

University of Wisconsin Milwaukee

UWM Digital Commons

History 450: The Growth of Metropolitan
Milwaukee

History Capstone and Course Research

Fall 2022

HIST 450: Twitter Reenactment Bibliography, Fall 2022

Amanda I. Seligman

Lillian Pachner

Hayley Jasinski

Nicholas Baumgart

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.uwm.edu/his450mke>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UWM Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in History 450: The Growth of Metropolitan Milwaukee by an authorized administrator of UWM Digital Commons. For more information, please contact scholarlycommunicationteam-group@uwm.edu.

Twitter Reenactment Bibliography
Milwaukee's Mitchell Family
#MitchellsMKE

Fall 2022
History 450
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

By Lillian Pachner, Hayley Jasinski, and Nicholas Baumgart
under the supervision of Professor Amanda I. Seligman

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Acknowledgements	4
Previous History 450 Bibliographies	4
Basic Milwaukee History Sources	4
Conceptualizing and Documenting a Character	5
Mitchell Family Sites around Milwaukee	6
Alexander Mitchell	7
Timeline	7
Sources on Alexander Mitchell's life	8
Banking	10
The Economic Panic of 1837	11
George Smith	13
Martha Mitchell	15
Martha Mitchell biography	15
The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers	15
Mount Vernon	16
John Lendrum Mitchell	17
Select Primary and Secondary Sources	17
Primary Source Collections	18
Billy Mitchell	21
Primary Sources	22
Secondary Sources	23
Short Biographical Pieces	23
Shorter Pieces that Describe Billy's Views and Opinions	23
Longer Biographies	23
Cast of Court-Martial Characters	25
How Court Martial Proceedings Operate	25
The People Involved in the Court Martial	26
Ruth Mitchell	28
Calvin Coolidge	30
MacArthur Family	31
Sources on the MacArthur Family	31
Sources on Arthur MacArthur, Jr.	32
Sources on Douglas MacArthur	33
A Civil War Soldier and Veteran	35
Encyclopedia of Milwaukee Entries with Context on the Civil War	35
The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers	35
William Reed	35
Wisconsin Regimental Histories	36
Grand Army of the Republic	37

Political Cartoonist	39
Journalist	40
Civil War Nurse	42
Scottish People in Wisconsin	44
Railmen and Plankmen	45
Plank Roads	45
Railroads	45
Extras	47
Timeline of Alexander Mitchell's Life	48
Timeline of Billy Mitchell's Life	49

Acknowledgements

This document provides the foundation for the research of students in History 450. It would not exist without institutional and personal support. We gratefully acknowledge those who aided our work. We offer thanks to the UWM Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR), especially Kyla Esguerra and Nigel Rothfels. OUR supports History 450 in multiple ways, including making funding available to hire undergraduate researchers through the [SURF program](#). We thank the UWM Libraries, especially Abigail Nye in the Archives Department. Abbi consulted with us at many points along the way and provides research instruction to students in the course. Also at UWM, we thank Ashia Gripentrog for making travel arrangements. Jaclyn Kelly and Richard Hedderman of the Milwaukee Public Museum provide professional development opportunities for enrolled students. Jaclyn also directly inspired this course by looking for a partner for her longstanding practice of running Twitter reenactments through MPM's Education Department.

Previous History 450 Bibliographies

Every year, UWM student researchers prepare bibliographies for History 450. The UWM Libraries' Digital Commons hosts prior iterations of History 450 bibliographies. It is possible that at some point during the semester, you might wish to consult these works. They are:

Langenfeld, Mark E. "Research Bibliography for Students in History 450: The Growth of Metropolitan Milwaukee." 2020. [Link](#)

Pachner, Lillian, and Henry Wehrs. "The Birth of Zero: A Twitter Reenactment Bibliography." 2021. [Link](#)

Basic Milwaukee History Sources

This bibliography is customized to the History 450 course theme. You may at times wish to look for sources that are not listed here. Basic starting points for researching Milwaukee history include the following works.

Anderson Margo, and Victor Greene, eds. *Perspectives on Milwaukee's Past*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Encyclopedia of Milwaukee, edited by Margo Anderson and Amanda I. Seligman. [Link](#)

Graf, Ann M., Amanda I. Seligman, and Margo Anderson. *Bibliography of Metropolitan Milwaukee*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2014.

Gurda, John. *The Making of Milwaukee*, 4th ed. Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 2018.

Conceptualizing and Documenting a Character

Each student in History 450 is assigned to write 18 tweets from the point of view of a historical figure and 2 tweets for the narrator. Part of establishing your character is providing background information for the reenactment's audience. You will need to pick a handle for your character, build a Twitter profile, and write a post about your character's biography for the [course blog](#).

Advice for conceptualizing your character

- If your character is based on a real historical figure, much of your research will involve researching their biography.
- If your character is a composite figure, you will need to understand how historical figures with similar backgrounds experienced the period under consideration. You will need to develop a historically plausible name, backstory, and context for the figure.
- Think about whether the character's name should also be their Twitter handle.

Advice for preparing your character's Twitter account

- Keep track of the password and handle you choose!
- Indicate in the account's biography that your character is a fictional reenactment for History 450.
- Include the course hashtag (#MitchellsMKE) in the biography. The course hashtag should also appear in every tweet sent out as part of the reenactment.
- Research and use an appropriate profile image.
- For a cover image, use the one that MPM will provide. This image will lend visual coherence to the reenactment.
- If you are so inclined, tweet out a few non-chronological tweets in the days before the reenactment so anyone who lands on your Twitter page sees some content.

Advice for biography for posting on the History 450 blog

- Target length 250-500 words.
- Indicate whether your character is based on a real historical figure or is a composite.
- Include at least a paragraph about your character's historical backstory.
- Explain your character's relationship to the reenactment.
- If one is available, provide a related image. It could be the image you use for your profile.
- Remember that this is a public-facing document that should be professionally polished.

Mitchell Family Sites around Milwaukee

The work and lives of members of the Mitchell family are commemorated around the city of Milwaukee. As you travel around Milwaukee this semester, see how much you can learn about the Mitchells at the various sites that memorialize them.

Graves in Forest Home Cemetery ([Alexander Mitchell](#)) ([William Mitchell](#))

[Wisconsin Club](#). The Mitchell family mansion at 900 West Wisconsin Avenue is now the site of the Wisconsin Club. The stretch of Wisconsin Avenue where the Wisconsin Club is located was once officially called “[Grand Avenue](#).”

[Mitchell Park](#). The present site of Mitchell Park belonged to the Mitchell family in the 19th century, until John Mitchell sold and donated the land to the city of Milwaukee. For the history of Mitchell Park, see Jack R. Rongstad, “[A History of Mitchell Park in Three Eras: 1890-2021](#)” (Honors College Senior Thesis, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2021).

[Mitchell Park Domes](#). The Mitchell Park Domes, located within Mitchell Park, are named for the Mitchell family. The Mitchells also kept a conservatory at the mansion that is now the Wisconsin Club.

[Mitchell Street](#) also commemorates the Mitchells.

UWM’s own [Mitchell Hall](#) commemorates the Mitchell family.

[Meadowmere](#), centered on 57th, W. Hayes Ave., and W. Fillmore Dr. in West Allis, was the site of the Mitchell family’s “country” home. The [Aria at Mitchell Manor](#) (Mitchell Manor Senior Living Community) was part of the Meadowmere estate.

The [Mitchell Building](#) in Milwaukee’s downtown (207 East Michigan Street) was designed for Alexander Mitchell’s business operations by renowned Milwaukee architect Edward Townsend Mix. The building is on the [National Register of Historic Places](#).

[Mitchell International Airport](#) is named for General William Mitchell, who made such vociferous arguments in favor of the US building up its air forces that he was court martialed (and found guilty of insubordination). Note that it commemorates his status as a general even though he was reduced in rank. The airport’s Mitchell Gallery of Flight includes a permanent exhibit about Billy Mitchell; a bust of Mitchell is on display nearby; and the airport [website includes information](#) about Mitchell.

Alexander Mitchell

Alexander Mitchell was a Scottish lawyer who immigrated to Milwaukee in 1839 to pursue insurance banking with business mogul George Smith. Mitchell was the first Mitchell in Milwaukee and began his family's legacy of wealth and influence in the city.

Smith and Mitchell's partnership birthed the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company. Because banking was controversial in the United States in the first half of the 19th century, the fact that the company offered banking services was controversial. Smith and Mitchell were charged with scandal and corruption. They defended their work directly with the Wisconsin legislature.

Besides being a shrewd businessman, Alexander Mitchell's wealth funded several large-scale projects that can still be found throughout Milwaukee and Wisconsin today. Mitchell parlayed his wealth as the treasurer for the Milwaukee Plank Road Company and a railroad magnate, sat on the board of the Milwaukee Gas Light Company, backed the incorporation of the Milwaukee Iron Company, oversaw the construction of the city's first pumping plant for municipal water, assisted in the financing of the North Avenue Bridge, and founded Northwestern National Insurance. It is no wonder that by the 1860s, he was the wealthiest man in Wisconsin.

This section is subdivided into a timeline of Alexander Mitchell's life; biographical information on Mitchell; banking; and the Economic Panic of 1837.

Timeline

- October 18, 1817 — Alexander Mitchell was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland
- May 28, 1839 — Alexander Mitchell arrived on a Lake Steamer in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He had been recommended for a position in the city while working at a law firm in Scotland. He was carrying a briefcase filled with \$50,000. He had been tasked with bringing this briefcase to his boss, George Smith. George Smith was the owner of an insurance company, where Alexander was to be secretary.
- Summer, 1839 — Alexander Mitchell saw a beautiful woman ride past him on a horse. That woman was Martha Reed, sister of Harrison Reed (editor/publisher of the *Milwaukee Sentinel* and later 9th governor of Florida).
- 1840 — Alexander Mitchell helped found the Milwaukee Curling Club.
- October 6, 1841 — Alexander Mitchell and Martha Reed were married in Cleveland, Ohio by Reverend M. Aiken.
- 1843 — Suspicion began to arise of A. Mitchell and Smith's business practices. Opponents of the company called for an examination of the financial condition and business practices of the company.
- December 15, 1843 — It was determined that Smith and Mitchell were circulating certificates of deposit in violation of their company's charter. This led to a long running battle with legislators who wished to repeal the company's charter.
- 1846 — The Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company, due to the opposition from legislators and other businesses, reorganized under the leadership of Alexander Mitchell.
 - "Mitchell's Money" was circulated and widely accepted as it retained value during financial crises of 1857, 1873, and 1893.
- November 1849 — There was a run on the company after a rumor circulated that George Smith's Chicago Bank had closed. They had chosen to close for the Thanksgiving holiday, a holiday that none of the other banks observed. The unusual closure sparked the rumor.

- March 31, 1851 — There was another run on the WM&F due to Governor Dewey’s ongoing suspicions of the legality of the company’s business practices
- April 8, 1851 — Attorney General Coon called to restrain the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance company from doing any further business. This did not come to fruition.
- 1854 — Alexander Mitchell was elected president of the Wisconsin Bankers Association
- 1861 — The United States Civil War began
- 1865 — The United States Civil War ended
- 1869 — Alexander Mitchell founded Northwestern National Insurance Company
- 1871 — Alexander Mitchell was elected to the United States Congress
- 1877 — Alexander Mitchell was offered the Democratic nomination for governor, but declined
- 1876 — The Mitchell Building was constructed in Downtown Milwaukee
- April 19, 1887 — Alexander Mitchell passed away during a trip to New York City, age 69.

Sources on Alexander Mitchell’s life

Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, 1859-1906. Held by UW Madison. Request through UWM Archives. [Link](#).

Alexander Mitchell: Reception and Banquet: Proceedings and Speeches at the Reception and Banquet in Honor of Alexander Mitchell on His Return to Milwaukee from a Visit to Scotland, October 26th, 1883; with a Biographical Preface, Prepared by a Committee of the Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce. Milwaukee: [Cramer, Aikens, & Cramer, Printers], 1884. [Link](#).

Articles, “Evening Wisconsin,” Wisconsin, June 11, 1884. [Link](#).

Burford, Charles H. *Alexander Mitchell (1817-1887): Banker, Industrialist, Builder of Railroads, Pioneer of the Great West!* New York: Newcomen Society of North America, 1950.

This biography can be found in the Mitchell papers at the Milwaukee County Historical Society or in the UWM Archives.

Butler, James Davie. *Alexander Mitchell, The Financier*. Madison: Democrat Printing Company, State Printers, 1888. [Link](#)

Clipping, “Alexander Mitchell,” *Evening Wisconsin*. Wisconsin Historical Society. Wisconsin Local History & Biography

Clipping, “An Outline of the Remarkable Career of Alexander Mitchell,” *Chicago Tribune*, October 28, 1883. [Link](#)

Cosmas, Graham A. “The Democracy in Search of Issues: The Wisconsin Reform Party, 1873-1877.” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 46, no. 2 (1962): 93–108. [Link](#) or [link](#)

Harding, Bethany. “Alexander Mitchell.” *The Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

“Historic Farmhouse Passes.” *Milwaukee Journal*, 1931-09-20. [Link](#)

History of Milwaukee's Mitchell Park Domes 1795-1955. [Link](#).

Kellogg, Louise Phelps. "The Story of Wisconsin, 1634-1848." *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 3, no. 3 (1920): 314-26. [Link](#)

Leonard, David Blake. "A Biography of Alexander Mitchell 1817-1887." MS thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1951. [Link](#)

McGregor, John P. *Alex Mitchell: A Memorial Address*. Milwaukee: Burdick, Armitage & Allen, Printers, 1888.

This resource can be found in the Milwaukee County Historical Society's Mitchell papers. This can also be requested from the UWM library.

McLean, Jeffrey J. "The MacArthurs and the Mitchells: Wisconsin's First Military Families." *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 94, no. 2 (2010): 14-27. [Link](#).

"Mitchell and the Politicians." *Chicago Times*, 1883-10-28. [Link](#)

"Mitchell and Merrill." *Wisconsin State Journal*, 1882-12-20. [Link](#)

"Mitchell Family Collection." Mss-1866. 1862-1980, 2010. Milwaukee County Historical Society. [Link](#).

In folder 3, there is a memorial address on Alexander Mitchell given by John P. McGregor after Mitchell's death. There is also a biography of Alexander Mitchell.

National Register of Historic Places, "Mitchell, Alexander, House," "Milwaukee," "Milwaukee County," "Wisconsin," Reference Number: 86003852. [Link](#)

Peardon, Julia W. "Alexander Mitchell." In *Distinguished Citizens of Wisconsin. Biographical Sketches*, 32-33. Milwaukee, WI: Cramer, Aikens, & Cramer, Engravers and Printers, 1891. [Link](#).

Found in the UWM Special Collections.

Raney, William F. "The Building of Wisconsin Railroads." *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 19, no. 4 (1936): 387-403. [Link](#)

Rich, A.W. *Biographical Sketches of Increase Lapham, and other Distinguished Citizens of Wisconsin*. Milwaukee: Cramer, Aikens, and Cramer, Engravers and Printers, 1891. [Link](#)

Steamboat "Alexander Mitchell" Leaving Kilbourn Landing. Photograph. Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Historical Society, Bennett, Henry Hamilton, Accessed February 26, 2022. [Link](#)

Still, Bayrd. *Milwaukee: The History of a City*. Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1948.

See pages: 36, 58-60, 144, 155-56, 159, 170-73, 177-78, 182, 194, 196, 225, 234, 247-49, 251, 327, 336, 355, 362, 392, and 557. [Link](#). [Catalog link](#) for physical book in UWM Libraries.

Thomson, Alexander M. *A Political History of Wisconsin*. Milwaukee: E. C. William's Publishing Co., 1900.

See page 304 for a biography of Alexander Mitchell. This volume can be found in the UWM Special Collections.

Wisconsin Historical Society, Banquet to Hon. Alexander Mitchell Menu, Image ID: 120420. [Link](#).

"Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company Bank." Milwaukee Public Library Digital Collections. Milwaukee Historic Photos. Digital ID: Ba.WisconsinMarine.Pre1960.002. View online at [Link](#).

Banking

"A Century of Banking." *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 13, no. 3: (June 1939): 44-47. [Link](#).

A short article describing the Marine National Exchange Bank for their 100-year anniversary.

Banks/Savings & Loans Collection. Milwaukee County Historical Society. [Link](#)

Brodock, Alison B. & Louise H., Records. Milwaukee County Historical Society. Mss-0144. 1903-1947 [Link](#)

Conard, Howard Louis, ed. *History of Milwaukee County: From Its First Settlement to the Year 1895*. Vol. 1. Chicago: America Biographical Publishing Co., 1895.

Economic History Association. *Origins of Commercial Banking in the United States*. EH.net. [Link](#)

First Wisconsin National Bank Collection. Milwaukee County Historical Society. Mss-0361. WC, Sh. 70-71 OS SM "F" (2 items). 1944-1992. [Link](#)

Fruth, Marvin J. *The Log of the Marine: The Marine Corporation, 1839-1988*. Milwaukee: Banc One Wisconsin Corp. 1989. [Link](#).

Hadley, Jackson Collection. Milwaukee County Historical Society. Mss.-0466. Sm. Mss. 1853. [Link](#)

History of the Federal Reserve. Federal Reserve Education.org. [Link](#)

Langill, Ellen. "Banking Industry." *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. 2016. [Link](#)

Milwaukee County Treasurer, 1842-1953. Milwaukee County Historical Society. Mss-2074, HH, Sh. 019. [Link](#)

Milwaukee County Historical Society. "Bank One Collection." Mss-2987. 1839-1988. [Link](#)

In this collection, the bank's director's notes can be found. In the Director's Notes, some day-to-day information can be found.

Murphy, James Maxwell. *Marine National Exchange Bank, 100 Years of Banking*. Milwaukee: Marine National Exchange Bank, 1939. [Link](#)

This can be found in the Mitchell Family Papers at the Milwaukee County Historical Society or requested from the UW-Madison library.

Smith, Alice E. "Banking without Banks: George Smith and the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company." *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 48, no. 4 (1965): 268–81. [Link](#).

Sumner, William Graham. *A History of American Currency, with Chapters on the English Bank Restriction and Austrian Paper Money*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1968; originally published 1874. [Link](#)

Thomson, Alexander M. *A Political History of Wisconsin*. Milwaukee: E. C. William's Publishing Co., 1900.

Chapter 18 (pp. 208-218) is entitled "The Green Back Epidemic" and provides a history on the introduction of "soft money" to Wisconsin after the Civil War. This can be found in the UWM Special Collections.

"Wisconsin Bank Failures of 1837," Wisconsin Historical Society website. [Link](#).

Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company records. UWM Archives. [Link to catalog record](#).

Wisconsin Marine & Fire Insurance Co. Bank. *Director's Book: 1880-1903*. Bank One Papers. Milwaukee County Historical Society Manuscript Collection, Milwaukee County Historical Society, Milwaukee, WI.

Wood, Geoffrey, Terence C. Mills, and Nicholas Crafts. *Monetary and Banking History: Essays in Honour of Forrest Capie*. London: Routledge, 2011. [Link](#)

The Economic Panic of 1837

The Economic Panic of 1837 was a global financial crisis that caused many people to fall into financial ruin. It was caused by a period of rapid economic growth in the United States (1834-1836), which led to high inflation. It was triggered by President Jackson's refusal to recharter the Second Bank of the United States and insistence on payment for federal land in specie rather than currency. In Midwestern cities like Chicago and Milwaukee, the Panic of 1837 burst the bubble of speculative land sales, which had built fortunes for early investors. While this panic ruined some, Alexander Mitchell and George Smith used it to build their monopoly. In addition to these sources, review the section on George Smith.

Alasdair, Roberts. *America's First Great Depression: Economic Crisis and Political Disorder after the Panic of 1837*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012. [Link](#).

Campbell, Stephen. "Panic of 1837." *The Economic Historian*. August 15, 2022. [Link](#).

Note: See the "Further Reading" section at the end of this article

Knight, Timothy. *Panic, Prosperity, and Progress: Five Centuries of History and the Markets*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2014. [Link](#).

- Lepler, Jessica M. *The Many Panics of 1837: People, Politics, and the Creation of a Transatlantic Financial Crisis*. New York. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. [Link](#).
- McGrane, Reginald Charles. *The Panic of 1837; Some Financial Problems of the Jacksonian Era*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1965. [Link](#).
- Rousseau, Peter L. *Jacksonian Monetary Policy, Specie Flow, and the Panic of 1837*. New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2002. [Link](#).

George Smith

Influential Business Owner, mentor of Alexander Mitchell

George Smith was born in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1808. In 1835 he traveled to the United States Midwest, where he felt like the circumstances were ripe for high profit. After raising funds through colleagues in his home country, he founded the Scottish Illinois Land Investment Company. Luckily for him, but unluckily for most, the panic of 1837¹ left most banks in ruins. In this, he saw opportunity. In 1839 Smith and Mitchell established the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company. They were able to gain an insurance charter for this company through the Territorial Legislature of Wisconsin. This charter did not allow them to circulate currency as a bank charter would have, but it did allow them to receive and loan money. The charter also stated that if the bank was to receive or lend money, a certificate of deposit signed by the president of the company should be provided. Smith issued these certificates as if they were bank notes, and they began to circulate as such. These certificates were known as “George Smith’s Money” and were widely considered the most reliable form of currency in early Milwaukee. This practice continued until the Wisconsin legislature cracked down on these practices in 1852.

Clipping, “George Smith, Banker,” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, August 18, 1893. [Link](#)

Klebaner, Benjamin J. *Commercial Banking in the United States: A History*. Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1974. [Link](#)

James, F. Cyril. *The Growth of Chicago Banks*. 2 vols. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938.

Schweikart, Larry E. “Banking, Commercial.” *Encyclopedia of Chicago*. [Link](#)

Sketch of the Origin and Progress of the Illinois Investment Company, Established at Aberdeen in MDCCCXXXVII: with an Appendix Containing (in Note Second) Some Particulars Respecting the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company, Originated in MDCCCXXXIX. Aberdeen: [W. Bennett], 1850. [Link](#).

Observations about the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company from one of Alexander Mitchell’s business colleagues. Please note that you must request this item be sent to you from Madison, so allow time for transportation.

Smith, Alice. “Banking without Banks: George Smith and the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company.” *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 48(4) (1965): 261-281. [Link](#).

Smith, Alice. *George Smith’s Money: A Scottish Investor in America*. Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1966. [Link to catalog record](#); [link to Google Books](#).

A biography of George Smith, with detailed accounting of his operations in Chicago and Milwaukee. If you are reenacting George Smith, this source is the place to start.

¹ For more on the Economic Panic of 1837, see the subsection under the sources for Alexander Mitchell.

White, Horace. *An Elastic Currency: "George Smith's Money" in the Early Northwest. An Address to the American Bankers' Association at Chicago, October 19, 1893*. New York: Evening Post Job Printing House, 1893. [Link](#)

Wisconsin. Legislative Assembly. Joint Committee on Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company. *Report of a Joint Select Committee, Appointed at the Last Session of the Legislature, to Investigate the Affairs of the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company, House of Representatives*, Dec. 15, 1843. [Link](#)

As the title suggests, this document provides key evidence about how anti-bank Wisconsin territory legislators thought about the circulation of certificates of deposit (that is, "George Smith's money") by the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company. Note that you need to request this item be sent to you from Madison, so please allow a couple of days for its arrival.

Wisconsin Legislative Assembly House of Representatives, Committee on Corporations. *Report of the Minority of the Committee on Corporations, to Which was Referred a Resolution Concerning the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company, &C.*, [Jan. 17, 1844]. [Link](#).

Further evidence about how the legislators in the territory of Wisconsin understood George Smith's money. Please note that you must request this item be sent to you from Madison, so allow time for transportation.

Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company records. UWM Archives. [Link to catalog record](#).

Martha Mitchell

Martha Mitchell was the wife of Alexander Mitchell. You can gain some sense of her life by researching Alexander Mitchell's domestic life and John Lendrum Mitchell's childhood and by visiting the Wisconsin Club (by appointment or membership). However, being married to the once-wealthiest man in the state of Wisconsin was not her only claim to fame. She was born in 1818 as Martha Reed. Mitchell was the founder of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, which is now the Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center. Additionally, Martha Mitchell is well known for buying and helping preserve Mount Vernon, the former home of first United States president, George Washington. She did this along with three other women. Her correspondence with these colleagues can be found below. Lastly, Mitchell was also part of the society group "The Colonial Dames" because she was able to trace her ancestry back to the Mayflower colonizers.

Martha Mitchell biography

Brown, Henry S. "Victorian House, possibly of Martha Mitchell, Vice Regent for Wisconsin." The Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon. [Link](#)

Mitchell, Martha Reed, 1818-1902. The Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon. [Link](#)

"Mrs. Alexander Mitchell," Wisconsin Historical Society, Schemboche Photographe, Rome, Italy, Image ID 106346. [Link](#)

Still, Bayrd. *Milwaukee: The History of a City*. Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1948. [Link](#).

See p. 223.

The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America. [Link](#)

The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers

Clement J. Zablocki Veteran's Administration Medical Center Collection. Milwaukee County Historical Society. Mss-0237. 1865-ongoing. [Link](#)

"History of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers." National Parks Service. [Link](#)

Lynch, Patricia, A. *Milwaukee Soldiers Home*. South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2013. [Link](#)

Marten, James. "Veterans." *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*, 2016. [Link](#)

"National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Northwestern Branch, Main Building, 5000 West National Avenue, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, WI." Library of Congress. [Link](#)

Plante, Trevor K. "The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers." 2004. *Prologue Magazine*. National Archives. [Link](#)

“Registers of Veterans at the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Northwestern Branch in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1867-1934.” FamilySearch.com. [Link](#)

Mount Vernon

Catalogue of the Centennial Exhibition Commemorating the Founding of the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association of the Union, 1853-1953. Mount Vernon, Va: [publisher not identified], 1953. [Link](#)

Costello, Matthew. *The Property of the Nation: George Washington's Tomb, Mount Vernon, and the Memory of the First President*. Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2019. [Link](#)

Mitchell, Martha Reed, 1818-1902, The Fred W. Smith National Library for the Study of George Washington at Mount Vernon. [Link](#)

Martha Mitchell's records held at Mount Vernon do not appear to be digitized, with a few exceptions ([Link](#)). However, it is possible that if there are one or two documents on this list that you might wish to study in greater depth, you could ask the librarians at Mount Vernon to make copies available to you.

Towner, Horace M. 1920. “The Mount Vernon Ladies Association of the Union.” *Annals of Iowa* 12 (5): 359–65.

John Lendrum Mitchell

John Lendrum Mitchell was born to Alexander and Martha Mitchell on October 19, 1842, in Milwaukee, Territory of Wisconsin. As a young man, John went to Europe to study and spent several years traveling. At one point, in Paris, John even watched Napoleon III parade his army of 80,000 soldiers through the city after France's success in pushing the Austrian Empire from Italy. John returned home in 1860 as the tensions between the North and the South began to mount.

In 1862 John L. Mitchell enlisted in the Union Army, fighting with the Wisconsin 24th Infantry. Enlisting as a 2nd Lieutenant of Company I, he was eventually promoted to 1st Lieutenant of Company K in 1863. Later that year, John was discharged because of worsening visual impairment. After the Civil War, John L. Mitchell kept in touch with his friends from his military days.

After his service in the Union Army, Mitchell got involved in Wisconsin politics. John L. Mitchell served in the Wisconsin State Senate from 1872-1874 and, again, in 1876-1878. In 1891, he began his career as an elected official in Washington DC, first in the House of Representatives in the 52nd Congress and then in the 53rd to 55th Congresses as a US Senator. In 1892, he declined nomination to run for Vice President of the US. As a legislator, he introduced influential social welfare measures. When he was not a candidate for nomination in 1899, John left for Europe with his daughter, where he earned a degree in French and Literature. John returned home in 1902 and died two years later.

Besides his political career, John's return home was a time for him to become involved in local civic activities as well. John moved out to a farm (now 54th/Lincoln) where he continued the family hobby of keeping horses. He transferred (though sale and donation) 30 acres of his deceased father's land to the city of Milwaukee, for use as a park. John married Bianca Cogswell, with whom he had several children. This marriage ended (unknown when), and John and Bianca gave up custody of their two youngest sons to his parents, Alexander and Martha. John remarried (unknown when) his second wife, Harriet Danforth, the sister of Washington Becker, one of his friends and a bank colleague. Shortly after Alexander's death, John was promoted to president of the Marine Bank. John saw the bank through the Panic of 1893, when the bank did close for several months while they reorganized. The bank reopened in 1894 with some fanfare.

According to John and Harriet's daughter, Harriet Fladoes, John sacrificed a great deal to ensure that the regular bank members did not suffer as a result of the bank closing. Harriet Fladoes was the custodian of the Mitchell records and responsible for donating them to local archives. The Fladoes Memorial Fountain outside the Milwaukee Public Museum commemorates the family she married into. The Milwaukee Public Museum's collection includes some of John's artifacts, including his [Civil War coat](#).

Select Primary and Secondary Sources

Clipping, "Some Fine Libraries," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, March 12, 1898, [Link](#)

Conrad, Howard Louis, ed. *History of Milwaukee County: From Its First Settlement to the Year 1895*. Chicago: America Biographical Publishing Co., 1895.

This three-volume work found in the UWM Archives has several chapters that may be of interest. In Vol. 1, Chapter XVII, there is information about the Milwaukee Democrats, which John belonged to. In Vol. 1 Chapter XLIII, the author writes about the Milwaukee park system and Mitchell's contributions

to it. Vol. 1, Chapter XXIX, has a history of banking and how it pertains to John. Vol. 2, p. 459 has a biography of John. Vol. 2 has several chapters written by Milwaukee women about the cultural and social life of the city. Vol. 1 also has several chapters on the practice of medicine in Milwaukee.

“Ex-Senator John L. Mitchell Very Ill.” *New York Times*, June 28, 1904.

Very short blurb on Mitchell’s fatal illness.

Harding, Bethany, “John Mitchell,” *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

“John L. Mitchell Dead: Ex-United States Senator Had Been Ill for Ten Days.” *New York Times*, June 30, 1904.

Obituary for John Lendrum Mitchell.

Letter, John L. Mitchell to Martha Mitchell, January 8, 1863, [Link](#)

According to the digitized record, this letter “describ[es] combat and conditions at Camp Bradley near Murfreesboro, Tennessee.”

“Marine Bank Opens: The Event Made a Gala Occasion at Milwaukee Wis.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 16, 1894.

The Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance company closed its doors in 1893. The bank reopened in 1894.

Mitchell, John L. *Description of a Trip to California, with the Board of Managers of National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers*. Milwaukee, WI: Burdick, Armitage, and Allen, Printers, 1888.

Thomson, Alexander M. *A Political History of Wisconsin*. Milwaukee: E. C. William’s Publishing Co., 1900.

A biographical sketch of John L. Mitchell appears on p. 399. This volume can be found in the UWM Special Collections Department of the Golda Meir Library.

Primary Source Collections

Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers. Golda Meir Library, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI.

Descriptions of select items:

D. W. Curtis to John L. Mitchell, June 8, 1896: A letter to the senator thanking Mitchell on his support of the “Filled Cheese Bill,” a bill that defined what cheese is (made with milk or cream and no forms of fat other than those found in milk) and taxes fake cheese (cheese made with oil and other fats). See also the *New York Times* article “The Filled Cheese Bill Passed” in the John L. Mitchell article folder.

John Black to John L. Mitchell, May 6, 1896: John Black writes about a statue of Jacques Marquette carved by Gaetano Trentanove given to the Capitol Building in DC by the state of Wisconsin. This

statue is still in the capitol building ([Link](#)). Gaetano Trentanove was an Italian living in Milwaukee (not necessarily an immigrant, as he traveled back and forth); his works can be seen at the Milwaukee Art Museum. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 28.

John L. Mitchell to Bob Chivas, March 18, 1860: Letter to John Mitchell's cousin from Dresden, Germany, detailing a parade by Napoleon III and a not-so-fun stay in Dresden. See Box 1, Folder 16, Chivas Letters).

John L. Mitchell to Bob Chivas, November 9, 186: in this letter to his cousin, Bob Chivas from New York City, Mitchell states, "Politics may be my 'forte.'" In this folder are other letters to Bob Chivas. Bob Chivas was a cousin of John's. Eventually they served together in the Civil War, where Bob was killed in action. (There is a later letter mentioning this.) In this collection, there is also a letter sent by John where he wrote poems under the influence. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 16.

John L. Mitchell to Harriet Mitchell (his wife), July 14, 1884: This is a brief note to Mrs. Mitchell inviting her to join him for lunch at "The Club" with a former confederate general, Bradley Johnson, the brother of an acquaintance. In this folder are other notes that would have been sent across town to Harriet Mitchell inviting her out or letting her know his schedule for the day. Several letters show a fair amount of affection for Harriet, which can be seen in one pet name, "My Dearest Hätchen." This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 17.

Northwestern Association of Trotting and Pacing Horse Breeders to John L. Mitchell, December 20, 1895: letter telling John that he has been elected the director of this association. Mitchell spent much of his life on his farm with horses, a hobby that was passed on to his son, Billy. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 27.

Paul D. Carpenter to John L. Mitchell, April 2, 1898: A letter to the senator regarding the explosion of the *USS Maine* in Cuba and to express concern about the possibility of war. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 29.

Paul D. Carpenter to John L. Mitchell, April 6, 1898: A follow up to the previous letter about Carpenter's view of imperialism; he does not approve of a "war of conquest." This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 29.

Valentin Blatz Brewing Company to John L. Mitchell. February 9, 1899. A letter to Senator Mitchell asking for a change in legislation to allow for beer to be sold in army canteens, an effort that never materialized into anything of substance.

Washington Becker to John L. Mitchell, April 26, 1894: This letter suggests that there had been insider trading within the Northwestern Marine and Fire Insurance company and that Mitchell may have been part of it. Becker also suggests selling land to the city that was near Mitchell Park. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 28.

Washington Becker to John L. Mitchell, May 3, 1895: Letter asking for supplies and funding for the Soldier's Home in Milwaukee. A response to Mitchell asking to sell stock in the bank. Included in this

is a printed copy of a previous letter suggesting the bank is in trouble. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 28.

Washington Becker to John L. Mitchell, May 24, 1897. A letter asking for local influence to persuade another senator to change views on a tariff (Dingley Tariff) of Portland Cement (a type of cement that originated from the Isle of Portland in England).

Washington Becker to John L. Mitchell, February 1, 1898. A letter asking Mitchell to vote against the Teller Amendment. The Teller Amendment prevented the annexation of Cuba once the Spanish left; the Democrats (Mitchell) want Cuba to be annexed while the Republicans do not want this. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 28.

Washington Becker to John L. Mitchell, April 1, 1898. Both Mitchell and Becker are concerned about the war with Spain. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 28.

William McFarlane to John L. Mitchell. February 15, 1898. This letter contains a poem about the sinking of the *USS Maine*. This letter can be found in the UWM Archives in the Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, Box 1, Folder 31.

Alexander and John L. Mitchell Papers, 1859-1906. Wisconsin Historical Society. Wis Mss OH. [Link](#).

This collection from the Wisconsin Historical Society builds on the collection of the UWM Archives. In this small box, compiled by a daughter of John, Mrs. Martin Fladoes, correspondence to the family shines a light into the personal life of John and his father Alexander. The folders of note in this collection are numbers, 2, 3, 4, and 7. Folder two is full of humorous and somewhat creepy letters to Martha and Alexander Mitchell asking for favors and loans. Folder three is a collection of letters from John about his time on the front during the Civil War. Folder seven reveals several contracts about John's children from his first wife, Bianca Mitchell (Cogswell). Folder four has letters to John from an uncle, all repeating the same story and requests—that John step in and look after Martha, his mother, in Florida—and suggests that Martha's caretaker is taking advantage of her.

Note that these materials may be transferred to the UWM Archives for your review. Please speak with an archivist with your request.

Mitchell Family Collection, Milwaukee County Historical Society. Mss-1866. 1862-1980, 2010. [Link](#).

More correspondence to the Mitchell's from various members of the community. Folder 3 is the most relevant to John. In one letter, the writer complains about mandatory smallpox vaccines. Another letter speaks of a rivalry between North and South Milwaukee. Further in the collection are scrapbooks and family photos, though most of the photos are not captioned.

Billy Mitchell

William “Billy” Mitchell was born on December 29, 1879, in Nice, France. When he reached 20 years of age in April 1899, he left Colombian University (now George Washington University in Washington D.C.), where he studied. He enlisted with the Wisconsin Volunteers Company M to fight in the Spanish-American War. He spent 8 months training in Florida before being stationed in Cuba to build telegraph lines with the Signal Corps. Later that year, in November, he transferred to the Philippines with the Signal Corps, where he contracted malaria. This bout of illness tempted him to resign from the military. Despite this setback, he continued on with his career, and from August 1901-1903, Billy traveled 3,000 miles across Alaska laying the area’s first telegraph line. While the area had been inhabited for time immemorial by the Indigenous populations, Billy was one of the first Americans to “explore” and map the region.

During this period of his life, he began studying aeronautics. During WWI, Billy was stationed in France where he was heavily influenced by European aeronautics techniques. He also organized large-scale air battles, the most well-known of which was the battle of Chateau-Thierry. Billy reported what he learned about air battles to the US Army, but his superiors simply ignored his recommendations. In the summer of 1921, Billy demonstrated what he learned to the US military by sinking out-of-use battleships and a submarine using only airplanes. This demonstration proved the nay-sayers wrong and showed them that airplanes could have a bigger place in the US military. He was even able to sink a captured German ship called the *Ostfriesland*, which was previously believed to be “unsinkable.” Despite his argument for the effectiveness of airplanes in war, government funding for the air service was cut.

The US government continued to ignore his reports on the status of aeronautics in Japan, Hawaii, and the Philippines, including a prediction of the 1941 Pearl Harbor attack that was correct in many details despite coming almost two decades beforehand. In 1925, Billy was demoted to Colonel and sent to Texas after claiming that the Army and Navy falsified facts to deceive the country and Congress. In retaliation, that September Billy released a 6,000 word statement to the press in response to two easily preventable air disasters. President Calvin Coolidge was closely monitoring the controversy around Billy Mitchell’s public statements and commissioned a board for investigation into the case. Three days after Billy’s long statement, the order for a court martial against him was issued.

The court martial trial began on October 28, 1925. Billy was charged under the 96th article of war, which is a grab bag for any acts of disrespect or insubordination by military officers. Three weeks of witness testimony occurred in support of Billy. His cross-examination took place on November 20, and Billy’s closing statements were given on December 17. The guilty verdict was delivered on December 17 at 6:34 after judges deliberated for just under three hours. Billy was to be suspended for five years without pay. On January 26, 1926, President Calvin Coolidge confirmed the guilty verdict but publicly offered to restore Billy to half-pay for five years if he agreed to stop criticizing the U.S. military for lack of air power.

On the first of February, 1926, Billy officially resigned from the military because he could not sacrifice his personal convictions to serve the government. He spent the rest of his life on Boxwood Farm in Middleburg, VA, where he bred horses and spent time with his family. Billy died 10 years later on February 19, 1936, after suffering a coronary occlusion. He was 56.

Primary Sources

Hardie, George. George Hardie Papers. Archives Department, University of Wisconsin -- Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI. [Link](#).

Series four on Billy Mitchell is of particular interest to our class. This collection holds many items of visual interest that could be used to illustrate tweets.

Mitchell, Ruth. *My Brother Bill: The Life of Billy Mitchell*. New York, NY: Brace Harcourt, 1953. [Catalog Link](#) and [Alternative Link](#)

Mitchell, William. Correspondence dated 1888-1922, 1927, and undated. Microfilm reel. [Catalog Link](#): must request from UW-Madison

Mitchell, William. *General Greely: The Story of a Great American*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1936. [Catalog Link](#)

Mitchell, William. General William Mitchell Letters. MPL Digital Library, Milwaukee, WI. [Link](#).

Mitchell, William. General William Mitchell Papers. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. [Link](#)

Select files from this source can be found on the course Canvas Module labeled "Mitchell Family Sources."

Mitchell, William. *Memoirs of World War I: "From Start to Finish of Our Greatest War."* New York, NY: Random House, 1960. [Catalog Link](#)

Mitchell, William. *The Opening of Alaska*. 2nd ed. Edited by Lyman L. Woodman. Missoula, MO: Pictorial Histories Publication Company, 1988. [Catalog link](#)

Mitchell, William. *Our Air Force, The Keystone of National Defense*. New York, NY: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1921. [Catalog Link](#)

Highest recommendation from our course bibliographers. Billy details many of his reports and ideas for what the Air Force should look like, and it would be the most useful to create tweets and find inspiration for photos to attach to tweets.

Mitchell, William. *Skyways: A Book on Modern Aeronautics*. Philadelphia, PA: J.B. Lippincott Company. 1930. [Catalog Link](#)

Mitchell, William. *Winged Defense: The Development and Possibilities of Modern Air Power, Economic and Military*. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1971. [Catalog Link](#)

This book is probably the most important readily available statement of Mitchell's philosophy of air defense.

Secondary Sources

Short Biographical Pieces

American Clan Gregor Society. "Brigadier General William 'Billy' Mitchell." November 22, 2018. [Link](#)

Boyne, Walter J. "The Spirit of Billy Mitchell." *Air Force Magazine* (June 1966): 66-72. [Link](#)

Gonzalez, Michael. "Billy Mitchell." Encyclopedia of Milwaukee, 2014. [Link](#)

Meilinger, Phillip S. *Airmen and Air Theory: A Review of the Sources*. Maxwell Air Force Base, AL, 2001. [Link](#)

Ott, William J. "Maj Gen William 'Billy' Mitchell: A Pyrrhic Promotion." *Air & Space Power Journal* 20, no. 4 (Winter, 2006): 27-33. [Link](#)

Shorter Pieces that Describe Billy's Views and Opinions

Hale, Wesley R. "The SMS Ostfriesland: A Warship at the Crossroads of Military Technology." MA thesis, University of Rhode Island, 2018: 55-84. [Link](#)

McClarey, Donald R. "Billy Mitchell Predicts Pearl Harbor Attack in 1924." *The American Catholic*, December 6, 2016. [Link](#)

Pisano, Dominick. "General William 'Billy' Mitchell and the Sinking of the Ostfriesland: A Consideration." Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. July 21, 2011: 55-84. [Link](#)

Longer Biographies

Burlingame, Roger. *General Billy Mitchell: Champion of Air Defense*. New York, NY: New American Library, 1956. [Catalog Link](#)

Cooke, James J. *Billy Mitchell*. Boulder, CO: L. Rienner, 2002. [Catalog Link](#)

Davis, Burke. *The Billy Mitchell Affair*. New York, NY: Random House, 1967. [Catalog Link](#)

Gauvreau, Emile, and Lester Cohen. *Billy Mitchell: Founder of Our Air Force and Prophet without Honor*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1942.

Hardie, George, Jr. *General William Mitchell, Air Power Pioneer*. Milwaukee: Ken Cook Transnational, [1960-1969?]

Hurley, Alfred F. *Billy Mitchell: Crusader for Air Power*. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1964.

Levine, Isaac Don. *Mitchell, Pioneer of Air Power*. Cleveland and New York: The World Pub. Co., 1944.

Miller, Roger G. *Billy Mitchell: "Stormy Petrel of the Air."* Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 2004. [Link](#)

Includes a "Recommended Reading" section on pages 48-49 and lots of photos

Waller, Douglas C. *A Question of Loyalty: Gen. Billy Mitchell and the Court-Martial that Grippped the Nation.* New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2004. [Link](#)

Cast of Court-Martial Characters

The most well-known event in William “Billy” Mitchell’s life was his court martial. A court martial is a trial that occurs for military personnel who have committed serious criminal offenses. In this case, the criminal offense was a statement Billy released to six reporters. Billy gave his 6,000-word statement on the failures of the US military aviation to the press in September of 1925. He felt compelled to share his thoughts on two disasters that occurred earlier in 1925. The first disaster was the first attempted nonstop flight from California to Hawaii. Out of the three planes that were expected to make this journey, one never made it to the air strip, one landed on the ocean 300 miles into the journey, and one was stranded at sea. It took Navy officials 10 days to rescue crew members. The second disaster happened to the *USS Shenandoah*, a Navy dirigible airship that crashed in Ohio during a thunderstorm. It was not advisable for this airship to make the trip because of its poor condition, lack of parachutes, and inadequate amount of helium in the blimp. This easily avoidable disaster killed 14 out of 43 crew members on board. In Billy’s statement, he asserted that “these accidents are the direct result of incompetency, criminal negligence, and almost treasonable administration of the National Defense by the Navy and War Departments.” President Coolidge and other military officials determined that this behavior was unacceptable and the order for a court martial was released three days after Billy’s statement.

The people on this page are those who were enlisted to lead and assist with court proceedings. They each play a role in how Billy’s court-martial verdict was determined. Your task is to recreate the trial in a way that captures its essence while also being creative! The resources on this page will guide your research, but it is up to you to bring these characters back to life. These characters could be reported as individual voices or by a journalist covering the trial who interviewed them or otherwise observed their activities.

How Court Martial Proceedings Operate

FindLaw Team. “The Court Martial Process.” FindLaw. Thomson Reuters, June 20 2016. [Link](#)

This article provides a simple overview of how the process works and how a court martial is different from civilian court proceedings. It provides a starting point for understanding.

Military Justice: Trial Procedure. Washington DC: US Department of the Army, 1964. [Catalog Link](#).

This title explains the details of how a court martial operates. It can answer any questions that arise, though please note that court martial procedures changed over time. Although these guidelines were established 40 years after Billy’s trial took place, they are generally the same. It can be daunting to look at, but this is not intended to be read cover to cover, but for reference.

Mitchell, Ruth. *My Brother Bill: The Life of Billy Mitchell*. New York, NY: Brace Harcourt, 1953. [Catalog Link](#) or [Alternative Link](#)

Chapters 10-11 (pp. 297-338) provide Ruth’s perspective on the events.

Preminger, Otto, director. *The Court-Martial of Billy Mitchell*. Warner Bros. Pictures, 1955. 100 min.

- [Catalog Link](#): must be requested from UW-Madison
- [Alternative Link](#): has Portuguese captions

This movie is a dramatized version of the court martial. It provides context for the events leading up to the order for the court martial, the preparations that were made for the trial, and the actual event. It brings the events to life and is arguably one of the most important sources to understand Billy Mitchell. Ruth, Billy's younger sister, was promoting this film toward the end of her life.

The People Involved in the Court Martial

- Cross-examiner/prosecutor Major Allen W. Guillion
 - Borch, Fred L. "From Infantry Officer to Judge Advocate General to Provost Marshal General and More: The Remarkable Career of Allen W. Gullion." *The Army Lawyer* (January, 2016): 1-5. [Catalog Link](#)
- Defense attorney Congressman Frank Reid
 - "Reid, Frank R." Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. US Senate Historical Office. Accessed August 3, 2022. [Link](#).
 - Miller, Roger G. "Billy Mitchell, the 3d Attack Group and the Laredo Project of 1923." *Air Power History* 54, no. 2 (2007): 4-15. [Catalog Link](#)
- 13 judges, who were reduced to 10 after Billy challenged three of them for bias. Note that the judges were high-ranking military officials. These tweets should not be done individually, but instead delivered as a final verdict. Judges did not speak individually, other than the presiding judge.
 - Charles Pelot Summerall—original presiding judge but challenged for bias
 - Fred W Sladen—challenged for bias
 - Albert J Bowley—challenged for bias
 - William S. Graves
 - Robert L. Howze (presiding judge)
 - Benjamin A. Poore
 - Ewing E. Booth
 - George Irwin
 - Edward K. King
 - Frank R. McCoy
 - Edwin B. Winans
 - Douglas MacArthur (note the Milwaukee connection here)
 - Blanton Winship
- Voices of testimony for Billy
 - Widow of Zachary Lansdowne, commander of the *Shenandoah*
 - Unknown Photographer. National Photo Company Collection. Library of Congress, Washington DC. [Link](#).
 - Associated Press. "Giant Dirigible Shenandoah Splits in Air: 14 Men of Crew Die, Including 2 Commanders." *Standard Sentinel*, September 4, 1925. (access through Newspapers.com, available through the UWM Libraries Databases page)
 - Eddie Rickenbacker
 - Mass, Warren. "Eddie Rickenbacker: From Flying Ace to Patriot-Entrepreneur: America's Top Flying Ace of WWI, Eddie Rickenbacker, Stood up for American Ideals,

Which He Exemplified through His Military Service and His Business Endeavors.” *The New American* 29, no. 14 (July 2013): 36-40. [Catalog Link](#).

- Hap Arnold
 - Glines, C.V. “General Henry H. ‘Hap’ Arnold: Architect of America’s Air Force.” HistoryNet. June 12, 2006. [Link](#).
 - “Henry H. Arnold,” *New York Times*, Jan 22, 1950. [Link](#)
 - Kamps, Charles Tustin. “‘Hap’ Arnold.” *Air & Space Power Journal* 17, no. 4 (December 2003): 54. [Catalog Link](#).
 - Wolverton Mark. “Hap Arnold: The Practical Air Force Visionary.” HistoryNet. October 13, 2016. [Link](#).
- Carl Spaatz
 - Glines, C.V. “Air Power Strategist Carl A. Spaatz,” *Aviation History* 12, no. 4 (2002): 41-49. [Catalog Link](#)
 - Glines, C.V. “Carl A. Spaatz: An Air Power Strategist.” HistoryNet. June 29, 2017. [Link](#)
- Ira Eaker
 - McFadden, Robert D. “Ira C. Eaker, 91, Is Dead; Helped Create Air Force.” *New York Times*, Aug 08, 1987. [Link](#).
 - “Eaker, Ira Clarence.” In 1986-1990, edited by Kenneth T. Jackson, Karen Markoe, and Arnold Markoe, 265-266. Vol. 2 of *The Scribner Encyclopedia of American Lives*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1999. *Gale In Context: Biography*. [Catalog Link](#).
- Robert Olds
 - George, Harold L. 1968. “Aerospace Profile...The Most Outstanding Leader.” *Aerospace Historian* 15 (2): 4–7.
 - “Rites Held for Gen. Robert Olds,” *New York Times*, April 30, 1943. [Link](#)
- Thomas George Lanphier Sr.
 - “Lanphier, Thomas George, Jr., Col.” Together We Served. Accessed August 8, 2021. [Link](#)
 - Sherman, Stephen. “Thomas G. Lanphier.” Ace Pilots. January 26, 2012. [Link](#)
- Fiorella La Guardia
 - “La Guardia, Fiorella Henry.” *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*. US Senate Historical Office. Accessed August 3, 2022. [Link](#).
 - Muson, Howard. “Fiorello La Guardia: From Congressman to WWI Hero in the Air.” HistoryNet. September 18, 2020. [Link](#)
 - Fiorella La Guardia was the mayor of New York City, an important historical personage who is the subject of many biographies and (!) a Broadway musical. Two recent biographies include H. Paul Jeffers, [The Napoleon of New York](#) and Alyn Brodsky, [The Great Mayor](#).
- Will Rogers
 - Humorist Will Rogers is the subject of many books, both primary and secondary sources. A great supporter of Billy Mitchell, he appeared frequently at the court martial. A starting point for understanding Rogers is Richard D. White, Jr., *Will Rogers: A Political Life* (Lubbock: Texas Tech University, 2011).

Ruth Mitchell

Ruth was the younger half-sister of Billy, who was determined to live outside of his shadow. Not much is widely known about her personal life, but what she documented herself is written magnificently. Instead of living off of her family's inheritance, she chose to seize life's opportunities as they came to her. She was able to travel widely in her early life with her family and learned to speak fluent German. Ruth chose to study at both UW-Milwaukee's predecessor institution [Downer College](#) and Vassar College. She met and married one of her husbands, Stanley Knowles, and they decided to settle in England to begin their life together. There, Ruth shared her love of travel through *The Friendship Travel* magazine, a publication she created and wrote for. This led to the creation of "The Young Adventurers," one of the first travel organizations that promoted low-cost trips for young adults to explore Europe. The Third Reich quickly banned the German branch of this organization.

Ruth's journalism career began as the Third Reich assembled and gained power. She took up photography to fill her time in the wake of the ban on the Young Adventurers. Several publications bought her photos, and she began to get assignments as a freelance journalist. Sent to Albania in 1938 to write about the marriage of royalty there, she fell in love with the Balkans and decided to stay. She lived in Belgrade (in then-Yugoslavia, now Serbia) and reported on the events of WWII in the Balkans. Sworn into the [Chetniks](#) in 1941, she pledged her life to the cause of Serbian independence. As her pieces continued to be published and she inserted herself into the violence around her, she was imprisoned several times. She came back to America in 1942 and continued to support the Chetniks through publishing her first book, speaking publicly, and serving on the Serbian National Defense Committee. After the US switched its support from the Chetniks to Joseph Tito and his communist allies, Ruth felt betrayed and rallied for policy changes. She also advocated for Serbian orphans and established the "General Billy Mitchell Memorial Foundation for Balkan Youth." Similar to Billy in his later years, Ruth fell out of the public eye in the mid-1940s as her opinions became more radical.

Ruth spent her post-war time in London and published her second book, *My Brother Bill*. She also promoted *The Court-Martial of Billy Mitchell* feature film in the mid-1950s. She died in a nursing home in Portugal in 1969 after having a heart attack.

Mitchell, Ruth. *My Brother Bill: The Life of Billy Mitchell*. New York, NY: Brace Harcourt, 1953. [Catalog Link](#) and [Alternative Link](#)

Mitchell, Ruth. *Ruth Mitchell, Chetnik, Tells the Facts about the Fighting Serbs, Mihailovich and "Yugoslavia."* Arlington, VA: The Serbian National Defense Council, 1943. [Catalog Link](#): must request from UW-Madison or other libraries.

Mitchell, Ruth. *The Serbs Choose War*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Co, 1943. [Catalog Link](#)

"Ruth Mitchell Tells of Life in Nazi Camps: Treated Like Criminal; Urges Bombing to Defeat Germany," *The Lewiston Daily Sun*, July 1, 1942. [Link](#).

Roe, Dorothy. "Ruth Mitchell Says Brother Is Vindicated," *Eugene Register-Guard*, December 20, 1955. [Link](#).

Articles from the *Milwaukee Journal*, which can be accessed digitally through Milwaukee Public Library sites or UWM Libraries Microfilm room:

- “Report Ruth Mitchell Is Prisoner in Germany.” *Milwaukee Journal*, December 12, 1941, page 4.
- “Ruth Mitchell Calls Chetnik Trial a ‘Mockery of Justice.’” *Milwaukee Journal*, June 24, 1946, page 3.
- “Ruth Mitchell, Sister of General, Dies at 80,” *Milwaukee Journal*, October 27, 1969, page 11.

Calvin Coolidge

Calvin Coolidge was the 30th president of the United States. He served as president from 1923-1929. Coolidge's presidency is remembered widely for his economic policies. Additionally, Coolidge was president during Billy Mitchell's court martial and was closely intertwined with the proceedings. A tricky aspect of figuring out how to represent Coolidge through Twitter is his notorious terseness; his nickname was "Silent Cal." Like most US presidents, he is the subject of a great deal of scholarship. Here we provide a few starting points for your research.

Coolidge Virtual Library. Calvin Coolidge Presidential Foundation. [Link](#)

Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum. Forbes Library. [Link](#)

Calvin Coolidge, The 30th President of the United States. Whitehouse.gov. [Link](#)

McCoy, Donald R. *Calvin Coolidge: The Quiet President*. Newtown: American Political Biography Press. 2000.

Mitchell, William. "The Collapse of the Coolidge Air Policy." *AAHS Journal* 58 (4) (Winter 2013): 286-291.

In this article, reprinted from 1929, Billy Mitchell criticized President Coolidge's military aviation policy.

Relyea, Harold C. "National Study Commission Politics and Law: The President's Aircraft Board of 1925." *White House Studies* 12 (1) (2012): 69-88.

Author's abstract, provided in *America: History and Life*: "Presidents make use of temporary national study commissions for various reasons. At a pivotal moment, Calvin Coolidge established such a panel in 1925—The President's Aircraft Board—to stifle a critic, seize the initiative for an emerging and important policy area, and prompt Congress to enact legislation reflecting his preferences for that policy area. The circumstances underlying the creation of that panel, its operations and recommendations, and its legacy are profiled in this overview."

MacArthur Family

The MacArthur family history in Milwaukee parallels the Mitchell family. Arthur MacArthur, Sr. was a Scottish immigrant who became the City Attorney of Milwaukee. He was elected Wisconsin's Lieutenant Governor and briefly became the 4th governor of Wisconsin following the disputed election of 1855, in which the opposing candidates were both sworn in. His son, Arthur MacArthur, Jr., pursued a military career beginning with his service in the Civil War and culminating as a lieutenant general. Arthur Jr. served alongside John L. Mitchell in Wisconsin's 24th Regiment during the Civil War. His son was Douglas MacArthur, a renowned US Army general. Douglas MacArthur, a longtime acquaintance and colleague of Billy Mitchell, also sat on his court martial. For example, Arthur Jr. was Billy Mitchell's commanding officer when they were stationed in the Philippines. Douglas MacArthur met Billy Mitchell during World War I at the Battle of St. Mihiel. If you are portraying the MacArthurs for the Twitter reenactment, we recommend that you make a family account and change the voice across the generations.

Interestingly, despite their roughly equivalent fame at the national level, the Mitchells are commemorated in Milwaukee much more than the MacArthurs. There is a [statue](#) of Douglas MacArthur in Milwaukee, located in an eponymous park. It was installed during [one of two MacArthur weeks](#).

Sources on the MacArthur Family

Louis, Howard ed. *History of Milwaukee County: From Its First Settlement to the Year 1895*. Vol. 3. Chicago: America Biographical Publishing Co., 1895.

Includes a biography of Arthur MacArthur Sr., governor of Wisconsin for four days and grandfather to Gen. Douglas MacArthur.

McLean, Jeffrey John. "The MacArthurs and the Mitchells: Wisconsin's First Military Families." *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 94 (2) (Winter 2010): 14-27. [Link](#)

Milwaukee County Historical Society. "MacArthur Family Papers." Mss-1521.

Some odds and ends of the MacArthur family. In the first folder, there is a handwritten history of Arthur MacArthur Sr. The second folder has articles about the death of Arthur MacArthur Jr. (Douglas's father). A. MacArthur Jr. died during a 50th reunion of the Wisconsin 24th that both he and John L. Mitchell were a part of.

Milwaukee County Historical Society. *The MacArthurs of Milwaukee*. Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1979.

This item can be found in the UWM Archives.

Tuttle, Charles R. *Illustrated History of Wisconsin to 1875*. Boston: BB Russel, 1875.

This two-volume collection is found in the UWM Special Collections. The first volume has a description of Arthur MacArthur Sr.'s (Douglas's grandfather) VERY brief term as the governor of Wisconsin. There is also a chapter on famous Wisconsin women. The second volume has, tucked in the cover, two older maps of Wisconsin.

Usher, Ellis B. *Wisconsin: Its Story and Biography 1848-1913*. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1913.

This book has a biography of Arthur MacArthur Sr. as well as other historical information on Wisconsin. This object can be found in the UWM Archives.

Sources on Arthur MacArthur, Jr.

“Arthur MacArthur, Jr.: An American Hero” (alternate subtitle “Wisconsin’s Boy Colonel”) 1985. [Link](#) and [link](#)

Note that there are two catalog entries for this item, which seems to have two different lengths. Both versions reside at UW-Green Bay and must be requested to be transported to UWM. You should consult with a librarian to determine which version you want.

Brackob, A. K. *Duty, Honor, Country: The Life of Arthur MacArthur, Jr.* Las Vegas, NV: Vita Histria, 2020. Catalog [Link](#) or [Alternative Link](#)

Citizens of Milwaukee at the Chamber of Commerce. “Programme of Ceremonies and Addresses of Presentation and Acceptance: at the Presentation of Testimonial Swords to the Major-General Arthur MacArthur and to Brigadier General Charles King.” Milwaukee, WI: 1899. [Catalog Link](#)

Must be requested from UW-Madison

Hospodor, Gregory. “MacArthur, Arthur, Jr.” In *America’s Heroes: Medal of Honor Recipients from the Civil War to Afghanistan*, edited by James H. Wilbanks. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011. [Catalog Link](#).

MacArthur, Arthur. “Annual Report of Major General Arthur MacArthur, U. S. Volunteers, Commanding, Division of the Philippines, Military Governor in the Philippine Islands.” Philippines, 1900. [Catalog Link](#).

May, Glenn A. “Why the United States Won the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902,” *Pacific Historical Review* 54, No. 4 (November 1983): 353-377. [Link](#).

“Roster of Troops Serving in the Division of the Philippines: Major General Arthur MacArthur, U.S. Vols., Brigadier General, U.S. Army, Commanding: Manila, Philippine Islands, July 15th, 1900.” Philippines: Adjutant General’s Office, Headquarters Division of the Philippines, 1900. [Catalog Link](#)

Billy Mitchell can be found on page 39!

Welch Jr., Richard E. “American Atrocities in the Philippines: The Indictment and the Response.” *Pacific Historical Review* 43, no. 2 (May 1974): 233-253. [Link](#).

An article about the use of torture and other atrocities committed during the occupation of the Philippines, which was under the command of Arthur MacArthur Jr. Note: There is very strong, racist language in this article where the author quotes primary sources from actors in the Philippine Occupation.

Young, Kenneth Ray. *The General's General: The Life and Times of Arthur MacArthur*. Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1994. [Catalog Link](#) and [Alternative Link](#)

Sources on Douglas MacArthur

“An Illustrious Line Ends with MacArthur.” *The Milwaukee Wisconsin*, June 1, 1909. [Link](#).

An article from a newspaper on MacArthur Jr.'s retirement. No information could easily be found on *The Milwaukee Wisconsin* so more digging may need to be done here, but the link from the Wisconsin Historical Society is a good first lead.

Anonymous. *Notable Men of Wisconsin*. Milwaukee: William's Publishing Co., 1901-1902.

A brief introduction with statistics about Milwaukee around 1900, but all photographs of notable Wisconsin men. The only name involved with this project is Maj. Gen. Arthur MacArthur, Douglas's father.

“General MacArthur, New Star on Military Horizon of U.S., Recommended to Pershing as Mors [sic] Remarkable Fighter of World War.” *The Arizona Daily Star*, December 28, 1918. [Link](#) on Newspapers.com

Baird, Joseph H. “New Chief of Staff Takes Command of Army at Age 50.” *The Evening Times*, November 15, 1930. [Link](#) on Newspapers.com

Describes the modernization of the military as MacArthur became Chief of Staff of military at age 50.

Jendrysik, Stephen. “Chicopee's Arthur MacArthur Was a Civil War Hero.” MassLive. March 28, 2012. [Link](#)

“MacArthur Again Is a Milwaukeean.” *Milwaukee Sentinel*, May 21, 1907. [Link](#).

An article hailing the return of Arthur MacArthur Jr. to Milwaukee. The link here is to the Wisconsin Historical Society page, but a clearer image of the article should be found in the Microtext room of UWM's library.

MacArthur, Douglas. “Revitalizing a Nation; a Statement of Beliefs, Opinions, and Policies Embodied in the Public Pronouncements of Douglas MacArthur.” Chicago: Heritage Foundation; distributed by Garden City Books, Garden City, N.Y., 1952. [Catalog Link](#).

MacArthur Memorial Photographic Collection. The MacArthur Memorial. [Link](#)

Manchester, William. *American Caesar*. Boston: Little Brown Publishing, 1978. [Catalog Link](#)

Perret, Geoffrey. “My Search for Douglas MacArthur.” *American Heritage* 47, no. 1 (February/March 1996): 74-85. [Link](#).

This article describes how he was a really controversial figure and a compulsive liar. This article is by a biographer that details his journey on figuring out who Douglas really was and gives insight into his character.

Rick, Johnson L. "Harry Truman's Decision to Fire Douglas MacArthur Came after Months of Insubordination." *Military History* 21, no. 1 (April 2004): 74. [Link](#).

Wolf, Tom. "'Take the Offensive' Is Heart of MacArthur's Battle Creed." *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, February 1, 1942. [Link](#). on Newspapers.com

A Civil War Soldier and Veteran

A Milwaukeean who served as a soldier in the Civil War (and returned home as a veteran) could be used to illuminate many facets of the Mitchell family history. Such a figure could easily be based on either a real historical person or could be a composite figure. He might have served alongside John Lendrum Mitchell and then known him through politics or banking in the postwar period. If injured during the war, he might have stayed at the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, which John's mother Martha was instrumental in organizing.

Encyclopedia of Milwaukee Entries with Context on the Civil War

Kehoe, Karen, Kevin Abing, and Daryl Webb. "Wartime Milwaukee, *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Kehoe, Karen. "Wisconsin Soldiers' Aid Fair." *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Marten, James. "Clement J. Zablocki VA Medical Center," *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Marten, James. "Veterans." *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers

Clement J. Zablocki Veteran's [sic] Administration Medical Center Collection. Milwaukee County Historical Society. Mss-0237. 1865-ongoing. [Link](#)

"History of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers." National Parks Service. [Link](#)

Lynch, Patricia, A. *Milwaukee Soldiers Home*. South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2013. [Link](#)

"National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Northwestern Branch, Main Building, 5000 West National Avenue, Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, WI." Library of Congress. [Link](#)

Plante, Trevor K. "The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers." 2004. *Prologue Magazine*. National Archives. [Link](#)

"Registers of Veterans at the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, Northwestern Branch in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1867-1934." FamilySearch.com. [Link](#)

William Reed

William Reed was a Civil War Soldier from the only all-Black regiment from Milwaukee. He became a member of Company F, 29th Infantry of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) on April 7 1,864. This regiment was the only all-Black regiment from Wisconsin. Reed was one of 179,000 Black individuals to fight in the Union Army. Black people made up 10% of the Union Army.

Bleakley, Hoyt, Louis Cain, and Joseph P. Ferrie. "Amidst Poverty and Prejudice: Black and Irish Civil War Veterans." NBER Working Paper Series (2013): 19605-. [Link](#)

Kannel, Jeff. *Make Way for Liberty: Wisconsin African Americans in the Civil War*. Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2020. [Link](#)

“Lieutenant Colonel William N. Reed,” Battle of Lustee. [Link](#)

Matz, Lee. “A Statue Honoring Milwaukee’s Colored Civil War Soldiers Should Be Erected in Bronzeville.” *Milwaukee Independent*, February 8, 2018. [Link](#)

“Memorial Day, Civil War Soldier from ‘The Only Black Unit from Milwaukee That Fought’ Was Honored,” *Fox6Now*, May 30, 2016. [Link](#)

“The Civil War: Wisconsin African Americans in the Civil War,” CSPAN. [Link](#)

“White Officer Praises His Black Troops,” Mark E. Mitchell Collection, African American History. [Link](#)

Wisconsin Regimental Histories

Chapin, Sarah H. “A Chapter of My Personal Experience During the Civil War, Written at the Request of the 10th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, and Read at their Annual Reunion, July 21st, 1898.” In *Fourth Annual Reunion of the Tenth Wisconsin Infantry Association*, 15-24. Waupun, WI: Oliver Bros., Printers, 1898. [Link](#)

This is a large collection of reports of the Wisconsin 10th Infantry’s reunions after the war. This particular chapter is a recollection written by a woman who visited the front several times and interacted with soldiers who had just left the front. This provides an outsider’s perspective of the action, albeit a memory from more than 20 years after the war.

Damon, Herbert C. *History of the Milwaukee Light Guard*. Milwaukee, WI: Sentinel Co., 1875. [Link](#)

Can be found in the Special Collections and online through the library website.

Dawes, Rufus R. *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers*. Marietta, OH: E.R. Alderman & Sons, 1890.

Can be found in the Special Collections and online through the library website.

Hinkley, Julian W. *A Narrative of Service with the 3rd Wisconsin Infantry*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin History Commission, 1912. [Link](#)

A story of a Waupun soldier’s time volunteering in the Civil War. This book can be found in the UWM Special Collections.

Quiner, E.B. “Regimental History—The Twenty Fourth Infantry.” In *The Military History of Wisconsin: A Record of the Civil and Military Patriotism of the State, in the War for the Union, with a History of the Campaigns in which Wisconsin Soldiers Have Been Conspicuous, Regimental Histories, Sketches of Distinguished Officers, the Role of the Illustrious Dead, Movements of the Legislature and State Officers, Etc.* Chicago IL: Clarke and Co., 1866. 720-733. [Link](#)

This chapter covers only the 24th Wisconsin Infantry, which John L. Mitchell was a part of, as well as Arthur MacArthur, the father of General MacArthur, the WWII general. This volume as a whole provides the histories of other Wisconsin units, from Milwaukee and the rest of the state, and includes biographical sketches of Wisconsin characters who fought or helped with the war effort in general. This book can be found in the UWM Special Collections.

Rood, Hosea W. *Story of the Service of Company E, and the Twelfth Wisconsin Regiment, Veteran Volunteer Infantry, in the War of the Rebellion*. Milwaukee, WI: Swain and Tate Co., 1893. [Link](#)

A large tome providing detailed explanations of actions throughout nearly the entirety of the Civil War from “one of the boys.” Rood was not from Milwaukee, but from rural Wisconsin. This book can be found in the UWM Special Collections and online via the library website.

Grand Army of the Republic

The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) was a fraternal organization formed by Union Veterans after the Civil War. The organization was founded in 1866, in Springfield, Illinois. Most branches of the group were located in the Union states, but some were located in Confederate states as well. On the whole, the group strove for equality and inclusiveness; the only requirement was that one had to have fought in the Union Army. This meant both black and white members were equally admitted. The Grand Army of the Republic also fought for black voting rights and began the Memorial Day tradition. Soon after its creation, the group became all but an official arm of the Republican Party and helped several presidents become elected. It is suggested that if the GAR was not behind a candidate in primary elections, the candidate did not win a nomination. At its height, in 1890, the census of the organization was greater than 400,000 members. The group dissolved in 1956 when the last Civil War veteran died in Duluth, Minnesota.

Grand Army of the Republic. *Constitution of the Department of Wisconsin, in the Grand Army of the Republic*. Madison, WI: Atwood & Rublee, Book and Job Printers, 1866. [Link](#)

The constitution of the GAR in Wisconsin. This is found on the state historical society’s site.

Grand Army of the Republic. *Final Journal of the Grand Army of the Republic*. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1957. [Link](#)

This small pamphlet provides a very brief, succinct history of the GAR. It includes a list of commanders and leadership. This book also has short summations of the yearly encampments and their results in the organization. In 1889, the National Encampment (yearly reunion) was held in Milwaukee! This book can be found both in the stacks, in the basement in the compact shelving, and in the UWM Special Collections.

Grand Army of the Republic. *General Orders/Headquarters, the Grand Army of the Republic*. Broken Bow, NE: Grand Army of the Republic, 1929. [Link](#)

This is a small pamphlet recalling some of the things the commander had accomplished. This pamphlet also announces the upcoming encampment in Portland, Maine. This pamphlet can be found in the UWM Special Collections.

Grand Army of the Republic. *Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Meeting of the Society of the 28th Volunteer Infantry*. Milwaukee, WI: Grand Army of the Republic, 1894. [Link](#)

This is the proceedings of an annual reunion of one of the volunteer Wisconsin units. This item is found on Google Books.

Grand Army of the Republic. *Soldiers and Citizens' Album of Biographical Record [of Wisconsin] Containing Personal Sketches of Army Men and Citizens Prominent in Loyalty to the Union. Also a Chronological and Statistical History of the Civil War and a History of the Grand Army of the Republic*. Chicago: Grand Army Publishing Co, 1890. [Link](#)

A book as long as the title. Has histories and explanations of the GAR and Women's Relief Corp (WRC). Found in UWM Special Collections.

McCrory, Thomas J. *Grand Army of the Republic, Department of Wisconsin*. Black Earth, WI: Trails Books, 2005. [Link](#)

National Daughters of the Grand Army of the Republic. *The History of the Little Bronze Button and the Daughters of the Men Who Wore It*. Superior, WI: National Daughters of the Grand Army of the Republic, 1932. [Link](#)

Essays about who can belong to this organization that was a support group of the GAR. Any daughter of a veteran who was honorably discharged could join this group at the age of 16. Ruth Mitchell could have belonged to this group. This is found on the state historical society's site.

Rood, Hosea W. "The Grand Army of the Republic," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 6, no. 4 (June 1923): 403-13. [Link](#).

A description of the GAR by a member who fought with the 12th Wisconsin Infantry. This gives some interpretation to "orders" given out by the GAR that created Memorial Day and other events the GAR took part in. This is an article found on JSTOR.

Political Cartoonist

Like journalists, political cartoonists had a large influence in how the American public interpreted news events. They brought out the occasional comedy and irony that comes with monitoring global and national news. For people who didn't have a lot of background knowledge on a subject or didn't follow a news story for a long time, political cartoons could offer a more approachable way to understand current events. Political cartoons are quick to look over, but many of them include many layers of meaning beyond a cursory glance.

These types of cartoons were first published in the 16th century as a part of pamphlets that pushed for reform in the church, including some written by Martin Luther. Political cartoons were a way to reach the illiterate population. Benjamin Franklin's famous "[Join or Die](#)" cartoon featured a snake broken into eight pieces to encourage unity among the colonies. Thomas Nast was one of the most famous political cartoonists and published many of his works during the late 1800s. He is credited with popularizing the donkey and the elephant as symbols of the Democratic and Republican parties. Throughout the time of the Mitchells, political cartoons served as icons to not only inform but also to push people to action.

The Billy Mitchell files found at the Library of Congress contain a large collection of political cartoons available for anyone to use; we have [digitized a sampling](#) for your use in this course. They provide valuable insight into how public opinion on American airpower was shaped and molded. The sources below are intended as aids to understand these cartoons. A composite political cartoonist character could tweet out his own work as well as those of his colleagues in order to provide insight into Billy Mitchell's trial.

Bush, Larry. "More Than Words: Rhetorical Constructs in American Political Cartoons." *Studies in American Humor* 27, no. 27 (2013): 63-91. [Link](#)

Civil War Graphics and Ephemera. The Library Company of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA. [Link](#).

Hess, Stephen, and Milton Kaplan. *The Ungentlemanly Art; A History of American Political Cartoons*. New York, NY: Macmillan, 1968. [Catalog Link](#).

"How to Analyze Political Cartoons," Civil War Era NC, accessed August 16, 2021. [Link](#).

Parton, James. *Caricature and Other Comic Art in All Times and Many Lands*. Project Gutenberg, April 2012. [Link](#)

Porter, William James. "Milwaukeeans as We See 'Em.'" *Cartoons and Caricatures*. Milwaukee, WI: Newspaper Cartoonists' Association, 1904. [Catalog Link](#)

Journalist

Journalists provide a first look at history-in-the-making. Many Americans shape their view of current events through what they read in the news media. In the 21st century, journalists and news corporations are more contentious and important than ever. During the time of the Mitchell family's dominance in Milwaukee, journalism was the major source of information on what was going on in the world. Now, in the age of information, people are free to get information from anywhere they see fit. There are blogs, forums, comment sections, and even raw video footage of news events posted on social media completely unfiltered. This is a new concept. In the time period you are studying, people viewed the world through the newspaper, and journalists had much more control over the message. The sources below outline the history of journalism in the United States. A journalist character could provide helpful insight into the Mitchells of any period, but especially during Billy Mitchell's court martial.

American Newspapers, 1800-1860: City Newspapers. Illinois Library. [Link](#)

Byers, Stephen. "Milwaukee Journal Sentinel." *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Carter Olson, Candi S. "'This Was No Place for a Woman': Gender Judo, Gender Stereotypes, and World War II Correspondent Ruth Cowan." *American Journalism* 34, no. 4 (2017): 427–447. [Link](#)

Conrad, Will C., Kathleen Wilson, and Dale Wilson. *The Milwaukee Journal: The First Eighty Years*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964.

Daly, Christopher B. *Covering America: A Narrative History of a Nation's Journalism*. Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012. [Link](#)

Forde, Kathy Roberts, and Katherine A. Foss. "'The Facts—the Color!—The Facts': The Idea of a Report in American Print Culture, 1885—1910." *Book History* 15 (2012): 123–51. [Link](#).

Guarneri, Julia. *Newsprint Metropolis: City Papers and the Making of Modern Americans*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017.

This book includes extensive content about newspapers in Milwaukee.

Hatcher, Beth. "Teaching the History of America's Black Press." UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media. February 16, 2022. [Link](#)

Karolevitz, Robert F. *Newspapering in the Old West; a Pictorial History of Journalism and Printing on the Frontier*. Seattle: Superior Pub. Co., 1965. [Link](#)

McBride, Genevieve G. "Ione Quinby Griggs." *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Milwaukee Sentinel, 150 Years: Our Anniversary Celebration. Milwaukee: Milwaukee Sentinel, 1987.

Muhammad, Larry. "Black Press: Past and Present." Nieman Reports. Fall 2003. [Link](#)

- Park, Robert E. "The Natural History of the Newspaper." *American Journal of Sociology* 29, no. 3 (1923): 273–89. [Link](#).
- Payne, George Henry. *History of Journalism in the United States*. Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1970. [Link](#)
- Rogers, Tony. "Here is a Brief History of Print Journalism in America." ThoughtCo. May 15, 2019. [Link](#)
- Ruth Cowan Nash papers. [Link](#) and [Link](#) (select photos)
- Simonis, H. *The Street of Ink, an Intimate History of Journalism*. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company, 1917. [Link](#)
- Vos, Tim P., ed. *Journalism*. Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2018. [Link](#)
- Welky, David B. "Viking Girls, Mermaids, and Little Brown Men: U.S. Journalism and the 1932 Olympics." *Journal of Sport History* 24, no. 1 (1997): 24–49. [Link](#).
- Wells, Jonathan Daniel. *Women Writers and Journalists in the Nineteenth-Century South*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. [Link](#)
- Wells, Robert W. *The "Milwaukee Journal": An Informal Chronicle of Its First 100 Years*. Milwaukee: Milwaukee Journal, 1981.
- Wilson, Clint C. *Overview of the Last 182 Years of the Black Press*. National Newspaper Publishers Association. [Link](#)
- Woodhull, Nancy J., and Robert W. Snyder. *Defining Moments in Journalism*. Somerset: Routledge, 1998. [Link](#)

Civil War Nurse

One way to get at the experience of the Civil War is to learn from the perspectives of nurses. These medical staff, both male and female, served on the front lines of the war as well as in hospitals. Perhaps the most famous Civil War nurse was poet Walt Whitman. The Civil War was a formative experience for John Lendrum Mitchell in particular and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the United States more generally.

Edmonds, S. Emma E. *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army*. Hartford, CT: W.S. Williams & Co., 1865. [Link](#) and [link](#)

A personal narrative, told in serial format, of an army nurse who also had missions as a spy. One interesting event in this account is a hot air balloon reconnaissance mission by a few soldiers. This object is found in the UWM Special Collections and is also available digitally.

Erving, Annie Priscilla. *Reminiscences of the Life of an Army Nurse in the Field, Hospital, and Camp during the Civil War*. Newburgh, NJ: Daily News, 1904. [Link](#)

Another account of a nurse's time in the Civil War. This book can be found in the UWM Special Collections.

Gardner-Holland, Mary A. *Our Army Nurses*. Boston, MA: Wilkins & Co., 1895. [Link](#) and [link](#)

This book is a compilation of nurses' anecdotes of the war; they were requested by the compiler of the book and are stories written by the women after their time serving. There are nurses from Wisconsin in this book. This book can be found in the UWM Special Collections and is available online.

Grand Army of the Republic. *Soldiers and Citizens' Album of Biographical Record [of Wisconsin] Containing Personal Sketches of Army Men and Citizens Prominent in Loyalty to the Union. Also a Chronological and Statistical History of the Civil War and a History of the Grand Army of the Republic*. Chicago: Grand Army Publishing Co, 1890. [Link](#)

A book as long as the title. Has histories and explanations of the GAR and Women's Relief Corp (WRC). Found in the UWM Special Collections.

Livermore, Mary A. *My Story of the War: A Woman's Narrative of Four Years Personal Experience as a Nurse in the Union Army, and Relief Work at Home, in Hospitals, Camps, and at the Front During the War of the Rebellion*. Hartford, CT: A.D. Worthington, 1889. [Link](#) and [link](#)

Mary A. Livermore was a Chicagoan who participated in the Civil War. This volume is very dense but has a chapter on many of the female heroines of the war; a chapter on her work with the Sanitary Commission, which was headed by Frederick Law Olmsted who has Milwaukee connections; and a chapter which tells the story of some rural Wisconsin farmers' wives and their duties while their husbands and sons were off fighting.

Quiner, E.B. *The Military History of Wisconsin: A Record of the Civil and Military Patriotism of the State, in the War for the Union, with a History of the Campaigns in which Wisconsin Soldiers Have Been Conspicuous, Regimental Histories, Sketches of Distinguished Officers, the Role of the Illustrious*

Dead, Movements of the Legislature and State Officers, Etc. Chicago IL: Clarke and Co., 1866. Pp. 1015-1022. [Link](#) and [link](#)

This is a biographical sketch of Cordelia Harvey, wife of Wisconsin governor, Louis P. Harvey, who drowned while bringing supplies to soldiers on the front. Mrs. Harvey was a Madison resident and most of her story involves Madison, but she is credited in this article with helping to develop soldiers' hospitals, like the one in Milwaukee, in the northern states after the war. This book can be found in the UWM Special Collections.

Quiner, E.B. "Regimental History—The Twenty Fourth Infantry." In *The Military History of Wisconsin: A Record of the Civil and Military Patriotism of the State, in the War for the Union, with a History of the Campaigns in which Wisconsin Soldiers Have Been Conspicuous, Regimental Histories, Sketches of Distinguished Officers, the Role of the Illustrious Dead, Movements of the Legislature and State Officers, Etc.* Chicago IL: Clarke and Co., 1866. 208-246. [Link](#) and [link](#)

Brief explanation of the Soldier's Home built in Milwaukee in 1864 on W. Water Street. This book can be found in the UWM Special Collections and online.

Smith, Adelaide W. *Reminiscences of an Army Nurse*. New York, NY: Greaves Publishing Co., 1911. [Link](#)

This is an account of a nurse during the Civil War, but there are parts of the book devoted to care and social aid given after the war ends. This book can be found in the UWM Special Collections.

Whitman, Walt. *Drum-taps and the Sequel to Drum-Taps*, edited by F. DeWolfe Miller. Gainesville, FL: 1959. [Link](#)

This is two separate collections of poems written at the end of and just after the Civil War. This source does not really provide factual information; it does give us, in the 21st century, an emotional, literary idea of how at least one artist felt about the war. This book can be found in the UWM Stacks.

Whitman, Walt. *Memoranda during the War and the Death of Abraham Lincoln*, edited by Roy Basler. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1962. [Link](#)

This is two separate Whitman works. The first, *Memoranda...*, is a diary of Whitman's time helping in Civil War hospitals. The second work, *Death of Abraham Lincoln*, is about Whitman's reaction to the death of Lincoln, whom he admired very much. This book can be found in the UWM stacks.

Whitman, Walt. *The Wound Dresser: Letters Written to His Mother from the Hospitals in Washington during the Civil War*, edited by Richard M. Bucke. New York, NY: Bodley Press, 1949.

This work is commentary and explanations of how the hospitals worked. It also provides a literary, prose account of what happened in the hospitals. This book can be found in the UWM Stacks and online. [Link](#) and [link](#)

Scottish People in Wisconsin

Alexander Mitchell was not the only Scottish immigrant to Milwaukee in the 19th century. He came to work with George Smith. And many other Scottish immigrants arrived as well. You may wish to contextualize Mitchell's experience as an immigrant or develop a Scottish immigrant character using these sources.

"A Century of Banking in Milwaukee." *Bulletin of the Business Historical Society* 13 (June 1939): 44-47.

Andrew Aitken Senior. Photograph. Waukesha County Society and Museum. [Link](#)

Carroon, Robert G. "Bagpipes and Beer Barrels: The Scots in Milwaukee, 1810-1870." Master's thesis, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 1969.

Carroon, Robert G. "Scotsmen in Old Milwaukee, 1810-1860." *Historical Messenger* 25 (March 1969): 20-33.

Douglas, James. Douglas, Martha. "James and Margaret Douglas letters 1840-circa 1844. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Archives. [Link](#)

John Goadby Gregory papers, 1846-1946, Milwaukee Mss 94. University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Archives. [Link](#)

Kellogg, L. P. "The Story of Wisconsin, 1634-1848." *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 3 (3) (Mar. 1920): 314-326. [Link](#)

Margaret Glass. Daguerreotype. Waukesha County Society and Museum. [Link](#)

Mueller, Brian. "Scots." *The Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Railmen and Plankmen

Alexander Mitchell's wealth was founded in banking but flourished due to his investments in Wisconsin transportation infrastructure. He helped build the companies that created plank roads and railroads in Wisconsin, networks that allowed the flow of people and goods around the state—and enriched Mitchell to the point that he became the wealthiest person in Wisconsin in the 19th century. The railroad network also pushed Wisconsin's to become one of the largest wheat exporters in the United States. However, the labor to build the physical roads was performed by many men using their muscles, and a few machines. In re-enacting these characters on Twitter, you would have the opportunity to show what life in 19th century Wisconsin was like for working-class people.

Plank Roads

Longfellow, Rickie. "Plank Roads." U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. [Link](#)

Milwaukee-Watertown Plank Road. Watertown Historical Society website. [Link](#)

Petition for building a plank road from Milwaukee to Janesville. Wisconsin Historical Society, 1848. [Link](#)

Riedl, Ken. "History of Watertown, Wisconsin. A Digital Online Ebook." [Link](#)

Walzer, Joseph B. "County Roads." *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Railroads

A Glossary of 19th Century Railroad Terms. Transcontinental Railroad. Linda Hall Library. [Link](#)

Buck, James Smith. *Pioneer History of Milwaukee*. Milwaukee: Milwaukee News Company, 1884. [Link](#) and [link](#)

Burns, Adam. "Railroads in the 1840s, A New Industry Takes Flight." American-Rails.com. [Link](#)

Conard, Howard Louis, ed. *History of Milwaukee County: From Its First Settlement to the Year 1895*. Vol. 2. Chicago: America Biographical Publishing Co., 1895. [Link](#)

Grant, H. Roger. "Railroads." *The Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Gruber, John. "Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Pacific Railway." *The Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Gugler Lithographic Company. *Map of Wisconsin Railways*. The Gugler Lith. Co, 1892. [Link](#)

Jablonsky, Thomas J. "Byron Kilbourn." *The Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*.² [Link](#)

² For a lengthier bibliography about Byron Kilbourn, please see the version of this document created for the 2020 iteration of this class at [link](#).

Lorenzsonn, Axel. *Steam and Cinders: The Advent of Railroads in Wisconsin*. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society, 2009. [Link](#) and [link](#)

Primary Sources: The American West: Railroads. Christopher Newport University. [Link](#)

Stover, John F. “*The Routledge Historical Atlas of the American Railroads*.” New York: Routledge, 1999. [Link](#)

Transportation Library. Northwestern University. [Link](#)

Transportation-Archives Dept.: Related Material. UWM Archives. [Link](#)

Tschudy, Kim “Railroad Stations.” *The Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. [Link](#)

Wisconsin’s Railroads: Their Part in the Development of the State. District of Columbia: The Association, 1948, 1948. [Link](#)

Extras

For your contextual/narrator tweets, you may wish to create one or two tweets that reference these additional possibilities that shed light on the history of the Mitchells and of Milwaukee:

- Wisconsin legislators who wanted to take away charter from the Marine and Fire Insurance Company for violating its charter and banking without permission
- Patrons of the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company
- Someone who asked the Mitchells for money
- People complaining about riding on Plank Roads
- Charles Lindbergh, the most famous aviator of the early 20th century. His visit to Milwaukee is documented in the Mitchell Gallery of Flight at the Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport. The flight maps Lindbergh used on his famous trans-Atlantic crossing are held at the UWM Libraries American Geographical Society Library.
- Major General James Menoher, one of many US military leaders who resisted the introduction of aviation to warfare

Timeline of Alexander Mitchell's Life

- October 18, 1817 — Alexander Mitchell was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland
- May 28, 1839 — Alexander Mitchell arrived on a Lake Steamer in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He had been recommended for a position in the city while working at a law firm in Scotland. He was carrying a briefcase filled with \$50,000. He had been tasked with bringing this briefcase to his boss, George Smith. George Smith was the owner of an insurance company, where Alexander was to be secretary.
- Summer, 1839 — Alexander Mitchell saw a beautiful woman ride past him on a horse. That woman was Martha Reed, sister of Harrison Reed (editor/publisher of the *Milwaukee Sentinel* and later the 9th governor of Florida).
- 1840 — Alexander Mitchell helped found the [Milwaukee Curling Club](#).
- October 6, 1841 — Alexander Mitchell and Martha Reed were married in Cleveland, Ohio by Reverend M. Aiken.
- 1843 — Suspicion began to arise of A. Mitchell and Smith's business practices. Opponents of the company called for an examination of the financial condition and business practices of the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company.
- December 15, 1843 — It was determined that Smith and Mitchell were circulating certificates of deposit in violation of their company's charter. This led to a long running battle with anti-banking legislators who wished to repeal the company's charter.
- 1846 — The Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance Company, due to the opposition from legislators and other businesses, reorganized under the leadership of Alexander Mitchell
 - "Mitchell's Money" was circulated and widely accepted for commerce, as it retained value during financial crises of 1857, 1873, and 1893
- November 1849 — There was a run on the company after a rumor circulated that George Smith's Chicago Bank had closed. They had chosen to close for the Thanksgiving holiday, a holiday that none of the other banks observed. The unusual closure sparked the rumor.
- March 31, 1851 — There was another run on the WM&F due to Governor Dewey's ongoing suspicions of the legality of the company's business practices
- April 8, 1851 — Attorney General Coon called to restrain the Wisconsin Marine and Fire Insurance company from doing any further business. This did not come to fruition
- 1854 — Alexander Mitchell was elected president of the Wisconsin Bankers Association
- 1861 — The United States Civil War began
- 1865 — The United States Civil War ended
- 1869 — Alexander Mitchell founded Northwestern National Insurance Company
- 1871 — Alexander Mitchell was elected to the United States Congress
- 1877 — Alexander Mitchell was offered the Democratic nomination for governor, but declined
- 1876 — The Mitchell Building was constructed in Downtown Milwaukee
- December 29, 1879 — Billy Mitchell was born in Nice, France while his parents were on vacation
- 1891 — Twelve-year old **Billy**'s collection of taxidermied American birds he has killed in Wisconsin reached 200 specimens. He learned how to stuff animals by studying [Carl Akeley](#), a lion hunter and Milwaukee Public Museum curator.
- April 19, 1887 — Alexander Mitchell died during a trip to New York City, age 69.

Timeline of Billy Mitchell's Life

Source: Mitchell, Ruth. *My Brother Bill: The Life of Billy Mitchell*. New York, NY: Brace Harcourt, 1953.
[Catalog Link](#) and [Alternative Link](#)

Early Life

- December 29 1879: Billy was born in Nice, France while parents were on vacation. His birthplace is commemorated with a plaque.
- 1891: Twelve year old Billy's collection of taxidermied American birds he killed in Wisconsin reaches 200 specimens. He learned how to stuff animals by studying [Carl Akeley](#), a lion hunter and Milwaukee Public Museum curator.
- 1895: After attending Racine College (an Episcopalian prep school) for his first few years of education, he transferred to Colombian Preparatory University (now George Washington University) in Washington D.C. His parents lived in D.C. while John was in the Senate.

Spanish-American War/Cuba

- April 1898: Billy left Colombian University before graduation and enlisted in the First Wisconsin Volunteers Company M to fight in the Spanish-American War. He transferred into the 1st Wisconsin Infantry. He became the youngest Army officer when he was promoted from private to second lieutenant a week after arriving on base.
- August 1898: Billy transferred to the Signal Corps to build and repair telephone and telegraph lines. He became an acting squadron adjutant, meaning he was in charge of 22 men. He enjoyed the respect and promotions he gained quickly. He was stationed at Camp Cuba Libre in Jacksonville, Florida.
- December 1898: Billy received orders to construct telegraph lines in Cuba. He was stationed in Camp Columbia in Havana and strung telegraph lines throughout Santiago.
- January 1899: Billy saw Spain surrender, ending the Spanish-American War.
- February 2, 1899: First Lieutenant Billy Mitchell received orders to go to Gibara and then Holguin with men and materials to construct telegraph lines.
 - During this time, Billy started asking his father to arrange his transfer to the Philippines. He knew that the fighting in Cuba was over and he wanted to go where the action was. Although his father John hesitated to get involved, Billy continually wrote to him about it.
- Feb 17, 1899: Billy arrived in Holguin with his men and construction on telegraph lines quickly continued.
- April 11, 1899: Billy wrote to John that he has built over 196 miles of line since he has been in Cuba. He has ridden over 600 miles on his pony since the end of March. He also formally applied to go to the Philippines, despite his father warning that he should not go.
- May 19, 1899: Billy was stationed out of Quemadas, Cuba and continued to build lines.
- Mid-July 1899: Billy received orders to go to New York City, beginning the process of his transfer to the Philippines.
- August 10, 1899: Billy's last night in Cuba before heading back to the United States.
 - August 24: Billy arrived in New York City and traveled for a month while on furlough. He visited many family members and friends throughout the East Coast and Midwest.
 - September 25: Billy left Milwaukee and headed to San Francisco, where he began his trip to the Philippines.

Transfer to the Philippines

- November 2, 1899: Billy made it to Manila and received orders to serve under General Arthur MacArthur (from Milwaukee) in the Signal Corps. He continued laying telegraph lines before receiving an independent command.
- December 10, 1899: Billy was promoted to Acting Chief Signal Officer of the division.
- January 1900: Because he knew five languages, Billy worked as an interpreter to form the Filipino government. He was 21 years old.
- March 1900: He reached Cape Nome lighthouse at the north end of the Philippine islands and was the first white man to make it “overland.”
- May 1900: Billy and his men captured General Aguinaldo’s adjutant general (Mendoza), signaling the beginning of the end of the conflict. None of Billy’s men were killed when Mendoza peacefully surrendered.
- July 1900: Billy tried to submit his resignation after he used his six months of leave after departing the Philippines (with malaria). However, his boss and friend (General AW Greely) convinced Billy to go to Alaska to lay telegraph lines.
- ??? 1900: Billy took part in the Boxer Rebellion and made quite a few good friends because he knew Chinese.
 - [US Marines in the Boxer Rebellion](#)

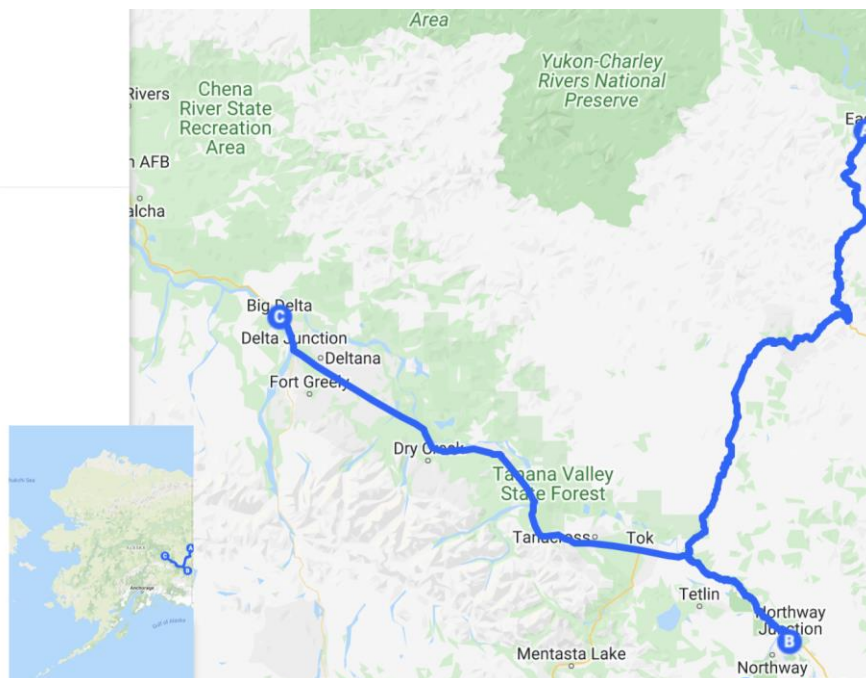
Alaska

- July 31, 1901: Billy received orders to go to Alaska to study and survey the difficulties of the terrain there, as well as suggesting routes for a telegraph line.
- Late August 1901: Billy arrived in Alaska and was stationed at Fort Egbert.
- January 4, 1902: Billy wrote to his father that he was considering transferring out of the Army (due to lack of advancement with the Signal Corps) or coming home to help the family business (if necessary). He began reading about aviation in his spare time.
 - Due to his need for pack dogs and his love of all animals, Billy’s dog collection reached over 200! His favorite remained his first dog, Pointer.
- March 1902: Billy and his hired crew have traveled over 2,000 miles since arriving at Fort Egbert in January. They mapped the area and began building telegraph lines. During this time, he also established a shop to custom design sled equipment.
- May 1902: Work on telegraph lines paused as summer arrived and the ice began melting, causing dangerous sledding conditions.
 - In late May, digging holes for posts began with much trial and error.
- Summer 1902: As his crew continued working on the telegraph line from the Yukon River to Eagle, Billy embarked on a trip to begin mapping southeast Alaska.
 - Early June 1902: Word arrived that Major Field would be coming to inspect the telegraph line. When he arrived in Eagle, Field admitted to Billy that he had extreme paranoia about men trying to harm him. Billy suggested that Field come on the expedition (map below) with him as an attempt to distract and heal Field. This journey was nicknamed “the nightmare of the Tanana” by the Mitchells.
 - See <https://explorenorth.com/articles/asf/float-down-tanana-river.html>

A Eagle, AK, USA

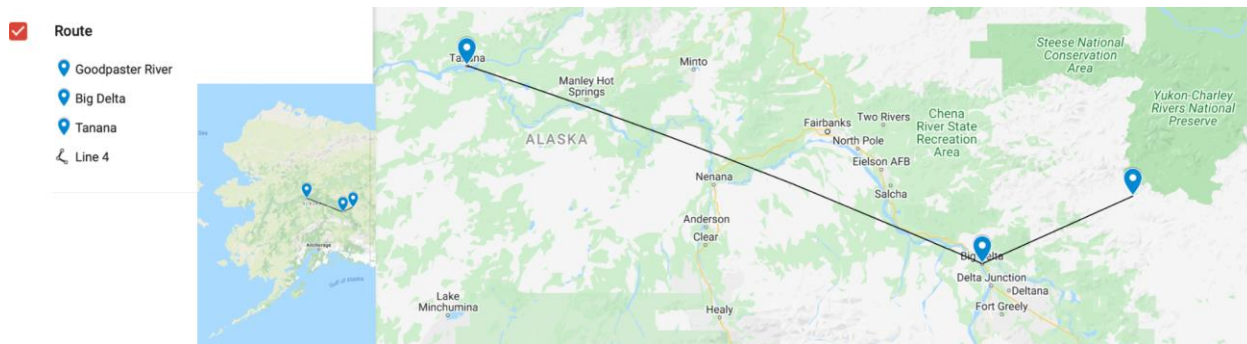
B Northway Junction, AK, USA

C Big Delta, AK, USA



- Until Billy's trip, there were no established routes in this region. Lieutenant Henry J. Allen's trip in 1885 was noted, but no useful notes existed from it.
- Late Summer: Billy, Major Field and other crew member concluded their journey at Fort Gibbon.
- August 26: Billy received a telegram from Adjutant General Evans congratulating him for completing the telegraph line between Valdez and Egbert.
- Fall 1902: Billy began the trip back to Fort Egbert to get the animals into shelters for the winter. He spent time hunting caribou and smoking salmon for rations to be consumed on future trips.
- December 1902: Billy, Chief Joseph of the Middle Forks tribe, Dutch (hired help and one of Billy's closest friends), and Pointer the dog set out to travel down the Good Pasture River. They successfully navigated the river and made it to the Good Pasture/Cheesen Native American land, where Joseph fell ill. Billy made "medicine" for Joseph to restore his strength.
 - Billy rewarded Joseph for taking the trip with him by buying him lots of items from a nearby trading post. This trip dramatically altered relations between the Middle Forks and Good Pasture/Cheesen tribes.
- January-March 1903: a gold rush began in Fairbanks and travelers were aided by Billy's new route along the Good Pasture River.
- March 1903: One final trip was required for telegraph line construction. If there were any delays or mishaps, instead of leaving at the end of the summer, Billy and crew would have to stay through another winter. Preparations began for their final journey.
 - Billy set a new record of traveling 150 miles in 24 hours from Good Pasture to Fort Egbert. This record stood at the time of Ruth's writing 50 years after it happened.
- Late spring 1903: Dutch helped Billy prepare for the exam required for Billy to become a captain. Many of the questions were about aeronautics.

- Six boats set off on their final journey. Billy was in the front to prepare a trail; this meant he could go only 5-10 miles per day while mapping the area. He was followed by a crew who erected poles, put on insulators, and tied wire.



- End of summer 1903: The crew approached the final rapids in their journey. Billy nearly drowned but was saved by the crew's quick thinking and Dutch's heroism.
 - The first telegraph message sent from Alaska is sent by Billy to General Greely in Washington D.C. It reads "REPORT LINE THROUGH ALASKA COMPLETED. Signed BILLY MITCHELL." All of this work was completed in two years, while estimates said it would either be impossible or be done in three to four years. Greely and the Mitchells were optimistic about Billy's military future.

Pre-World War I

- Dec 2 1903: Billy married Caroline Stoddard, and they had three children together: Elizabeth, Harriet, and John Lendrum III.
 - During this time, Billy became a captain after taking his exams. He was the youngest person to achieve this rank. He was briefly stationed in the Philippines again but was diagnosed with inflammatory rheumatism. His doctor advised him to quit the military and to adopt a less strenuous lifestyle. Billy refused but invested himself in aviation as a compromise.
- 1907-1909: Billy attended the Army School of the Line and the Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.
- 1908: Billy watched Orville Wright's flying demonstration at Fort Meyer, Virginia.
 - On pages 177-182 of Ruth's book *My Brother Bill*, the author gives a quick summary of how the Wright brothers invented the plane and how they attempted to convince the US War Department to fund their work.
- 1910: Billy predicted the US would enter into war with Germany based on how powerful their forces were becoming.
- March 1912: Billy was one of 21 officers who served on the General Staff of the military, and the only Signal Corps officer. He was chosen as a temporary head of the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps. At age 32, he was the youngest General Staff officer.
- 1914: The US only had 14 war planes, while France, Britain, Russia and Germany had several hundred each.
- June 1916: Billy took flying lessons at the Curtiss Flying School, which he paid for by himself. He couldn't do aviator training because of his age and rank in the military, so this was his way around the restrictions.

- July 1916: Billy was promoted to major and appointed Chief of the Air Service of the First Army. This army was the oldest and most traditional field army, and it supplied soldiers, distinguished officers, and equipment in WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.

World War I

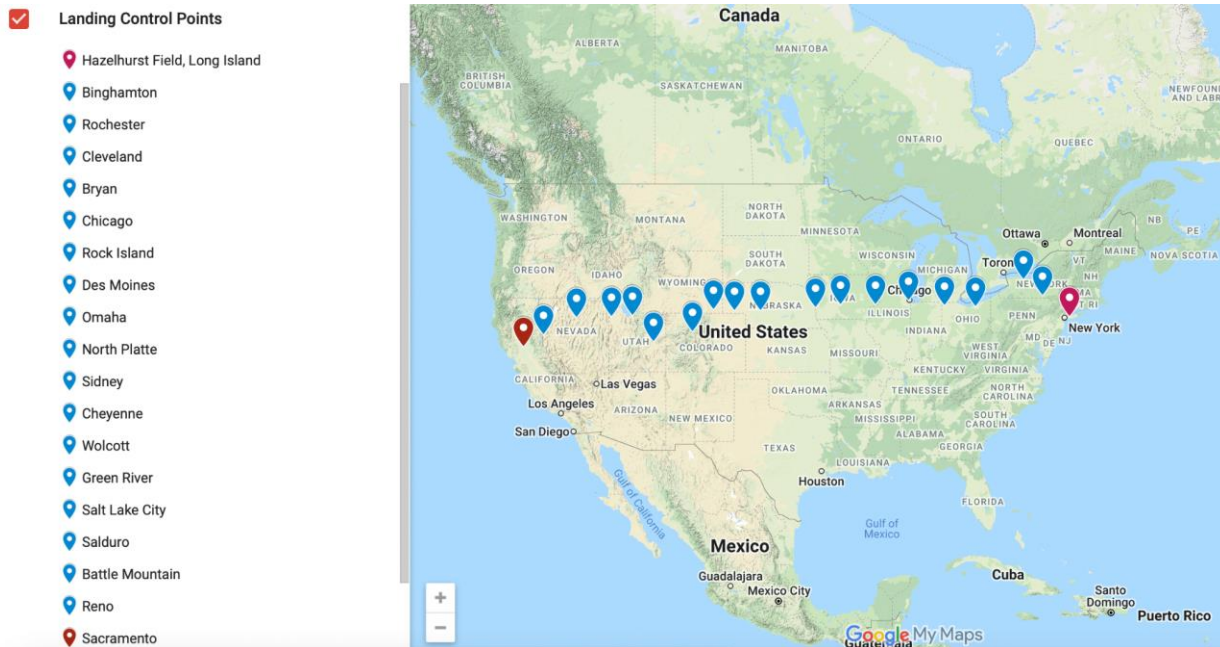
- April 6, 1917: The US officially declared war on Germany and entered WWI. Billy was sent to Corunna, Spain on a covert “special mission.” Ruth implies that he was doing reconnaissance and research on Allied troops.
 - April 10: Billy arrived in Paris, France, where he collaborated with British and French aviation officers. He wrote detailed descriptions of British and French infantry, equipment, strategy, plans, and military structure. He sent all of his reports to the War Department, where they presumably sat unread.
 - He earned many French high honors, including the *Medaille d’Honneur* for courage while in battle. Despite his promotions and awards, it seemed like no one took him seriously, and he became frustrated by the lack of US attention to aviation. He considered enlisting with French forces.
 - Billy’s reports shifted to descriptions of cutting-edge aviation techniques being used by European forces, such as bombing, aerial photos, strafing, and more. Again, his reports were ignored by the War Department.
 - April 24: He was the first American officer to make a flight over German lines.
- May 10, 1917: General Pershing was appointed Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF). He put Billy in charge of aviation as an air officer on the French front and approved many of Billy’s aviation plans. Billy also became the youngest lieutenant colonel in US military history.
 - Despite American newspaper headlines proclaiming the size of the air force, only 196 American planes made it to the French front. Billy and his men were forced to retrofit abandoned French planes and rely on British support.
 - Billy tested all of the repaired and retrofitted planes before he allowed any of his men to fly them.
- May 1917: The first air battle involving American troops happened over Toul, France. Three American pilots in three planes faced two German planes. Two American pilots shot down both German planes after the Germans descended from the clouds. All three American pilots survived. The entire battle took four and a half minutes.
 - May 19, 1917: The first recorded death in combat for an American pilot named Major Lufberry.
 - The lack of parachutes, new planes, and support from the US government killed many more American pilots. Billy insisted that the lack of pilots and aviation knowledge in higher positions in the air force was a great detriment. His adamantness soured his relationship with General Pershing.
- May 27, 1918: John Lendrum Mitchell II (Billy’s brother) was killed while flying a recycled French plane in battle. He was 23 years old at his time of death.
 - Also during this month, General Mason Patrick was appointed Chief of the Air Service by General Pershing. He was an engineering officer before the war and returned to his position after the war concluded.
- July 25, 1918: Billy was promoted to acting brigadier general. He was in charge of all American air combat units in France.
 - During this month, he campaigned to get 2,000 planes, fuel, equipment, housing, rations, and other logistical elements into Chateau-Thierry. This organization was intended as a last stand

against German forces. He received most of his equipment from the British and ended up with 1,481 planes.

- See <https://www.historyonthenet.com/battle-of-chateau-thierry>
- November 11, 1918: WWI ended when armistice was declared. Other notable air battles after Chateau-Thierry were St. Mihiel and the Argonne.
 - Billy ended the war serving as the Chief of Air Service, Third Army. It was assumed that he would become the Director of Air Service after returning from the war, but this did not happen.

Post-WWI

- January 1919: Billy was appointed Assistant Chief of Military Aviation, second to Chief Charles Menoher. Menoher was a member of the Cavalry Division before this role, and Billy expressed contempt for his new boss (who had never flown a plane).
 - Most pilots were dismissed from the service after the end of WWI, in contrast to Billy's newest proposal for expansion. This proposal included a flying division of 5,100 planes, 1,923 officers, and 21,853 men.
 - Billy also wrote reports on uses for aerial photography, higher altitude flying, and canons attached to planes. He worked in conjunction with Alexander P. Czersky, a Russian former pilot. Many of these ideas were dismissed by the federal government and the reports were largely unread at the time.
- February 28, 1919: Billy was appointed as the Director of Military Aeronautics (DMA) to lead the flying component of the Air Service. However, this office only existed six months after signing the WWI peace treaty.
- April 1919: Menoher eliminated the DMA and reorganized the Air Service based on how the AEF was set up. Mitchell was put in charge of the Training and Operations Group in the Office of Director of Air Service as a third assistant executive.
- May 6, 1919: Billy published a map of air routes in the US for commercial flights. He surveyed almost every mile of these routes, taking into consideration air conditions, natural air barriers, and practicality for pilots. He also advocated for air landing fields in 32 cities across America.
 - Assistant Secretary of War Benedict Crowell expressed interest in Billy's reports. He arranged a tour of Europe for him and a group of experts to explore possibilities for American commercial flights.
- July 19, 1919: Crowell wrote a report on the Europe trip to the Secretary of War. He expressed a need for a separate Air Force of equal impact to the Departments of War, Navy, and Commerce.
- September 30, 1919: The final deadline for dismissing temporary officers from the Air Service occurred. Only 232 permanent officers were left, 149 of whom were pilots.
- October 4, 1919: Billy organized a transcontinental race for army pilots. Any plane that went 90 mph or faster was allowed to enter. Because the government was so opposed to the proposed legislation on aeronautics, Billy wanted to get public opinion on his side. He also wanted to demonstrate how fast flyers could move in case a foreign air attack happened anywhere on US soil.
 - October 11: The race began simultaneously at Sacramento, California and Hazelhurst Field in Long Island, New York. 63 flyers took off with the agreement that they would not fly at night, as there were no lighted landing strips.
 - October 18: Winners were announced for the three categories: shortest total time across the US, fastest flying time as calculated between 20 control points (map below), and fastest flying time based on the handicap of each plane.



- December 6, 1919: By this point, Billy had given evidence at 27 Congressional hearings in support of forming a separate Air Force, independent of the Army.
- December 20, 1919: The first recorded commercial flight took place from London to Paris. In Washington DC, major railroad companies were lobbying against many of the proposed flight and airplane legislation.
- June 18, 1920: Billy was reduced from his temporary wartime rank of brigadier general to his permanent rank of lieutenant colonel of the Signal Corps.
- February 21, 1921: The first US model airway was established from DC to Dayton, Ohio. The Army Air Service couldn't fund airways but could provide advisory help, like advice, specifications, and information.
 - February 28: Four more American towns had hangars, gas/oil refueling stations, and lighted landing fields.
- March 1921: President Warren G Harding was inaugurated. During his election campaign, he supported Billy's plans for a Department of Defense with three separate but equal branches (Army, Navy and Air Force). Harding described how the consolidation would ultimately save money.
 - March 4, 1921: Billy was appointed as Assistant Chief of Air Service.
 - December 1921: Warren did not fulfill his initial statements. Aviation remained as a division of the Army with a significant budget cut for the upcoming year.
- May 1921: At a Congressional hearing, Billy asked to demonstrate that planes can shoot down both an unarmored and an armored ship. Many simply scoffed at him, but he got permission to do this demonstration.
 - 93 flyers with planes showed up to practice for the demonstration, and Billy nicknamed them "The First Provisional Air Brigade." They trained at Langley Field; this involved flying over wooden targets pulled by boats in Chesapeake Bay and bombing two shipwrecks near Tangier Island.
 - Billy supervised and wrote notes on strategy while flying with his men. His sister Harriet often flew with him in a small plane named the "Osprey."

- Glenn Martin (inventor of Martin Bomber planes) joined the First Provisional Air Brigade. Gyroscopes were added to the planes in Billy's team, making navigation in inclement conditions much safer. Gyroscopes were the predecessors to modern autopilot.
- June 7, 1921: Major General Menoher sent a formal request to Secretary of War Weeks that he wanted Billy removed from office. Weeks was torn up about this request and took three days to consider it before acting on it. A newsreel shown before movies showed aerial missiles at Langley Field (where Billy was training officers) with the words "Regards to the Navy" on them, infuriating Navy members.
 - June 9: Weeks was quoted in the *New York Sun* saying that Billy should accede to Menoher's request because of military discipline. Citizens and organizations throughout the US were furious about this statement and sent many letters and telegrams to Weeks. Thousands of newspaper columns, headlines, and political cartoons emerged in response. The *New York Times* and the *New York Globe* aligned themselves with Billy, not Weeks.
 - June 12: Senators suggested airing grievances about Billy on the Senate floor. Weeks avoided this by asking Menoher to withdraw his request. Billy's wife Caroline was embroiled in this plot and even asked Billy to step down. As a result, Billy and Caroline divorced and Menoher withdrew his request.
- June 20, 1921: The demonstration Billy proposed back in May begins. Five separate days were planned to sink five different types of vehicles, and this day involved a V-117 submarine in Chesapeake Bay. 12 bombs were dropped in 16 minutes.
 - Navy officers, observers and referees watched from a ship called the "Shawmut," while government officials, cabinet members, Senators, Congressmen, military officials, foreign emissaries, industrialists and socialites were on a bigger ship called the "Henderson."
 - One Navy officer insisted that the sinking of the sub "didn't count" because it was easy to destroy with no armor and an anchor down. He argued that the sinking could've happened faster with guns mounted on ships.
- June 29, 1921: The American battleship "Iowa" was NOT sunk during the second day of the demonstration. It was used as an aiming exercise, and it was kept in motion with remote control. 25 planes dropped 80 dummy bombs, but only 2 hit.
- July 13, 1921: A small ship, an ex-German destroyer G-102, was placed 100 miles from Langley Field for the third day of the demonstration. 12 pursuit fighter planes led by Billy strafed the deck, and 44 small bombs (100 lbs. and 300 lbs.) were dropped and the ship was sunk.
- July 19, 1921: The ex-German light cruiser "Frankfurt" was sunk in 33 minutes on the fourth day of the demonstration. Six rounds of 200 lb. and 300 lb. bombs were dropped with little impact on the ship. Later in the day, 7 bombers dropped 600 lb. missiles on the sides of the ship, not directly on the deck. The impact of the bombs exploding underwater cause irreparable damage to the hull. No aid from guns or cannons on nearby ships was needed.
- July 20, 1921: The final day of the demonstration involved sinking the 27,000 lb. captured ship *Ostfriesland*, which was considered unsinkable and the pinnacle of Germany navy technology. Windy and stormy conditions, along with exacting demands from the Navy referees, forced planes to withdraw and land early.
 - July 21: The bombing has a second attempt. 8 Martin bombers with two 1,000 lb. bombs were led by Billy and followed by planes with photographers. The first bomb was dropped from 2,000 feet and hit the forecastle of the *Ostfriesland*. It displaced 30,000 tons of water, and an estimated 15,000 tons hit the deck. 4 more bombs were dropped, three of which hit. 21.5 minutes after the first bomb was dropped, the ship sank!

- General Williams, American Chief of Ordnance, was quoted by journalists saying, “A bomb was fired today which will be heard around the world.” The sinking of this ship changed the future of military aviation and was considered one of the high points of Billy’s life.
- This demonstration inspired many countries to build up their plane reserves: Australia, the Netherlands, Japan and “several South American countries” expanded research, development, and construction of air defense as a result.
- 1921: Billy wrote and published his book *Our Air Force* to tell Americans what the development of aeronautics would mean for the future of the country.
- August 1921: General Pershing and the Joint Board of the Army & Navy published a report on Billy’s demonstrations. In it, they asserted that planes “add to the complexity of naval warfare” but the battleship continued to be the backbone of the US military. Funding to the Air Service was reduced as a response.
 - General Menoher resigned from his position as Director of the Air Service.
- October 3, 1921: Colonel Mason W. Patrick was promoted to Major General and filled Menoher’s former position as Director of the Air Service. Patrick was from the Engineer Corps and had a reputation as a strict disciplinarian. Despite urging from airmen and civilian air enthusiasts, Billy was passed over for the position again.
- Spring 1922: Billy met Elizabeth Trumbull Miller when he saw her working as a jockey at a horse show in Detroit. They began dating soon after this.
- September 22, 1922: Billy and Caroline’s divorce was finalized. Caroline won custody of the three children and alimony/child support.
- October 18, 1922: Billy broke the world speed record while flying. He took a 1-kilometer course 4 times, averaging 224.05 mi/hour. His speed peaked at 243.94 mi/hour, setting a new record.
- November 16, 1922: The first aerial mock warfare happened over Washington D.C. 5 Martin bombers took off from Langley Field and attempted to “destroy” strategic points in the city. 6 other planes took off from Bolling Field and acted as the defense for the city. The Martins completely canvassed the city in 30 minutes but were unable to destroy any of the points before landing at Anacostia Station. They “surrendered” to the 6 defense planes.
- September 3, 1923: Another demonstration was organized for this date. Two 15,000-pound American battleships, the *USS Virginia* and *USS New Jersey* were sunk after being bombed.
 - Doctors emphasized to Billy that his heart could not withstand the strain of overworking and risky maneuvers in planes. Billy ignored this warning as he continued his quest of eliminating ignorance about aeronautics.
- October 11, 1923: Billy and Elizabeth got married in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. Their 9-month honeymoon took them on a tour of five different places in the Pacific. Billy surveyed these places and wrote reports “from both an offensive and defensive standpoint” to provide solutions for the “Pacific problem.”
 - Hawaii: Billy described an egregious lack of air defense and training. Pettiness between the Army and Navy persisted, along with complacency around current tactical methods. In his report, Billy described the attack on Pearl Harbor EXACTLY even though it was 17 years in the future from the time of his report. [Link](#)
 - Japan: The Japanese government tightly controlled what Billy could and couldn’t see during his survey. He did observe that their air force was ambitious with technology development and manufacturing. He also noticed how they planned to dominate many regions in Asia.

- Philippines: Billy accurately predicted that this country would be occupied by Japan, and he gave steps to prevent or defeat invading forces. 22 charts and diagrams correctly predicted how this invasion was completed.
- The couple also visited India and China.
- July 1924: These reports were officially filed with the military but were presumably unread because they were not acted on.
- September 22, 1924: The first flight around the world occurred with organizing assistance from Billy. Six lieutenants and two mechanics in four planes took off from Seattle and flew 22,022 miles to Boston. Two planes made it the entire distance, which took 153 days to traverse.
 - See <https://pioneersofflight.si.edu/content/first-flight-around-world>

Demotion to Colonel

- January 1925: The Lampert committee hearings occurred. This congressional inquiry gave Billy the opportunity to push many of his opinions, especially creating a separate air force. However, his rhetoric became incendiary when he accused both the Army and Navy of “deliberate falsification of facts with intent to deceive the country and Congress.” He wrote a report at Secretary Weeks’s request with evidence to support his claims, but Weeks still threatened to court martial and demote Billy if he didn’t stop.
 - Representative La Guardia introduced and passed a bill that prevented transferring, demoting, or retaliating against an Army or Navy officer for testimony given before Congress. This was a direct response to Weeks’ harassment against Billy.
 - After much public response and statements by the military and federal government, President Coolidge sided with existing military policy. He stated that battleships were adequate and planes needed to find markets outside of government channels.
- April 26, 1925: Billy was not reappointed as the assistant chief of the Air Service and was demoted to the rank of colonel. He was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel James Fechet, who was a commander of a flying school in Texas.
 - Many farewell luncheons and events were held for Billy. During one luncheon, General Patrick was quoted saying “General Mitchell has done more for American aviation than, perhaps, any other man.”
 - The Assembly of Wisconsin invited Billy to run for Congress, but he declined the nomination. He was not interested in being a national politician.
- Billy arrived at Fort Sam Houston, where he was assigned as an air officer for the Eight Corps Area. He was frustrated because he was not assigned to a command, not doing any research, and not teaching new pilots.
- August 1925: Billy published *A Winged Defense*, which was his final book. It was a compilation of previously published articles and speeches. The inside covers included political cartoons mocking Secretary Weeks (who was seriously ill at the time the book was published) and Billy’s other opponents.

Court Martial

- August 31, 1925: The first nonstop flight from San Francisco to Honolulu was attempted. Three Navy seaplanes were originally intended to take this journey, but after many construction delays, only two took off from San Pablo Bay. One of the planes needed two attempts to get into the air and only made it 300 miles before landing on the ocean. The crew was rescued quickly by a nearby ship. The second

plane didn't have enough fuel to make it all the way and was stranded at sea for 10 days before the crew was found by Navy officers.

- <https://aviation.hawaii.gov/aviation-pioneers/john-rodgers/first-attempt-to-fly-to-hawaii/>
- <http://aviation.hawaii.gov/aviation-pioneers/john-rodgers/1925-flight-to-hawaii/>
- September 2, 1925: The *Shenandoah* blimp embarked on a 6-day promotional tour of the Midwest with planned stops at state fairs. Two cost-avoiding measures were used: not using the suggested amount of helium to fill the balloon and not including parachutes. The blimp was also damaged from past voyages. Several aviation experts urged the Navy to NOT carry out this tour, but they were ignored.
 - September 3, 1925: The blimp crashed into power lines in Ohio during a thunderstorm and had a crash landing. It rapidly changed elevation due to aggressive winds, causing it to be ripped into three parts. 14 out of 43 crew members were killed, including Billy's friend and the commander of the blimp, Zachary Landsdowne.
 - <https://www.ohioexploration.com/miscellaneous/ussshenandoah/>
 - A Naval Court of Inquiry was appointed to investigate this disaster, and Billy was invited to appear before it. There were no punishments for the officials involved in organizing this trip. *Liberty* magazine awarded Billy a \$1,000 prize for "distinguished moral courage," and he turned this money over to Zachary Landsdowne's widow.
- September 5, 1925: Due to his pent-up frustrations from the federal government's lack of support of air power and the Hawaiian and *Shenandoah* disasters, Billy released an infamous statement to the press. Billy knew that the War Department and President Coolidge would not be able to ignore his words. He called six reporters into his office in Texas for a mini press conference. He gave them his 6,000-word statement, which ultimately caused his court martial. In it, he accused the US government of not adequately protecting American citizens.
 - One of the most important quotes from the document reads, "These accidents are the result of the incompetency, the criminal negligence, and the most treasonable negligence of our national defense by the Navy and War Departments."
- September 8, 1925: The order for Billy's court-martial was seen in newspaper headlines across the nation.
- September-October 1925: President Coolidge requested that businessman Dwight Morrow form a special board to figure out the next steps for military aviation. It was made of both civilians and military members to provide low-cost suggestions for improvement and assure the nation that it would be safe from any air attacks.
 - September 29: Billy appeared before the board and read articles from *Winged Defense*. To avoid controversy, Morrow let Billy read as long as he wanted and no one asked questions.
 - The Morrow report was published at the conclusion of the investigation. It stated that there should be a separation between military and civilian aviation; an Army Air Corps should be formed similar to the Marine Corps; and advised a five-year increase of the air division of the Army. There were no policy suggestions. It was when this report was released (while the court martial was happening) that Billy realized his career was over; none of these suggestions were as bold as he thought they needed to be.
- October 28, 1925: The court martial began. Billy was charged under the 96th Article of War, which is a grab bag for any acts of disrespect or insubordination by military officers. 500 people, including 40 reporters, waited outside of the Emery Building in Washington D.C. to try and get inside the courthouse.

- 13 judges were appointed, but Billy challenged three out of their seats due to bias. This is the maximum number of judges that were allowed to be challenged during a court-martial. Three prosecutors were appointed.
- Over a three-week period, several witnesses testified on the validity of Billy's statements and showed that the US government has grossly neglected aviation development. The defense attempted to judge US airpower, not Billy's actions and his statements. Newspapers reported that Billy might be acquitted if he could prove his charges.
- November 20: Billy took the stand to be cross-examined. The cross-examiner, Charles Guillion, was well-known for his theatrical but appalling examination techniques. Billy's heart condition, side effects from having malaria in the past, and the intense questioning caused him to sweat profusely.
- December 17: Billy's closing statements were given. They reiterated the thoroughness of the evidence that had been presented. They also asserted that the judges hadn't decided if the testimony given was an "absolute defense" or not, meaning there was no conclusive statement on whether they were trying him or the inadequacy of airpower.
 - 3:40 PM-6:30 PM: The judges deliberated with a secret ballot.
 - 6:34 PM: The guilty verdict was delivered. Billy was sentenced to a five-year suspension from the military without pay.
 - <https://www.airforcemag.com/article/0812mitchell/>
- January 29, 1926: President Coolidge confirmed the guilty verdict but offered to restore Billy to a position with half pay if he quieted down.
- February 1: Billy rejected this offer and instead resigned from the military. He could not sacrifice his personal convictions to serve a government that does not serve the people.
- 1926: Billy and Elizabeth made their home at Boxwood Farm in Middleburg, Virginia. This 120-acre farm had quite a few horses and was their residence until his death.
- January 28, 1936: Billy was admitted to Doctors Hospital in New York City for heart problems.
- February 19, 1936: Billy died from a coronary occlusion at age 56. He was buried in Forest Home Cemetery in Milwaukee.

Posthumous

- 1940: A bill was introduced in Congress to promote Mitchell back to Major General, but it was unsuccessful.
- October 10, 1941: John Lendrum Mitchell III, Billy's son, enlisted in the military and was promoted to first lieutenant in the 4th Armored Division.
 - October 27, 1942: John died from a blood infection.
- 1941: Milwaukee's airport was [renamed](#) "General Mitchell Field" in Billy's honor.
- 1942: The first American planes to have cannons mounted on them were B-52s. They were nicknamed "Mitchell bombers" and they were the first planes to fly over Tokyo.
 - 1942: A bill similar to the 1940 (but seeking to promote Billy to Brigadier General) was introduced again and did not pass.
 - 1942: President Franklin Roosevelt petitioned Congress to award Mitchell the Congressional Gold Medal, which was given to him in 1946.
- 1943, 1945, 1947: Three bills were introduced to promote Billy and none of them passed.
- July 26, 1947: The US Air Force was created when President Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947, creating the three separate branches of the military Billy envisioned.

- 1958: Billy Mitchell, Jr. petitioned the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records to reverse his dad's conviction during the court martial. The Board supported this position but the US Air Force Secretary at the time did not support it, stating Mitchell's views had been vindicated but his insubordination was still unacceptable.
- 1966: Billy was inducted into the National Aviation Hall of Fame.
- 2004: The FY2005 National Defense Authorization Act authorized Billy's promotion. It was introduced by Rep Charles Bass, who is related to Billy. His father (Rep. Perkins Bass) also introduced legislation to promote Billy.