’s a tribute to his conversational cleverness the way we all gradually drop our own talk and listen to him.”²⁴ Mitchell also writes of Rainey’s motion pictures, how “there’s more bluff than you would think in them.”²⁵ Mitchell’s last mention of Rainey stated that Rainey had left Mitchell alone in the room they shared and gone to Biarritz.²⁶ While Rainey’s work in the field driving an ambulance was over for the time, he was still on the lookout for adventure. In the middle of the war, Rainey always kept his eyes and ears open for the next big adventure.

The *New York Times* reported in June of 1914, that Rainey was headed to Africa for a new hunt. This hunt was to collect insects and snakes.²⁷ Rainey’s time in Africa was not anything like the previous time. While on his hunt for insects and other specimens, the Germans interrupted him. Rainey was not happy about the Germans encroaching on his hunting grounds and decided to take matters into his own hands. Rainey sent bloodhounds to track down the Germans and drive them out.²⁸ As Rainey was collecting snakes and insects, he was also in service with the British to make sure Germans stayed out of his hunting grounds. His estate in

²³ Ibid., 60.

²⁴ Van Schaiak, *With a Military Ambulance in France, 1914-1915*, 34-35.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 36.

²⁷ “Rainey Off on New Hunt,” *The New York Times*, June 24, 1914.

²⁸ Mitch Stennett, “Rainey: The Man Who Knew no Fear,” *Southern Sentinel*, May 19, 1977, The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

Nairobi, British East Africa, was where he entered the service of the British Army and gained the title of Captain.²⁹ His title was likely in the fact that Rainey helped to corral the Germans; and some say he was responsible for the Germans leaving Kenya and never coming back.³⁰ His hunting trip to Africa was a success in that Rainey drove the Germans away from his hunting grounds and continued his hunting. Rainey's main objective was to work with the American Museum of Natural History and other places to bring back specimens for research and study, but he once again sought to serve not only those around him, but the world at large with his actions against the Germans. Rumors abound about the work he did in Africa, with some saying that he built the railroads and then proceeded to tear them to pieces so that the Germans might not use them. The railroads in Africa were limited, but Rainey kept the railroads in good condition in the areas where he liked to hunt, so it is an unlikely rumor that he destroyed the railroads just to keep the Germans away.

By the time 1917 rolled around, Rainey released pictures of more of his expeditions to the public. George J. Garrett notes in his book that in the spring of 1917, he went to see on the screen "polar and African pictures of that adventurous spirit, Paul J. Rainey."³¹ While his pictures were released in the spring, the United States was preparing to go to war. President Wilson urged Congress to make a declaration of war, and on April 2, 1917, Congress did. The United States officially entered the Great War.³² Rainey was still a well-respected adventurer and cameraman, even though he had taken time away from his normal role to help in the war effort. When America entered the war, Rainey headed out to be of service once again in Europe.

²⁹ "The Career of an Outdoors Man," *The Outlook*, October 3, 1923, 170-171.

³⁰ Bill Miles, "The Mysterious Paul J. Rainey," *The New Albany Gazette*, The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

³¹ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 147.

³² Newton Baker, *Why We Went to War* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1936), 1.

Paul J. Rainey was listed among the passengers on the SS *La Touraine* on June 2, 1917, and one of the passengers, Albert Edward MacDougall of the “Harvard Section” mentioned Rainey in his letter home.³³ Rainey was aboard the ship with volunteers from Harvard. His role: to continue his work with the Red Cross in France that he had done before America entered the war. The voyage to Europe was an adventure; MacDougall talked about the sensation Rainey caused on the ship. While sailing over to France, Rainey wanted to get a video of the gun on deck in action, but without actual ammunition. Those on deck prepared the gun for Rainey to film, but the ship’s gun was actually loaded, and the shell nearly hit another cruiser. This caused quite the reaction but made for great film footage for Rainey.³⁴ Once ashore in France the gun controller was arrested.

During the war, Newton Baker and General John “Blackjack” Pershing helped to lead the American forces in France. Pershing was a key player and the lead American general during the war. He took a ragtag army of ill-prepared men to victory across Europe. His work and his status as the top American general gave him power over decisions made in France. Pershing worked closely with Newton Baker as well. Baker worked to make sure Pershing received the resources he needed in France and throughout all of Europe where the Allied powers were fighting. One of Baker’s resources was Paul. J. Rainey.

Leading up to Rainey’s arrival in France, Secretary of War Newton Baker sent an introductory message to Pershing explaining that Rainey was there “to make a series of motion picture films to be used in Red Cross propaganda in the United States.”³⁵ Rainey worked under

³³ James William Davenport Seymour, *History of the American Field Service in France, Friends of France, 1914-1917 Volume 2* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), 381.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Greenwood, *John J. Pershing and the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I, 1917-1919: April 7-September 30, 1917*, 166-167.

the French government, and the letter stated that Baker was aware of the limitations caused by working with the French.³⁶ Baker also stated: “I will be very glad to have you show him any courtesies and extend him any aid that falls within your power.”³⁷ The telegram depicts the influence Rainey exerted not just among the public, but among high government and military officials as well. He was respected as a cameraman and regarded as the best person for the job to promote the war effort in America. His talents with the camera as well as his fame and fortune helped to garner him a position of influence among Pershing and Baker.

General Pershing wrote in his diary on June 17, 1917, that he met Rainey, and that Rainey would “be in charge of all photography and moving picture work for the Red Cross.”³⁸ From there, Rainey received an approval of his appointment from the Secretary of War, “as official public motion picture photographer with Army in France, as per your recommendation in telegram June 27, 1917.”³⁹

Rainey worked with the Red Cross filming pictures of the United States training camps in France and also along the Belgian lines. These films were used in the United States to encourage people to support the Red Cross, volunteer, and be a part of the war effort at home.⁴⁰ In the official telegram to Pershing, Baker specifically stated that the goal of Rainey’s motion pictures was to promote propaganda among the people at home.⁴¹

From being an ambulance driver to now a photographer, Rainey was on his way to making a mark in the First World War. Photography during the early twentieth century was just

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰ “Notes from Paris Office on American Commission in France,” *Red Cross Bulletin Volume 1*, October 29, 1917, n.p.

⁴¹ Greenwood, *John J. Pershing and the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I, 1917-1919: April 7-September 30, 1917*, 166-167.

becoming a popular way to showcase events. The cameramen of World War I used a line that described their work: “Go to hell if you must but bring back pictures of it!”⁴² And that is exactly what these men did, traveling to the front lines to capture the war effort for those back home. One of the most famous World War I photographers was Albert Dawson with the American Correspondent Film Company. In many ways he set the standard for cameramen on the Western Front during World War I. While Rainey is rarely mentioned in the World War I chronicle of photographers, he was right there in the middle of it all. With his camera skills, wealth, and connections, Rainey took on more work than an average man behind the camera.

Rainey later secured a position taking motion pictures for the Red Cross in France. His position was outlined in a document explaining that his film was for public use and was distributed throughout France for the purpose of promoting Red Cross work and what was occurring on the battlefield. Rainey himself paid for some of the costs with \$50,000 of his own money.⁴³

Upon finishing his assignments with the Red Cross, Rainey worked in other locations and sought to travel on new expeditions. Under the American Museum of Natural History, Rainey worked with them to set up another expedition. This time the expedition was to a new part of the world for Rainey - Asia. Rainey commissioned Edmund Heller - who traveled with him before to join him. Therefore, in 1918, Rainey traveled under the American Museum of Natural History on the Third Asiatic Expedition. This expedition was financed by Rainey himself. Heller,

⁴² Ron Van Dopperen and Cooper C. Graham, *Shooting the Great War: Albert Dawson and the American Correspondent Film Company 1914-1918* (Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2013), 17.

⁴³ General John Pershing, Cablegrams, National Archives, Washington, D.C., https://s3.amazonaws.com/NARAprdstorage/lz/microfilm-publications/M930-Cablegrams_GHQandWarDept_1917-1919/0001/M930_0001/images/0038.jpg.

accompanying Rainey, worked alongside Rainey on this expedition while Rainey was the official photographer for the Czech Army crisscrossing Russia.

The Czechs were a misplaced group of about 100,000 who were on their way across Russia to their new homeland. While traversing across Russia, the Czechs were involved unintentionally in the Bolshevik Revolution and aiding the Whites. The situation was complicated, and United States President Woodrow Wilson sought to intervene and help the Czechs get across Russia.

General William Graves was in charge of the American forces who were in Russia. His guiding handbook was President Wilson's "Aide Memoire," which outlined the steps that Graves took in Russia. The expedition for Graves was not an easy one and as he was told: "Watch your step; you will be walking on eggs loaded with dynamite. God bless you and good-bye."⁴⁴ These words were stated by Secretary of War Newton Baker when he hand-delivered the "Aide Memoire" to General William Graves in the Kansas City train station. By giving General Graves the task of leading the American Expeditionary Force into Russia, this hand-delivery of direct orders officially started the American Intervention into Russia.

Within the "Aide Memoire," President Wilson wrote out his objective for going into Russia and asked General Graves to complete it. While there was hesitation and confusion as to the role that the American Expeditionary Force played in Russia, General Graves followed orders as close as possible to what Wilson presented in the "Aide Memoire". Secretary of War, Baker, stated to General Graves, "In a vastly confused situation your duties were frequently delicate and difficult."⁴⁵ Surrounding these circumstances were pieces of a puzzle that took time

⁴⁴ William S. Graves, *America's Siberian Adventure 1918-1920* (New York: Peter Smith, 1941), 4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, xxi.

to fall into place. American interests in Russia were tied to the Czech Legion, who tried to use the Trans-Siberian Railroad to leave the Eastern Front of World War I and travel to France; these interests ultimately led to the American intervention in Russia under the leadership of General Graves.

General Graves and the “Aide Memoire” were the guiding principles for the Americans in Russia. Rainey’s notes acknowledge that he was there during September of 1918 through February 1919. Rainey worked with Colonel Landon in Russia to put together a report of what all was occurring. The situation in Russia was well documented by Wilson’s network of spies and General Graves. Through his spy network, Wilson gained information that led to his intervention into Russia. Wilson stated in his “Aide Memoire”, “the only legitimate object for which American or allied troops can be employed ... is to guard military stores which may be ... needed by the Russian forces in the organization of their own self-defense ... For helping the Czecho-Slovaks there is immediate necessity and sufficient justification.”⁴⁶ The goal of the Americans was to: “consolidate their forces and to get into successful cooperation with their Slavic kinsman.”⁴⁷ American forces intervened in two locations in Russia 5,679.95 miles from each other. One was in Archangel for the purpose of keeping American supplies from the Bolsheviks. This decision to intervene led to the death of 200 Americans, some of whom their bodies are forever lost in the deep of Northern Russia.⁴⁸ The other intervention in Russia was in Vladivostok on the Eastern side; and while there was a purpose for safeguarding American supplies and weapons, it also included helping with the Czechoslovakian Legion.

⁴⁶ James Carl Nelson, *The Polar Bear Expedition: The Heroes of America’s Forgotten Invasion of Russia 1918-1919* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2019), 14.

⁴⁷ Graves, *America’s Siberian Adventure 1918-1920*, 37.

⁴⁸ Nelson, *The Polar Bear Expedition: The Heroes of America’s Forgotten Invasion of Russia 1918-1919*, 15.

One of Wilson's spies along the Trans-Siberian railroad was Paul J. Rainey. He was disguised as the official photographer of the Czech army and as the financier of the Third Asiatic Expedition. Rainey took careful notes of the movement of troops and other officials along the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Traveling the Siberian Railroad from Harbin to Ekaterinburg, Rainey reported his findings in his *General Observations on the Situation in Russia*.⁴⁹ Traveling with Edmund Heller, the two of them were supposedly photographers for the Czech Legion but were also collecting animals and other natural items to take back to the Natural Museum of American History. *The Scientific Monthly* reported, "The Third Asiatic Zoological Expedition, conducted by Mr. Paul J. Rainey, assisted by Mr. Edmond Heller, collected in adjoining regions. The work was financed entirely by Mr. Rainey."⁵⁰ While their purpose was curiously defined, the papers left by Rainey confirm the spy mission that happened alongside the scientific adventures. Traveling alongside Colonel Edwin Landon, American attaché on duty in Siberia, Rainey got a firsthand view at the situation in Russia. He documented troop movements as well as supplies, and the people that he met and asked about situations and how everything was panning out. He reported back to an anonymous group of people he referred to as "sirs".⁵¹ While he reported on the movements of troops, he also took photographs to back up the words that he sent to those receiving his letters.

Making use of his camera across the Trans-Siberian Railroad, Rainey captured images of Siberian wastelands, trains holding soldiers and refugees, and the aftermath of war in Russia. His photographs show the horrors of war and the people displaced from their homelands.⁵² The

⁴⁹ Paul J. Rainey, *General Observations on the Situation in Russia*, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Wichita State University.

⁵⁰ "The American Museum of Natural History in 1918," *The Scientific Monthly*, 1919, 477–79.

⁵¹ Rainey, *General Observations on the Situation in Russia*, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Wichita State University.

⁵² Paul J. Rainey, *Photographs*, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Wichita State University.

photographs and the papers that Rainey wrote confirm his secret work in Siberia.⁵³ Rainey also left a detailed video of the last known home of Czar Nicholas and other Bolshevik prisoners, giving a voice to those who may never otherwise be known to history. His photographs and film footage are some of the few that are available in relation to the American Intervention in Russia.

In his expense report, Rainey outlined his travel and other personal expenses along the way - starting in the United States and continuing to Siberia. In July, he traveled from New York to Washington several times, paying for his lunch during those travel days. He bought a passport for two dollars and booked a ship from San Francisco. While in San Francisco he bought notebooks, cotton, needle, and thread. On August 29th, Rainey arrived in Peking, China, and took the railroad to Tieutin, and on September 8th purchased food for his Siberian journey. Later in September, he stopped for dinner at Harbin and spent four dollars on his dinner. He also expensed laundry in Irkutsk; and in January of 1919, he arrived back in San Francisco.⁵⁴

While in Russia, Rainey took careful notes on the movements of troops, documented the sentiment of the locals, and met with important people to gain information. Rainey stated about the Russian officers: "The Russian officers are the poorest lot of excuses I have ever seen for so-called men. They dress beautifully, go armed to the teeth and sit around cafes with women and drink."⁵⁵ Rainey continued to outline the fact that the Russians have no good officers, only young untrained boys, and quickly pointed out the difficulty in raising an army without help. Commenting on the Bolshevik propaganda, Rainey mentioned the quickness of officers to switch sides and join a more appealing army. While traveling the railroad, Rainey noted the refugees

⁵³ Various Authors, *National Cyclopedia of American Biography Volume 19*, 144-145.

⁵⁴ Paul J. Rainey, *Expense Report*, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Wichita State University.

⁵⁵ Rainey, *General Observations on the Situation in Russia*, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Wichita State University.

crowding the stations and the trains, people who had been displaced by the Bolsheviks.⁵⁶ People were going both ways along the railroad, some being displaced by the Bolsheviks and others by the Czechs. The displaced people were well- dressed and well- fed, so they had never done any hard work. Rainey also reported on the Czechs waiting for American help with supplies and food, and how just a few Americans sent to the front would encourage the Czechs in their journey across Russia. The situation in Russia caused Rainey to stat that, while backing the Russian government was an option, American troops would have to remain for possibly twenty years to ensure stability. He believed that as soon as the American troops departed, there would be an immediate Bolshevik takeover of Russia.⁵⁷

The Japanese also sent troops into Russia to protect their own assets and glean information from the failure of the Russian government. Their primary goal was to see what they could accomplish in Russia and to assess their accomplishment with the idea of future military operations.⁵⁸ In his report, Rainey noted how obnoxious the Japanese were and their desire to annoy everyone. His observation was that they were given these orders by their own government. The Japanese disturbed the British, Chinese, and American people who were in Russia, and sent supplies into Siberia that included war material. Rainey stated that, “Everywhere you find Japs in this country you immediately hear stories of their brutality.”⁵⁹

On September 24, 1918, Paul J. Rainey reported that upon arriving at Irkutsk, the 2nd division of the Czech army was leaving for Omsk.⁶⁰ Rainey noted a fight, and the Russians tried

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Walter E. Grunden, *The Journal of Asian Studies* 72, no. 1, 2013, 200–202, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23357532>.

⁵⁹ Rainey, *General Observations on the Situation in Russia*, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Wichita State University.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

to disarm the Czechs of all their weapons. Thirty rifles were retained to guard the rations; however, but the Czechs had some bombs with them unbeknownst to the Russians and took the town from the Bolsheviks.⁶¹ The Bolsheviks then tried to attack them from across the river; and when the Bolsheviks tried to cross over, the Czechs slaughtered them with machine guns that the Czechs had captured from Irkutsk.⁶² Reporting that the town was in bad condition after the skirmish, Rainey stated that he had not seen a town so “riddled by bullet holes.”⁶³ In his report, Rainey stated that the Czechs were in charge of the railroad to China and from there the Japanese were in charge, who wanted all socialism be kicked out of Russia. While in Irkutsk Rainey learned General Gaida had returned to take command of the Russians and Czechs. General Gaida was the leader of the movement the Czechs were making across Russia. Originally in the Russian army, Gaida took command of the Czech Legion when they broke from the Bolsheviks.⁶⁴ “The movement was a concentrated movement, and at a designated time, all train commanders were instructed to take over the towns.”⁶⁵ The observations of Rainey in Irkutsk confirm the directed movement that General Gaida pursued.

Rainey ate lunch with a Czech captain on General Gaida’s staff who believed that there would be trench warfare at the front, come winter. He bragged that his men fought in twenty below zero. The captain on Gaida’s staff said he felt the Russians were friendly with the Germans, and was certain there was something, “being hatched”.⁶⁶ From there, he went on to

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Two great Czech generals, Cecek and Gaida. Cecek wears the five decorations and throat insignia. Lieut. General Radula Gaida, the man who won fame when the Czechs drove through the Bolshevik lines across Siberia, is at his left. They are standing in a group of Allied officers of high degree., 1919. [29 September date received] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017670117/>.

⁶⁵ Graves, *America’s Siberian Adventure 1918-1920*, 42.

⁶⁶ Rainey, *General Observations on the Situation in Russia*, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Wichita State University.

mention the supplies the Czechs needed, and Colonel Landon (traveling with Rainey) told him the Americans could likely spare some supplies for the Czechs. The next day, Rainey discovered that the Russians were swapping German officers for Russian prisoners.⁶⁷

These papers were sent back to the people Rainey was working with to document the details of the American intervention in Russia. Along with the papers, Rainey took photographs and video footage of what was happening in Russia. Those photos and the footage were used in various places once Rainey sent it to those he was working with as a spy. Rainey took careful notes and kept a record of his travels, and a detailed record of the money he spent while in Russia. His expedition was kept secret; many of the sources of his time there are limited in detail and scope. While this was one of his greatest contributions to World War I, Rainey was involved in several other adventures across the world during the war.

While his work in Russia was documented by Rainey himself, other services Rainey was involved in lacked the sources and information to prove them. Various stories surround the legend of Rainey and his time in World War I. Rumors abound in local history about Rainey and his airplane; this information has been passed down through local history and newspaper interviews but was not documented enough to prove the truth of the details. Rainey's time on the Eastern front, while an undercover mission, showed his desire to serve his country. Not only did he serve on the Eastern front, but the Western front as well.

Rainey also spent time on the Western Front in one of the newest forms of travel for that era - the airplane. George Garrett states: "The daring deeds of Paul during the World War in covering the enemy's lines in his plane, taking scientific views, in conjunction with his daring

⁶⁷Ibid.

deeds of sportsmanship appealed to the world at large.”⁶⁸ Planes were a new phenomenon to the world of war. They had marks that identified them with the country that they were associated with. The Allies generally have a “circular target-like insignia with a center surrounded by two rings ... America[‘s] was white, blue, and red.”⁶⁹ Some of the early American pilots were Corporal James Bach and William Thaw. These two men set records for planes in World War I. Rainey flew over enemy lines in Europe as well as in Africa. His goal with flying over enemy lines was to take notes and photographs used by the Allied forces for planning their troop movements. While serving in the Great War was Rainey’s main way of contributing, he also financially contributed to the war effort.

Contributing to local causes, Rainey helped to buy war bonds and stamps from local college students at Blue Mountain College to aid them and to assist with the war effort. While he was generous with some folks, he did take it seriously on his own account when people asked for more than he personally thought was reasonable. One story notes that some other girls from Blue Mountain College went to ask him for money after hearing about his generosity to the previous students and he wrote out a check for them. They were disappointed in the amount and said that they expected more of Rainey. Rainey asked for the check back and ripped it in two. He stated that greedy people would not get his support.⁷⁰ Generosity came and went as Rainey saw fit; but Rainey’s generosity, not just during war time, was a central part of his life.⁷¹

Rainey bought and outfitted three ambulances for the war, drove them, and trained others to work on the grueling battlefields of the Western front. His support of the war effort went

⁶⁸ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 167.

⁶⁹ Klekowski, *Eyewitness to the Great War: American Writers, Reporters, Volunteers, and Soldiers in France 1914-1918*, 123.

⁷⁰ Jill Smith, interview by Peyton Holliday, New Albany, June 9, 2022.

⁷¹ Brown, *History of Tippah County Mississippi: The First Century*, 306.

beyond what many others could afford to do. While the evidence remains sparse, Rainey did help to gather information and pictures from the war effort to bring to the public and the American government. Research is sparse on exactly all the efforts Rainey was involved in in Russia and in other places, but there is enough evidence to prove he was indeed involved in various missions not well publicized, of which some documents have not been disclosed to the public.

Rainey sought to support the war effort through all the means he could and was involved in as much of the action as was possible for one to. While not holding an official title in the war, he had his hands full with duties beyond what the average soldier was ever be able to do. Due to his wealth and fame, Rainey had some clout in the world, but his missions went beyond what those with wealth and fame were capable of in relation to war time. While not all of the information is available, enough evidence exists to prove that Rainey did indeed work on a secret spy mission at least in Russia, and possibly in other places as well. The notes he left behind from Russia prove that; but his time on the Western Front is more difficult to prove. Overall, Rainey contributed to the war effort in massive ways and sought to serve not just his own country, but the entire Allied cause on the Western Front, in Africa, and also in Russia.

Paul J. Rainey was an exceptional serviceman to both his country and the world during the Great War. He served in various capacities, seeking to make a difference in the lives of those around him. Throughout his times as an ambulance driver, airplane pilot, and a spy in Russia, Rainey left traces of solid work and an outstanding record. While many of his deeds have been lost to the archives of history - his service largely forgotten, and oral legends almost completely orally transmitted faded through time, Rainey left an example for others to follow, demonstrating that someone with means can make a difference and serve the world for good.

Rainey's adventurous spirit propelled him to be a part of making history all across the world. In each circumstance, he placed his full energy into service for his country and the betterment of the world. When the war ended, Rainey's adventurous spirit continued on, and he left his mark on the world in more ways than one.

CHAPTER 4: Death and Legacy

“To Paul J. Rainey the whole world represented a midnight moonlit copse... as he sailed toward the Capre, recollect, with that curious vividness which impending disaster will sometimes give to the memory, the frozen loon - crowned ledgers of Cape York.”¹

After the Great War, Rainey did not rein in his ambitious spirit at all. He continued to expand his influence and personal wealth. Rainey took hunting and everything else he did beyond what some would think humanly possible. His adventurous spirit and desire to try for the impossible gained him a world-wide reputation as a big game hunter, filmmaker, and Great War veteran. While all of these things were important to Rainey, he spent the rest of his life pursuing his big game hunting, and amassing land holdings in various places around the world. Friends, family, and those who surrounded him in his work knew that Rainey required of them time, energy, and the ability to give their all to whatever task was at hand.

After purchasing an estate in Africa, Rainey organized hunting and polo games both at his estate in Mississippi and his estate in Africa. These foxhound trials were an immaculate spread; Rainey flaunted the best of his land and what he had to offer. George Garrett and other foxhunters of the day left behind pieces of the stories built around Rainey, his Mississippi estate, and his hunting career.

Rainey would bring in the best types of foxes and other types of hunting animals for his guests to hunt. The hunting was organized by divisions and Rainey had plenty of foxes placed throughout the forests for the judges to keep track. Garrett writes in his account about the foxes being plentiful, and how the hounds would run in organized divisions to a point where some could not be followed by the judges due to their unprecedented speed. The foxes dashed in

¹ Powys, *Black Laughter*, 163-164.

various directions due to the thickness of the forest. Garrett calculated the runs the hounds took, while other hunters charged in various directions after the foxes. He also discussed how Rainey rode and how he had never seen someone ride so expertly. Rainey calculated his speed with that of the hounds and kept an eye out for all the action while being right in the middle of it as well. Rainey's skills enabled him to win the foxhound trial and garner respect among the greatest hunters of the day.²

Hunting took more than the skill of the dogs sniffing out foxes, but also on the rider and how well they could manage a horse. Rainey was well respected as a rider throughout the local area. Carl Akeley spoke of Rainey's riding and horse maneuvers stating in a retelling of some of his African adventures: "Rainey jumped off his horse, threw the reins over a bush, and grabbed his rifle from its boot." Rainey rode after lions' full speed, never once giving thought for his life, but only for the hunt that he was on.³ Hunting around the world, Rainey spent hours upon hours on horseback learning skills and putting his humanity to the test. A key to Rainey's success was his ability to choose the best horses and spend top dollar for them.

One fascinating story documented by Shelley was the vast amount of money Rainey poured into his hunting expeditions. Having gone to a horse racing event in Africa, Shelley watched the event and afterwards bought all the winning horses with money that Rainey had trusted him with. These horses were used by Rainey and his crew to go swiftly after lions once the dogs had cornered them.⁴ The legacy that Rainey left with his big game hunting skills and stories has been well documented by locals who experienced his wild ideas firsthand.

² Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 148-150

³ Akeley, *In Brightest Africa*, 74.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

In 1923, Rainey traveled to his estate in Africa for the last time. On board the ship with him was his sister, Grace Rainey Rogers, his current girlfriend May Peters Graham, and various others Rainey was planning to spend several years on his African estate. While on the ship Rainey was found dead one morning and his body was thrown overboard. The accounts of his death are various and mysterious; there are even accounts stating that he did not really die.

Rainey's friend George Garrett recounts the death of Rainey in his book. Rainey was on board the ship en route to Africa when he gathered his friends and family for a celebration of his forty-sixth birthday. A light was on in his room that night around 1 o'clock in the morning, and he was discovered lifeless. Upon this discovery, his body was buried at sea.⁵ Garrett stated of Rainey, "May the career on earth of this departed and good Samaritan bring that heavenly repose of spirit in the great beyond that God alone can give to the cheerful giver. The world would be better and happier if we have more Paul Rainey's."⁶

Another account stated that a mixed couple had been dancing on board, and Rainey did not approve of the dancing. He marched over and broke up the couple, commenting that there should never be racial integration of that sort. The man walked away, murmuring under his breath that Rainey would never live to see his next birthday. Some thought this man was a sorcerer of sorts because by the next day, which was Rainey's 46th birthday, Rainey was dead.⁷

Other accounts stated that Rainey had died from a heart issue caused by an overdose of alcohol. Due to a heart condition, he was unable to drink excessive amounts of alcohol. This account was repeated as often as the other accounts and not one of them has proved to be right or wrong.

⁵ Garrett, *Fifty Years with Fox and Hounds*, 163.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 167.

⁷ Bill Miles, "The Mysterious Paul J. Rainey," The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

Some people, in the Tippah County area believed that he never died that night, but only faked his death. His girlfriend May Peters Graham suspected Rainey wanted out of his promise of marriage to her, so faked his death. In her own account she stated that the body was thrown overboard before she could see it, and therefore Rainey, in her mind, had not died that night. Those back at his Tippah Lodge waited for him to come home because they could not believe he was truly dead. Rumors abounded that he still walked around his Tippah Lodge at night and offered people money for various things that they needed at the time.⁸

Whether or not he died that night, the newspapers around the world heralded his death. Foreign papers and American papers wrote of his death along the route to Africa, and how he was buried at sea. Many of the papers outlined his life and legacy. He was portrayed as larger than life, and his death as the death of ideas and plans - even the death of a man who had done much for his local community and for the world.

While his death was announced in all the major papers, his legacy was left to collect dust in the archives of history, except in one small corner of Northeast Mississippi. Tippah County in Mississippi still experienced the influence of Rainey even after his death. Rainey brought to Tippah County a wealth of enterprises and, with his death, left a legend and mysterious circumstances in his wake that continue to intrigue people throughout the local area. In the wake of his death, his sister sought to preserve his legacy and tell the world of his accomplishments. Rainey's sister Grace Rainey Rogers was not as well-known as her brother at the time, but by the time of her death she was well known as a philanthropist to honor her family across the United States.

⁸ Ibid.

Grace Rainey Rogers commissioned a biography to be written on her brother, but that biography was never published. Her last contributions were donations of the gates, in memory of her brother, at the Bronx Zoo in New York City and Paul J. Rainey's land in Louisiana. Grace left her own legacy with her love of art and love of philanthropy. At the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the auditorium is named after Rainey's sister; she personally donated over 400 items to the museum. Rainey's legacy lived on while his sister lived; but at her death, his legacy changed hands again. Grace died in 1943 and left a wealth of land, money, and resources to her niece. Part of that land was Rainey's Tippah Lodge.

When Rainey died in 1923, the lodge was left virtually the way Rainey left it when he went on his voyage to Africa. Nothing was changed; the lodge sat on the property untouched for years. When Grace died in 1943, there was still nothing done to the property. Not until 1965 was an auction held at the Rainey estate for all the items held in the house. Rainey's collection of animal pelts, furniture, film reels, and other items all were auctioned off to the public. People from all around came to see what might be of interest to them to buy, or out of pure curiosity as to how Rainey lived his life in Mississippi.⁹ The auction was the last of the Rainey estate, and the house was sold.

Pieces of Rainey's life are scattered across Northeast Mississippi and other nearby areas. In 1994, a local museum hosted a day where people brought their Rainey artifacts for the public to view. Vice President of the Historical Society stated: "Faulkner, Rainey, and the railroad are three things we definitely want to include and make a major part of the museum for they have been three of the largest influences on the county and area."¹⁰ Gathering the pieces and

⁹ Ed Holliday, interviewed by Peyton Holliday, September 5, 2021.

¹⁰ "Henderson Donates old Rainey Projector," *New Albany Gazette*, June 17, 1994, Union County Historical Society Archives and Special Collections.

information about Rainey's life shows how influential and legendary he was not just for the world, but for Northeast Mississippi.

Later the house was torn down, and another house was built on its old location. That house is still standing, along with the polo barn and a few other pieces from when Rainey was living there. Occasionally, at auctions, antique stores, and other places in Northeast Mississippi, pieces from the Rainey estate become available for sale. His intriguing legacy is still the talk of those in Tippah County and the surrounding areas.

Rainey's death was written about by those local to his Tippah Lodge and also by those who knew him well. His legacy also lives on in a couple of literary pieces. One of the most famous authors to memorialize the life of Rainey was Mississippi author William Faulkner. Faulkner's own father, Murray Falkner, worked with Rainey. Murray advised Rainey on his stables and "stocked the 11,000 acres with foxes and pheasants."¹¹ Due to this connection, Faulkner was familiar with the name and legend of Rainey. While there is little evidence if William ever went to the Rainey estate, he most likely heard stories and knew enough about Rainey to present him well in his pieces of fiction. Only a small mention, but nevertheless Faulkner introduced Rainey in his book *The Reivers*¹² as a side character:

Paul Rainey also, who liked our country enough--or anyway our bear and deer and panther enough--to use some of the Wall Street money to own enough Mississippi land for him and his friends to hunt them in: a hound man primarily, who took his pack of bear hounds to Africa to see what they would do on lion or vice versa.¹³

Faulkner also wrote a short story entitled *Fox Hunt*. This short story tells a tale about Harrison Blair, who is based off Rainey. The story is about a man who loves to fox hunt and is

¹¹ Joseph Blotner, *Faulkner: A Biography* (New York: Random House, 1974) Volume I, 645, Archives and Special Collections University of Mississippi Libraries.

¹² *Ibid.*, 196.

¹³ William Faulkner, *The Reivers*, (New York: Random House, 1962), 82.

disinterested in his wife due to her not being a skilled rider. Faulkner paints a picture of Rainey through fiction.¹⁴ Another Faulkner story involves a guy named Sells Wells who is the “owner of a plantation measured not in acres but in miles.”¹⁵ Even though a small literary character, Rainey’s memory still lives on in works of fiction thanks to the writing of William Faulkner.

While Rainey himself never knew his influence, he inspired filmmakers, dog trainers, and others to follow in his footsteps. Local dog trainer Clyde Morton used the skills he learned growing up near Rainey in Union County to win eleven national championships for the bird dog hunting trials. To this day, Morton has yet to lose that record.¹⁶

Another couple of people inspired by Rainey were Martin and Osa Johnson. These filmmakers saw what Rainey did in Africa and decided to follow in his footsteps. Together they traveled the world, shot film footage of wild animals, and brought the footage back to the United States. The popularity of these films led Osa Johnson to write her own book of their adventures. Within her book she mentions Rainey’s waterhole and other places that she and her husband went to film and work with wildlife.

Llewelyn Powys remembers Rainey in his book as well. Powys stated, “And like a half-educated farm boy I do not suppose that once during the whole forty-six years of his consciousness he felt the slightest misgiving for the havoc that his presence brought to the wildlife of the countries he visited.”¹⁷ Powys remembered Rainey for his destruction of wildlife, not so much for the legacy of a big game hunter. He ended his portion on Rainey by saying: “I

¹⁴ William Faulkner, *Collected Stories of William Faulkner*, “Fox Hunt” (New York: Vintage International, 1995).

¹⁵ Joseph Blotner, *Faulkner: A Biography* (New York: Random House, 1974) Volume II, 1455, Archives and Special Collections University of Mississippi Libraries.

¹⁶ William Smith, “2021 National Championship Report,” *Ames Plantation*, <https://www.amesplantation.org/2021-national-championship-report>.

¹⁷ Powys, *Black Laughter*, 164.

can still hear his voice, that powerful deep-lunged American voice, cheering on his hound, ‘Ring’, as we drew near to a lion at bay in one of the glades of the Karianduce Valley.”¹⁸

Binks, hired by Rainey to work on film, remembered Rainey as well and related a story of Rainey in the African bush. Water was scarce and muddy, so those drinking it were not fulfilling their thirst. Rainey was a teetotaler; but having been fed up with the coffee-tinted earthy liquid from waterholes, accepted a bottle.”¹⁹ Those with Rainey had tough stomachs, but Rainey had an issue after downing the bottle. “Less than minutes after finishing his bottle, he began to clutch his stomach. His face became distinctly pallid even in the ruddy glow of the campfire and his big frame was shaken by frequent convulsions.”²⁰ After searching through the medicines they had, there were no Epsom salts, so the men went out to a farm some miles away and obtained some Glauber salts. The salts cured Rainey, but not without some frequent runs to bring out the old beer he had drunk earlier.²¹

Brian Herne writes of Rainey and his hunting: “Paul Rainey was neither fainthearted nor content merely to listen to the accounts of others. Rainey was a keen hunter. He was also a skilled rider, a fine shot, and generally well liked in Africa.”²² On top of that, Herne noted how Rainey had ridden lions, making the experience one worth watching.

Pascal James Imperato writes in his book that “Rainey comes closest to H. Rider Haggard’s fictional character, Allan Quartermain.” This character was the hero in books like *King Solomon’s Mines* and others. These novels, set in 1885, describe a man full of endurance

¹⁸ Ibid., 165.

¹⁹ Binks, *African Rainbow*, 116.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Herne, *White Hunters*, 79.

and great physical strength, while being resourceful, and courageous. He brings the “ethics of the English hunt to the African bush.”²³

Adventures told by Rainey’s friend in books, newspaper articles, and other collections depict Rainey as a tough man, without fear, and full of energy. He never shied away from something others said was impossible. Rainey stood his ground and did business with those willing to take the price, but also willing to do as Rainey asked. Examples of this exist throughout Tippah County where Rainey’s legacy continues to live on.

The legends that Rainey left in Tippah County have echoed through the local newspapers and oral history of the area since Rainey’s death. One local newspaper clipping states that Rainey’s servants would all run to greet him as he landed his plane in Cotton Plant.²⁴ As the years passed, Rainey's legacy lasted in Mississippi, but not so much in other parts of the world where he was involved.

Rainey’s untimely death was followed by his unorthodox legacy leaving in how wake a story untouched by time. Various notations in books, memorials, and land donations were a part of his amazing legacy. Family and friends remembered him and what he had done for them, or what he had accomplished. His legacy survives, though largely forgotten by modern history outside of the fading footprints where he lived in Mississippi. Rainey was remembered through film, though his connections into the modern world have been overlooked. As previously stated, some think Rainey influenced wildlife filmmaking and changed the way the world operates with film. He accomplished achievements that allowed others to build on his original works. Rainey himself, dying a young and unexpected death was memorialized by his family and friends.

²³ Imperato, *They Married Adventure*, 96.

²⁴ Bill Miles, “The Mysterious Paul J. Rainey,” The Archives of Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain College, Blue Mountain, Mississippi.

The biggest legacy left is that of Rainey's sister Grace Rainey Rogers, who commissioned the building of the Rainey Gates at the entrance of the Bronx Zoo in New York City. These gates stand in memory of Paul J. Rainey and welcome all who enter the Bronx Zoo. Built by the sculptor Paul Manship, the gates have a fascinating history of their own. Cast in bronze in Belgium, they were shipped to the United States where they found their home at the Bronx Zoo in New York City. The mighty green gates have animals sculpted into them and ginormous doors that open and close. At the top of the gates is a lion who stands guard as the king of the gates in memory of Rainey, the great lion hunter. In 1973 a plaque was placed on the gates stating that they were a designated landmark in New York City. The Paul J. Rainey Memorial Gates are one of the last standing memorials to Rainey and his accomplishments.

While the Rainey Memorial Gates are a visible representation of Rainey's legacy, other pieces of his legacy exist in various places. In relation to the Bronx Zoo, there was an old museum called the "National Collection of Heads and Horns." This collection was once housed at the Bronx Zoo and was a key component in starting the conservation movement of big game animals and the loss of breeds due to hunting. This collection, while no longer housed in New York City, contained animals hunted by Rainey. Currently that collection is on display at the Wonders of Wildlife Museum in Springfield, Missouri.

In addition to his legacy in Mississippi, Rainey owned land in Louisiana and there his legacy continues to live on as well. Rainey went into a partnership with Edward McHenry who had made his millions with Tabasco sauce. These men had big plans to build a hunting club down in the marshes of Louisiana. Rainey and McHenry corresponded, traded hunting dogs, and compared extensively about their land holdings.²⁵ When Rainey died in 1923 the land was

²⁵ Edward McHenry To Paul J. Rainey, Paul J. Rainey Papers, Union County Historical Society Archives and Special Collections.

deeded to his sister Grace Rogers. Grace was contacted by the National Audubon Society about buying Rainey's portion of the land and using it for a wildlife sanctuary. Grace agreed, and the land was used to build the Paul J. Rainey National Wildlife Sanctuary in Louisiana. The sanctuary was meant as "a place for refuge wherein the killing, trapping or destruction by any means of wild birds and wild mammals shall not be permitted."²⁶ Today part of Rainey's legacy ironically lives on in the form of a wildlife sanctuary.

While many of the above legacies carry his name, other places display his legacy in lesser forms, but are still available to the public. One of those is Rainey's famous moving picture of the "Watering Hole", which was in his film. This scene is cast at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Enshrined in the Akeley Hall of African Mammals, this scene shows animals of all kinds gathered around a watering hole to drink. Akeley designed this part of the museum to "tell the story of jungle peace, a story that is sincere and faithful to the African beast as I have known them."²⁷ The scene of the watering hole holds a giraffe and other animals close by waiting to lick up the water. One of the animals is a subspecies of a gazelle named "Rainey's Gazelle". What sets this subspecies apart are their straight horns; they live in the open bush country. Rainey discovered this type of gazelle in his travels and hunting expeditions. At first it was considered an entirely new species. After further research some years later, it was discovered to be a subspecies. These gazelles are seen at the watering hole in the American Museum of Natural History, which in a small way preserves Rainey's memory and legacy.

Rainey's legacy has been preserved through wildlife film making, through those who remember the film Rainey created, and through the mentions of that particular work in various

²⁶ Dyana Z. Furmansky, *Rosalie Edge: Hawk of Mercy: The Activist Who Saved Nature from the Conservationists*, 103.

²⁷ Akeley, *In Brightest Africa*, 254.

books and magazines about the impact that it made on the world. The scenes from the film are still considered some of the finest representations of wildlife ever placed in moving picture format. The people that Rainey inspired and the wildlife films that followed Rainey's are numerous. While one may not be able to exactly pinpoint the places where Rainey's influence has been seen, plenty of rumors abound.

Rainey's dog trainer Er M. Shelley stated of Rainey, "I was sorry to see him go. With his brains, his money, and his courage there was nothing he couldn't have done if he'd put his mind to it."²⁸ Rainey's unique legacy continues into the 21st century through his films, memories, oral history, and the work of those who sought to make sure his legacy survives the passage of time.

²⁸ Danny Murray, *The Amazing Paul J. Rainey*, Lee County Library Mississippi Collection, 10.

CONCLUSION

“‘For God’s sake, man, be careful!’ Rainey shouted back, his voice shaking with apprehension. ‘Don’t disturb that python. This will make a hell of a picture.’”¹

Paul J. Rainey –big game hunter, filmmaker, World War I serviceman, and local history legend – changed the world in which he lived and sought to leave a legacy that others could follow and respect. Rainey’s time overseas and in his claimed hometown of Cotton Plant, Mississippi, while mostly forgotten to time, has been documented here for all who read. Rainey’s legacy is much more than that of an adventure story, it is a legacy of service and dedication to the work and the adventure that he loved best.

Rainey left records that demanded research and a willingness to find creative solutions to undiscovered research and ideas of where to look for the sources. His significance to history proves that a man with wealth and power can come into a small community and leave a lasting legacy. Rainey left the local people of Cotton Plant, Mississippi, a legend and a story passed down through the generations. Investing in his local community while also adventuring around the world, Rainey set a standard no one else has been able to duplicate. Of all the places he lived in, hunted in, traveled to, and was a part of, Rainey called his Tippah Lodge in Mississippi home. His Tippah Lodge, his home, and his legacy is remembered by those who lived around him in Cotton Plant. One man, coming into a small community and boosting the economy made a lasting difference.

While that lasting difference is still here in Mississippi, he also left legacies all over the world. Even almost one hundred years after his death, Rainey still inspires adventurous spirits

¹ J. A. Hunter and Dan Mannix, *African Bush Adventures* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1954), 183.

across the world. With his filmmaking and big game hunting, Rainey opened the door for modern natural science in the United States. Behind the scenes, Rainey financed and influenced scientific research expeditions, and sparked a desire for knowledge, adventure, and ultimately conservationism, posthumously. His life, while forgotten by many, influenced people, places, ideas, and creativity throughout the worlds of natural science and film. The epitome of Rainey's daring life can be imagined as readers read how he rode horses following trained dogs as they chased lions in a great hunt. With his wealth and connections, Rainey set the bar high for creative ideas and work. In all he did, Rainey showed courage, ingenuity, and expressed his humanity.

Overall, Rainey is significant to history with his influence in life and his surviving legacy. Influencing various aspects of history significant to our day- such as the Great War, African and Arctic exploration, and film - Rainey's bold personality spills even into his influence today. He set the standard for wildlife filmmaking and inspired others through several generations to follow in his footsteps. Forgotten to time, Paul J. Rainey left a legacy in his hometown of Cotton Plant, Mississippi, that has inspired students of local history to better understand his influence and the difference he made in various places all across the world.

The world may not remember Rainey, but Rainey is still remembered by those who experienced his influence. He is still remembered by those who have the drive to research and uncover the numerous pieces that make the puzzle more complete and demonstrate a life well lived. He is still remembered by those directly involved in all the sports, arts, and sciences that he played a part in influencing. Diaries, memories, papers, and archives of those who worked with Rainey and knew him show the influence and significance that Rainey had on his local community and the world itself. As his body rests in peace deep in the Atlantic Ocean, may his

exploits and tales of living dangerously in sport, on film, and during a world war continue to survive.

Paul J. Rainey Memorial Gates



Figure 1¹

¹ Peyton Holliday, *The Paul J. Rainey Memorial Gates*, 2022, photograph, Personal Collection of Peyton Holliday, Mississippi.

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