

The Great Commodore Forgotten, but not Lost: Matthew C. Perry in American History
and Memory, 1854-2018

By

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Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the

History

Program

May 2020

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and Memory, 1854-2018

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Abstract

Commodore Matthew Perry was impactful for the United States Navy and the expansion of America's diplomacy around the world. He played a vital role in negotiating the 1854 Treaty of Kanagawa, which established trade between the United States and Japan, and helped reform the United States Navy. The new changes he implemented, like schooling and officer ranks, are still used in modern America. Nevertheless, the memory of Commodore Matthew Perry has faded from the American public over the decades since his death. He is not taught in American schools, hardly written about, and barely remembered by the American people. The goal of this paper is to find out what has caused Matthew Perry to disappear from America's public memory. The researcher argues that the rise and fall of Perry's legacy is related to his family relationships, his participation in imperialistic ventures, and the state of foreign affairs between the United States and Japan. It concludes that Commodore Matthew Perry is remembered in Japan more than in the country where he was born. Many types of sources were used to support this research including biographies, Perry's journals, and history books. American textbooks, newspaper articles, and other forms of media were examined to determine Perry's history changed. Finally, it examines Japanese anime and manga to highlight Perry's importance in Japanese popular culture. Taken together, these sources explain when and why the memory of Matthew Perry started to fade from American's public memory.

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Introduction

From an early age, I started watching anime. I could only watch what aired on television. This new love of anime started with *Yu Yu Hakusho*, *Dragon Ball*, and *Sailor Moon*. At this young age, history was not a subject that I was focused on in school. From the fifth grade to eighth grade, the state curriculum kept changing, so I was taught world history every year. I did not learn about the country that was creating these new shows I was watching. I had hardly learned about early American history (founding of the country, the American Revolution, and the Civil War), let alone another country's history. Matthew Calbraith Perry, American naval hero who first opened trade between the United States and Japan, was never mentioned in middle and high school. Before I knew anything about Perry, I heard of Perry through the anime *Rurouni Kenshin* or *Samurai X*. *Rurouni Kenshin* is a fictional historical anime that takes place during the beginning of the Meiji period in Japan. Perry's arrival in Japan was mentioned and had an indirect part with the plot of the first arc of the show. At that point, they mentioned about Perry's "Black Ships" and how they brought forth the Meiji Revolution. Even though I did not know who Matthew Perry was, I remember wondering who was this American man that created such significant political change in Japan.

What happened to make Perry so important to the people of a distant land yet left him virtually forgotten in his own country? The rest of this work will combine multiple forms of memory to figure out what caused the public memory of Commodore Matthew Perry to decay over the decades since his death. When focusing on the public memory of Matthew C. Perry, it is prudent to study the different ways he has been chronicled. Biographies, history books, textbooks, newspaper articles, and other forms of media are

primary sources. These sources become primary sources because they show different times that the public memory of Perry was revisited.

The impact of his career on the United States and its Navy is the main reason he should be remembered, but what issue occurred to weaken him in public memory? One thing that is prominent, but hardly mentioned, is imperialism. With the emergence of imperialistic entanglement within Perry's career, this may lead to a better understanding of why Perry fell out of favor with American popular memory. As the United States started as a colony, a majority of Americans have grappled with the founding ideologies of freedom and self-determination and how it took part in oversea expansion. Most people may look at this uncomfortable contradiction as a reason to downplay Perry's importance to American history and, therefore, our collective memory.

Different historians and sociologists have written about how memory affects people, society, and history. These studies and writings are called memory theory. Maurice Halbwachs, Pierre Nora, and Michael Kammen are all noted individuals that look at memory. Each of them has different thoughts on memory and how it affects history.

Maurice Halbwachs, a French philosopher and sociologist, focused his writing on how memory is not just an individual or private thing but studied how communities or societies share a collective memory. This collective memory gives a sense of communal identity and adds to people's culture. Within his writings, a conclusion can be reached about society. As a society ages, its identity evolves and changes.¹

¹ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941).

Pierre Nora, a French historian, differs from Halbwachs and explains that the manipulation of society's memory is for the sake of creating a shared cohesive understanding of the past. With this manipulation, a majority of the people can identify with each other through a popular history. Nora mentions that this manipulation leaves essential truths out. He thinks that all history, primarily academic history, should be more objective and not so selective.²

This paper will argue that Perry's place in memory can only be understood in the context of the history of American imperialism. A difficulty arises, however, in that not many historians call the early American expansion before the Civil War "imperialism." One reason was comparing American actions to the actions of the British. America had just freed itself from the British. The sentiment to be anti-British was one that helped people gain political office or gain more substantial credit for their ideas. There is no sources that label Perry's actions as American imperialism.

When doing any research, it helps to have primary sources. Luckily, Matthew Perry kept meticulous journals throughout his career a habit he may have gotten from his father, Christopher Perry, or maybe his brother Oliver Hazard Perry. First-person accountings of events, and his thoughts on the outcome of his actions, are priceless to those who chronicle the life of Matthew Perry.

Unfortunately, after Perry died, his wife destroyed a majority of his journals. Only a couple of Perry's journals survived this purge of his logs and diaries. The Smithsonian Institution published one; this was his journal from the Japanese Expedition of 1852 to 1854. Even though a majority of Perry's journals were lost, some journals and memoirs of

² Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire" (*Representations*, spring 1989): 7-24.

people who served under Perry remain. A glimpse into Matthew Perry's psyche and mindset can be pieced together with this small sample size of documents.

With some of Perry's journals surviving, it makes it easier to see his thoughts when issues arose. Though with his wife destroying a majority of them, it makes researching hard. Some facts about Perry's career could be forgotten entirely, could have been changed slightly, or could have been misinterpreted. If more of Perry's journals had survived, his biographies would have had more first-hand facts about his life and career.

Unfortunately, Perry's widow decided that his writings would not be passed on to the ages. By destroying them, she cleaned the slate of this part of our history. Matthew Perry's legacy is limited to the supposition of scholars. There is still a chance that military records or dispatches still exist. The only difficulty is the availability of access to them.

I find it necessary to have some words about the organization of this work. The first chapter will focus on how Perry's lineage leads to a successful career. It will also look at brief highlights from the life of the Perry family. This first part looks into his life is not a look at his career, but his birth, marriage, children, and death.

The second chapter will focus on his career. The study of Perry's career will show when it entwines with imperialism and the reason that caused Perry to slip from America's memory. The last two chapters will focus on how well Perry is remembered throughout the generations since his death. These chapters will be broken up. The first will look at how biographies, textbooks, and newspaper articles. The last chapter will look at Perry's memory in popular culture, particularly in Japan

We know there is a difference between memory and history. Some historical figures like Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson, have risen above history to become a

part of America's collective memory. These figures have become legends for an American identity that embodies the way many Americans think about themselves. Many others, like Matthew Perry, made historical contributions but never became immortalized in America's popular memory. What caused this? Was the reason Perry's involvement in two of America's early wars, or was it for imperialistic actions by the American government while Perry was in the navy?

Chapter 1

To better understand the Great Commodore Matthew C. Perry and his place in history and memory, it is essential to explore his family and their role in shaping early America's navy. This chapter makes several claims about his family's importance to Perry's legacy. One aspect is how religion was something the Perry bloodline followed, moving from Quakerism to Catholicism. Lastly, it considers how the navy and his older brother Oliver Hazard Perry molded the young brain of Matthew, as well as how Matthew and his family advanced their social status in America. What made Matthew Perry? Was it the long line of strong men and women, or was it the moments? Understanding the distinction between them can help better explain made the creation of the memory of Commodore Matthew Perry.

The first in line is Edward Perry. Edward left England for the Plymouth Colony town of Sandwich around 1639.³ He had many quarrels with the civil authorities of the colony once he arrived. Edward fell in love with Marry Freeman, who was the daughter of a colonial official. Edward refused to marry Mary unless it was a Quaker ceremony. The bride was happy to get married through any ceremony, but the commonwealth declined to recognize the Quaker ceremony of marriage. "Edward Perry refused to go

³ Edward Barrows, *The Great Commodore: The Exploits of Matthew Calbraith Perry* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1935), 22.

through another ritual even for the sake of peace, to which the [sic] outraged authorities declared his marriage irregular and imposed on him a considerable fine."⁴ The fine was for living an adulterous relationship with his wife. For a second time, Edward found himself fined for his past offense. "For the rest of his life, he continued to ignore the Pligram [sic] marriage ceremony while he berated the authorities over differences of opinion and paid fines for the privilege."⁵ Even though he faced constant arguments with authorities, Edward found himself a high leader in his community. In 1680 Edward found himself named 'Judge of Whales' for the fishing fraternity of Sandwich Massachusetts. Edward died in 1695. He left two sons, Samuel and Benjamin.⁶ He also left behind a legacy of embroilments with the church and laws of the colony. Edward did not live long enough to see Quakers live in peace. According to Edward Barrows, "in three generations, we find the same rigid orthodoxy, the same sense of justice and unswerving honesty, coupled with a forthright insistence on personal honor" that defined the character of Matthew C. Perry.⁷

In 1761 Christopher Raymond Perry, son of Judge Ben Perry, broke the pattern of the Perrys as Quakers. The War for Independence began while Christopher was in his

⁴ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 23.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

teens. Sources vary on the exact age of Christopher. Some say he was fourteen others, fifteen. At this age, he went against his pacifist father's teachings and joined the Kingston Reds. The Kingston Reds were an elite militia company that wore gold and scarlet uniforms. This organization was more social than military. Like most people in these organizations, they did not enlist in the Continental army in mass, but performed local guard duty and kept a keen watch on local Tories and other dissidents.⁸ In 1777, Christopher fully joined the American cause. He did this by killing one of his father's neighbors, Simeon Tucker, a Quaker farmer. Tucker sided with his religion; "he refused to pay war taxes or honor requisitions of food and blankets for the Continental army."⁹ The Kingston Red went to teach the reluctant Tucker a lesson. Christopher and the Reds dragged Tucker from his farmhouse and demanded that he present a list of items for the war. Tucker refused, and the Kingston Reds were ordered to lower their muskets. He then denied it again, and they fired at Tucker. "Tucker fell dead. It was a bullet from the rifle of Christopher Perry, not yet sixteen years old, that pierced his heart; all others missed. Christopher then helped his fellows carry the still-warm corpse into the

⁸ Samuel Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C Perry 1794-1858: The American Naval Officer Who Helped Found Liberia: Hunted Pirates in the West Indies: Practised Diplomacy with the Sultan of Turkey and the King of the Two Sicilies; Commander the Gulf Squadron in the Mexican War: Promoted the Steam Navy and the Shell Gun and Conducted the Naval Expedition Which Opened Japan* (Massachusetts: An Atlantic Monthly Press, 1967), 8.

⁹ Ibid.

farmhouse and throw it at Mrs. Tucker's feet with the curt remark, 'Here's your husband.'"¹⁰ The Kingston Reds were soon run out of the town. Near Newport, some of the Reds were captured by the British.

Christopher made his way to Boston and quickly enlisted onto a Yankee privateer. There are no records for what Christopher did during the cruise, but by 1778 he was a private in the Continental army. A majority of his movements are difficult to track through all the later statements, rumors, and family tales. "He claimed to have been in four different British prisons during the war: at Charleston in South Carolina, Tortola in the Virgin Islands, the Jersey hulk at New York, and in Ireland; and to have escaped from them all."¹¹ For the final years of the war, Christopher served on two privateers and two vessels of the Continental navy. Christopher Perry was not particular about which branch of service he served in as long as it gave him a chance to fight. He never received an officer's commission. It is unknown what his position was on each ship he served with.¹²

While onboard a ship returning from Ireland after the war ended, Christopher met Sarah Wallace Alexander, her guardian Mr. Calbraith, and his son Matthew Calbraith. When the boat anchored in the Delaware River, Sarah was told that the couple she was going to live with had died from yellow fever. Sarah was no longer allowed to leave the

¹⁰ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C Perry 1794-1858*, 8.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹² *Ibid.*

ship because she no longer had a guardian to look after her. Christopher told officials at the port that he was engaged to Sarah and they would soon be wed. Quickly after the wedding, Christopher and his bride traveled home to South Kingston. Christopher and Sarah were welcomed by his uncle Oliver Hazard Perry as they arrived. His father, Judge Freeman Perry, took them into his house on the outskirts of South Kingston built by Benjamin Perry.¹³ Christopher and Sarah lived at his father's home for nearly a decade. During this time, Christopher set sail on multiple voyages, either in the navy or aiding merchants. In 1785, in the house that Benjamin built, Oliver Hazard Perry was born. He was the second to be given this name in the Perry family. In 1789, Raymond Henry Perry was born, and in 1791 Sarah Wallace Perry was born. In the early 1800s, The Perry family moved to the Point section of Newport, Rhode Island. Here they built a frame house with a gambrel roof on the corner of Second Street and Walnut.¹⁴ The Perrys were neither wealth nor socially prominent. In Newport, they were a respected family of the middle-class. Then in 1794, Matthew Calbraith Perry was born in the Perry home. Four more children followed Matthew: Anna Maria Perry in 1797, Jane Tweedy in 1799,

¹³ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 30.

¹⁴ John Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat* (Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2001), 4.

James Alexander in 1801, and Nathaniel Hazard in 1802. "In all, Sarah Perry bore eight children, all of whom grew to adulthood."¹⁵

Accounts show that Matthew Perry's mother, Sarah, was a remarkable woman, along with being a wonderful mother. "Of strong character and an excellent constitution, Sarah was an intelligent, religious person who imbued her children to be obedient but tempered her discipline with love."¹⁶ Teaching her children to be respectful, resourceful, proud, and self-reliant while duty and service to the country were the prime virtues handed down from Sarah and Christopher. "Christopher and Sarah Wallace Perry did not raise their sons to be farmers, entrepreneurs, or merchants, or to pursue an established civilian profession."¹⁷ While Christopher was away on voyages for the navy, Sarah made sure their sons learned all they could. The world was starting to change as the Perry children were growing up. The maritime world became a focus for the world, and the Perry family was intermixed with the young navy for the United States. "The family placed a high value on military service, the U.S. Navy offered a logical and respected career."¹⁸ All five of Sarah and Christopher's sons joined the navy.

¹⁵ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 4.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 5.

Even though Matthew C. Perry had seven other siblings, there is only one that could be as well-known as Matthew his brother, Oliver Hazard Perry, born in 1785. Oliver's father was on many voyages throughout his childhood. When Oliver was nine years old, his second brother Matthew Calbraith Perry was born. Just after Oliver's tenth birthday, his father returned from one of his voyages. At this time, Oliver and his father had a bonding moment. Christopher told his oldest son about how he played the same games as his son when he was growing up. Christopher then told Oliver about how he first joined a naval ship. In full detail, Oliver learned about his father's adventures during the Revolutionary War. "Before Christopher had sailed away, he had promised Oliver to do everything in his power to secure for him an appointment in the navy."¹⁹ When his father would return, he would see his son wanting to follow in his footsteps.

In 1799, Christopher Perry was home for a short leave. When this leave came to an end, Matthew saw his older brother leave the house to join the navy. "When he joined his ship, young Oliver Hazard Perry, dressed in a new midshipman's uniform, was with him."²⁰ People at the time felt that this was a shortcoming for a young man to have begun his career by serving in the same vessel his father commanded. "He took his place among the other midshipmen naturally and without assumption. He worked hard and diligently

¹⁹ James Barnes, *The Hero of Erie* (New York: D Appleton and Company, 1898), 10.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

at his studies, and soon became the leader in the steerage so far as mathematics was concerned."²¹

In 1801, Oliver and his father were put in different crews as in the aftermath of the War for Independence naval force of the nation reduced again in size to almost nothing. Young Oliver found himself under the command of Captain Campbell. His new crew was tasked with stopping piracy against American ships in the Mediterranean. Their success kept ports and waters safe. Thousands of dollars were saved from pirates. "In 1803, Oliver returned to the United States. He was now an acting lieutenant at the age of eighteen, but age counted little in these days when the country itself was young. Experience, the coolness of judgment, and bravery were qualifications that offset those of extreme youth."²² Just before his nineteenth birthday, Oliver was captain appointed to command the *Nautilus* by Captain Campbell.²³

By 1808, relations with Great Britain started to deteriorate again. A blockade and an embargo prevented any vessels coming to the United States. The British seized American ships that were trading with the French. The British did not like America trading with their enemy. When the British started capturing American soldiers, America acted against the British, resulting in the War of 1812. "Lieutenant Oliver Perry was

²¹ Barnes, *The Hero of Erie*, 11.

²² *Ibid.*, 17.

²³ A little schooner attached to the squadron.

given the command of seventeen gunboats at the Newport station."²⁴ Oliver was then moved to a squadron in Lake Ontario after two years. For the battles Oliver fought and won during the War of 1812 he was called the 'Hero of Erie.'

In 1819 Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry was sent to the Caribbean Sea aboard the frigate *John Adams* to put an end to piracy. Yellow fever was running rampant along the coast. When Commodore Perry was ashore in Venezuela, he contracted yellow fever. "He was taken aboard his ship, with the fond hope that he might recover at sea, but on the 23rd of August 1819 (which was his birthday), he died on board his ship."²⁵

Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry only spent twenty years in the navy, but he gained many awards and helped win many essential battles during a war against the British. Oliver's career and actions helped shape the lives of the men he commanded, along with the experiences and views of his family. At the age of thirty-four Oliver gave up command for the last time.

Matthew C. Perry came from a large family. Three of his brothers joined the navy like their father. His sisters married men who were in the navy. A majority of his siblings had many kids of their own. Some of his nephews and brothers-in-law were apart of

²⁴ Barnes, *The Hero of Erie*, 25.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 167.

Matthew's crews throughout his career. Like his brother, Matthew's upbringing set him up for success in the navy.

Matthew C. Perry was born on April 10, 1794, in Newport, Rhode Island, near the Narragansett Bay. "Matthew spent his childhood in the house at Second and Walnut, little more than a block from the shore of the bay."²⁶ Periodically his family visited their Tower Hill farm across the bay. Matthew spent many of days during his childhood near the waters of Narragansett Bay. If he was not playing with friends, he was swimming in Narragansett Bay. Matthew would watch ships travel across the pristine water of the bay year-round. He would hear stories and tales about the sea from friends, his father, and other adults when he would visit downtown Newport. Matthew learned of the sea's dangers, adventures, and how it connected distant and exotic lands. One of the biggest local celebrations in Newport, when Matthew was young, was called Election Day. This holiday was the inauguration of the recently elected governor and state administration at the State House, in April.

According to historian John Schroeder, "Matthew admired his father, Christopher, whose appointment as captain of the U.S. Navy frigate *General Greene* in 1799 conveyed status and prominence in the community. Matthew also revered his mother and adored his

²⁶ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 5.

older brother, Oliver Hazard."²⁷ Even though Matthew admired his father and loved his mother, his love and admiration for his brother Oliver helped reinforce the allure of the sea once Oliver joined the navy. "When [Oliver] returned home periodically to regale his young brothers with real and embellished tales of the sea and life in the navy."²⁸ His brother's stories strengthened Matthew's attraction to the maritime world.

Matthew Perry attended local schools and received a general education during his childhood. He was christened in a quadruple baptism with his three older siblings. At first, Matthew did not take religion seriously, but as he grew, he made sure to keep worship a focal point for his life. He attended church with his mother. Matthew's father and brother would join whenever they were home after a voyage. Even though Matthew did not care for the church at a young age, he integrated religion into his ships and crews later in his career.

Although Matthew's father served in the navy, he was not as positive of a role model as Oliver Hazard Perry. In 1800, Matthew's father returned home, and five midshipmen filed charges against Christopher for cruelty and oppression. After a trial, Christopher was acquitted of some charges and found guilty of others. Christopher faced a three-month suspension without pay from the navy. "He was subsequently relieved of command. When the navy was reduced in 1801 under the new President Thomas Jefferson, Christopher was not one of the nine captains selected to remain in the navy

²⁷ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 5.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

even though he was known as a good Jeffersonian Republican."²⁹ Matthew would remember the events that ended his father's career and would change his views of sailors' conduct and health when he joined the navy.

Matthew C. Perry joined the navy in 1809. When he entered the navy, there were almost five hundred men. Two hundred fifty were midshipmen in their late teens. Of the nearly two hundred midshipmen appointed in 1809, more than half were from Northern Atlantic seaboard states.³⁰

Marriages in the Perry family helped bolster Matthew's social stature and career. Oliver was the first to marry in 1811. He married Elizabeth Chapman Mason, and she was a member of one of Newport's prominent families. Raymond married Mary Ann D'Wolf in 1814. Mary Ann's father was a wealthy merchant who owned a sugar plantation in Cuba and was also a shipowner participating in the slave trade even after it became illegal. Anna Maria Perry married Lieutenant. George W. Rodgers, who was a younger brother of Commodore John Rodgers. The sixth Perry child was Jane Tweedy Perry, and she married Dr. William Butler in 1819. Dr. Butler was a navy surgeon from South Carolina. Matthew's youngest brother Nathaniel married Lucretia Thatcher, who was from a prominent family in New London. Matthew's oldest sister Sarah Wallace never married, and his brother James Alexander drowned while serving as a lieutenant in the navy in 1822. All of Matthew's new in-laws helped give him a meaningful advantage in the intensely political world of the postwar American navy.³¹

²⁹ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 10-11.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 11.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 12-14.

All of the marriages that brought new family members into the Perry were as important for Matthew as his own. In 1814, Matthew found himself stuck in New York. He spent the majority of his time ashore. While ashore, he met John Slidell and soon found himself acquainted with his whole family. Slidell was a prominent merchant and banker, but it was Slidell's daughter Jane that Matthew met and courted throughout the summer and fall. Jane was seventeen years old at the time; Matthew was now twenty-two. "They were married on Christmas Eve 1814 at Grace Church in New York City. Matthew's married life started the same day the United States and England signed a treaty of peace in Europe at Ghent."³² Matthew found himself quickly married, a lieutenant in the navy, and a member of a prominent New York family. The political influence would only grow through Matthew's life and career.

Many accounts claimed that neither Jane nor Matthew were known for their physical beauty. They complimented each other well; both earnest, stable, and intelligent and they remained married for forty-one years. Years after his death, one of Matthew's granddaughters remembered how important his wedding ring was. "In the navy, Matthew was known as a 'family man' who did not carouse or chase women in foreign ports."³³ No matter how far he was from home, there was only one person Matthew wanted to love. "There were no scandals hinted at Jane while Matthew was away for the navy."³⁴ Most of the communication between Matthew and Jane while Matthew was away from home has been lost. Not many of the letters between them survived. "Jane did not like to write

³² Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 18.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

letters."³⁵ Matthew was often frustrated by this lack of letters. That habit was one that Matthew hoped that their children would not inherit.

Jane bore ten children in a twenty-two-year span from 1816 to 1838. Matthew and Jane's first child were Jane Perry Born in 1816. Different records did not show when Jane died, but some believe that she died in infancy before Matthew's second child was born. Their second child born was Sarah Perry, two years after Jane in 1818.³⁶ Sarah married Colonel Robert Smith in 1841, and they added five grandchildren to the Perry family. Sarah died in 1905. The third child born to Matthew and Jane was Jane Oliver Hazard Perry in 1819.³⁷ In 1841 Jane married John Hone. They had seven children and Jane Oliver Hazard passed in 1881. In 1821 Matthew had his first son Matthew Calbraith Perry Jr.³⁸ Later, in 1853, Matthew Perry, Jr., married Harriet Elizabeth Taylor. Matthew Perry Jr. followed in his father's footsteps and joined the United States Navy, where he reached the rank of captain. Matthew Perry Jr. only had one child, and he later died in 1873.

In 1824, Matthew and Jane brought Susan Murgatroyd Perry into the world, and tragically one year, they lost her in 1825.³⁹ Later in 1825, Matthew and Jane had their

³⁵ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 18.

³⁶ "Find A Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVKZ-KJ76> : 11 July 2016), Sarah Perry Rodgers, 1905; Burial, Washington, District of Columbia, District Of Columbia, United States of America, Rock Creek Cemetery; citing record ID 38919686, *Find a Grave*, <<http://www.findagrave.com>> (accessed February 17, 2020).

³⁷ "Find A Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVP3-T6RN> : 11 July 2016), Jane Oliver Hazard Perry Hone, 1881; Burial, Morristown, Morris, New Jersey, United States of America, Evergreen Cemetery; citing record ID 137378858, *Find a Grave*, <<http://www.findagrave.com>> (accessed February 17, 2020).

³⁸ "Find A Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVVG-FJKB> : 27 July 2019), Matthew Calbraith Perry, 1873; Burial, Newport, Newport, Rhode Island, United States of America, Island Cemetery; citing record ID 23379821, *Find a Grave*, <<http://www.findagrave.com>> (accessed February 17, 2020.)

³⁹ "New York, New York City Municipal Deaths, 1795-1949," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F6MK-VZ5> : 10 February 2018), Susan M. Perry, 14 Aug 1825;

second son Oliver Hazard Perry.⁴⁰ Oliver would marry Mary Jane Billings in 1849, they only had two children, and Oliver died in 1870. Three years later, in 1828, Matthew and Jane had their third and final son William Frederick Perry.⁴¹ William never married, but he did reach the rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps before he died in 1884. Matthew and Jane's eighth child was Caroline Slidell Perry, born in 1829.⁴² In 1849, Caroline married August Aaron Belmont. Before her death in 1892, Caroline and August had ten children of their own. Five years after the birth of Caroline, Isabella Bolton Perry was born in 1834.⁴³ In 1861, Isabella married George Tiffany and later had six children. Isabella passed in 1912. The last child that Matthew and Jane had was Anna Rodgers Perry, who was born in 1838.⁴⁴ Like some of the other Perry children who were born before Anna, she only lived one year.

Only seven of their children reached adulthood; three were boys, while the other four were girls. "Given her husband's frequent and extended absences, Jane assumed most of the responsibilities and duties of raising the family. By all accounts, she was a

⁴⁰ "Rhode Island Deaths and Burials, 1802-1950", database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F8FM-L53> : 22 January 2020), Oliver Hazard Perry, 1870, <<http://www.familysearch.org>> (accessed February 17, 2020).

⁴¹ "Find A Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVVG-FJ23> : 27 July 2019), William Frederick Perry, 1884; Burial, Newport, Newport, Rhode Island, United States of America, Island Cemetery; citing record ID 23380098, *Find a Grave*, <<http://www.findagrave.com>> (accessed February 17, 2020).

⁴² "Find A Grave Index," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QVVF-9P8R> : 11 July 2016), Caroline Slidell Perry Belmont, 1892; Burial, Newport, Newport, Rhode Island, United States of America, Island Cemetery; citing record ID 15038660, *Find a Grave*, <<http://www.findagrave.com>> (accessed February 17, 2020).

⁴³ "BillionGraves Index," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:Q2Q8-VD3M> : 1 July 2016), Isabella Bolton Perry Tiffany, died 05 Jan 1912; citing *BillionGraves* (<http://www.billiongraves.com> : 2012), Burial at Island Cemetery [NT001], Newport, Newport, Rhode Island, United States, <<http://www.familysearch.org>> (accessed February 17, 2020).

⁴⁴ "New York, New York City Municipal Deaths, 1795-1949," database, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:2WWG-JBH> : 10 February 2018), Anna R. Perry, 09 Mar 1839; citing Death, Manhattan, New York, New York, United States, New York Municipal Archives, New York; FHL microfilm 447,549, <<http://www.familysearch.org>> (accessed February 17, 2020).

loving and dedicated mother."⁴⁵ Even though Matthew was not always home, that does not mean he was a terrible father. He spent time with his wife and children whenever he was home on leave. Matthew also spent time with his siblings while home and with some like Oliver and James while on voyages.

In June of 1855, Matthew, Jane, and their daughter Isabella moved into a new house at 38 West Thirty-Second Street in New York City. This house was the sixth house Jane and Matthew lived in while; Matthew served in the navy. For the first time in thirty-five years, Matthew voted in a presidential election. "Although he felt that he ought to vote for Millard Fillmore in 1856, Perry voted for instead for Democrat James Buchanan because Fillmore had 'no chance' and Perry strongly opposed Republican candidate John C. Fremont."⁴⁶ More than fifty years had passed since he last celebrated election day in Newport; he recalled how it made him feel. "I often watched on the shore for the first glimpse of gaily decorated packet sloop that in those days annually brought the Governor from Providence to his town."⁴⁷ The navy wanted Matthew to retire, but he refused. While fighting the retirement boards, Matthew created a comprehensive account of his final voyage to Japan. He spent the last few years of his life writing and spending time with his wife. "By 1857, Perry had become weaker and spent more and more time confined to bed."⁴⁸ His wife wrote to their children, explaining how unwell their father was at this time. Sadly, though all the research, there is no copy of the letters Jane sent to her children. It was at this time when Commodore Matthew Perry retired from the American Navy.

⁴⁵ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 18.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 252.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 259.

"In February 1858, Matthew caught a severe cold, and his rheumatism returned. Confined to his bed for several weeks, he did not respond to medical treatment and continued to decline."⁴⁹ On March 4th, 1858, Matthew Calbraith Perry died unexpectedly.

For three days after Matthew's death, flags flew at half-mast in New York. The funeral occurred on the 6th of March. Even though it was unbelievably cold, large crowds lined the streets of Matthew's procession from his house to St. Mark's church. More than half a thousand service members from the National Guard, Navy, U.S. Marines led Matthew's procession, while family and friends followed in carriages behind. Matthew preceded his wife Jane in death. He left behind seven children and thirty-one grandchildren, some of whom he never got to know. Matthew also left behind men he served with in the navy, who learned how to better themselves as not only sailors but as men.

His life was full of high moments and some devastating moments, but without living through these moments, Matthew C. Perry would not have been able to achieve many accomplishments. Matthew came from a long line of men who spoke up for what they believed in, even if it went against standard views. He learned equally from both of his parents. His father taught him about how honor and hard work led to success in early America. Perry's mother imbued him with compassion and love for his family and for the men he risked his life with while in the navy. He also learned how to achieve his ambitions from his brother Oliver. Matthew used all of these lessons to help form his mental identity.

⁴⁹ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 259.

It is difficult to tell if just the life and lineage of Matthew C. Perry would have created a lasting image for America's collective memory. The only way to know what America's attitude toward Matthew is to look at his career in the navy. This investigation into his career will create a better understanding of what Perry was remembered for and why he is no longer prominent. Then it will be easier to know where Perry fits into the modern memory of America and the world.

Chapter 2

Commodore Matthew C. Perry's career was longer than his brother Oliver's and full of achievements and defeats. The Commodore helped create many advancements in the American navy, fought in two American wars, and he helped prompt new trade with Asian countries. Even though Matthew Perry did so much for America, it is curious to find that he is not popularly remembered and seldom taught in schools. Why did Matthew Perry fade out of the collective memory of the American public?

Commodore Perry's career has moments that were great for the United States, but those moments went hand in hand with imperialistic ventures that modern Americans do not popularly celebrate. Matthew Perry's whole career was driven by American imperialistic views, whether he personally held those views or not. To better understand how imperialistic Matthew Perry's career was, it is best to understand what imperialism is and then when it intersected with his career.

There are many definitions of imperialism. *Webster's New World Dictionary* in 2020 defines it as, "the policy, practice, or advocacy of extending the power and dominion of a nation especially by direct territorial acquisitions or by gaining indirect control over the political or economic life of other areas."⁵⁰

The definition of Imperialism has changed since the 1970s, but not much has been added to the definition. One thing that could be added to this definition is, 'to impose a countries ideals or policies on an area or country other than their own.' I put this addition in to emphasizes the fact the one state forces its policies that shape regions around the

⁵⁰ Merriam-Webster. s.v. "Imperialism". <<https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/imperialism?src=search-dict-box>> (accessed October 21, 2019).

world that it does not rule. With these policies, one nation, in this case, the United States, attempts to alter location's ideals so that helps America's political views, or material needs.

Understanding Perry's relationship with imperialism can reveal how and why his memory has faded. Perry played such a leading role in the expansion of the naval power of the United States and the expansion of its foreign influence. When looking at Commodore Matthew C. Perry's known career through the definition of imperialism, a few particular events stand out.

Matthew C. Perry joined the navy in 1809 at the age of fifteen. He had been begging to join the navy since the day he turned twelve. "His father, rightly predicting that the government's policy would end in war, gave his consent and obtained fir [sic] the lad a midshipmen's warrant, signed by President Jefferson, on 16 January 1809."⁵¹ When he joined the navy, there was no naval academy. Recruits joined ships and were taught the trade by various crew members. They did plenty of the seaman's work to learn the ropes. While aboard, recruits also learned mathematics, astronomy, reading, and writing from the ship's chaplain. The captain trained them in the art of navigation. Perry was assigned to a twelve-gun schooner named the *U.S.S. Revenge*. His placement on the *U.S.S. Revenge* was mostly because of the influence of his family more than Perry's familiarity of with seamanship. Perry found himself under the command of his older brother, Oliver. The *U.S.S. Revenge* only patrolled the waters of Massachusetts including Montauk Point, Nantucket, and Buzzard's Bay with his hometown of Newport serving as its base port.

⁵¹ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 26.

While on the *U.S.S. Revenge*, Perry saw no fighting, but he learned what it was like to live the daily life of a midshipman. Perry became board with the monotony of sailing around looking for British impressments. "Matthew thought seriously of resigning from the navy to get into glamorous East Indies trade."⁵² Having confided this to his older brother, Christopher Raymond Perry talked to different chiefs in the navy he knew on behalf of his brother. Proper wires were pulled, and, in the middle of October 1810, Perry packed up his chest, joining Raymond on the frigate *U.S.S. President*. Perry now found himself on the largest frigates and flagship of Commodore John Rodger.⁵³ Commodore Rodger was in command of the entire Atlantic coast squadron.

Matthew Perry showed his abilities early when he joined the Commodore John Rodger's crew. Soon after posting aboard the *U.S.S. President*, Perry was relieved of his duties as a watchman and made the Commodore's aid.

May sixth, startling dispatch from Washington reached the *President*. A British warship, erroneously supposed to be the *Guerrière*, Captain Dacres commanding, had stopped the American merchant ship *Spitfire* at the very entrance of New York harbor and forcibly taken off two men, one of whom was known to be a native of Maine. The *President* was ordered immediately to proceed without loss of time to New York, there to await further orders.⁵⁴

The *U.S.S. President* was told to hold near the harbor. Commodore Rodgers ordered preparedness drills. All of the ships were performing gun drills, practiced calls to "general quarters," and he ordered large quantities of ammunition to be at the ready. These actions were all for the preparation to make an attack or repel one.

⁵² Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 27.

⁵³ Commodore was a special rank in the U.S. Navy until 1862. It was a courtesy rank given to any senior captain in the task force or fleet, at the time when the level of captain was the highest naval rank authorized by Congress.

⁵⁴ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 64.

After waiting offshore for seven days, the *U.S.S. President* was about to dock in Sandy Hook, Massachusetts, when an unknown ship was spotted in the distance. Commodore Rodger called all men to their stations as they sailed toward the unknown ship. The frigate had been cleared for action like Rodger's ship. As the *U.S.S. President*. As the *U.S.S. President* neared, a harmless shot passed overhead. Rodger had a shot fired back. The other ship fired three more cannon shots and a volley of muskets fire. The *U.S.S. President's* crew sprung to action just as they had been trained.

After this encounter, Commodore Rodger's ship did not have to go far to start an engagement. The United States found itself in another battle against the British. The *U.S.S. President* quickly came across the *H.M.S. Belvidera*.⁵⁵ Commodore Rodger ordered Perry to assist him with firing the first shot. After firing three shots, disaster struck as the *U.S.S. President* closed on the enemy. "The gun exploded on the fourth discharge, blowing the Commodore high into the air and landing him on deck with a broken leg. It killed Midshipman Taylor, and slightly wounded Midshipman Perry and fourteen seamen. The explosion also shattered the forecastle deck, putting the *President* temporarily out of action."⁵⁶ The *U.S.S. President* was not able to keep up, and the *H.M.S. Belvidera* outran Commodore Rodger's damaged ship. Perry's notes in the ship's log mentions the damage, death, and injuries to other crewmen, including the Commodore. He omitted the injuries that he sustained.

After the *U.S.S. President* was temporarily repaired and Rodger had his leg splinted, the *U.S.S. President* was again reassigned. The ship and crew were sent to the Caribbean. Their orders were to capture the British treasure fleet as it was leaving

⁵⁵ A thirty-two-gun frigate commanded by Captain Richard Byron.

⁵⁶ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 72.

Jamaica. This cruise would end in disappointment when the *U.S.S. President* returned from their first voyage. They had not been successful in engaging a single British sloop, nor did they engage a single British man-of-war.⁵⁷ They did manage to capture six merchant vessels, and two privateers while on this voyage. "After sailing for eighty-five days and covering nearly eleven thousand miles, the *President* returned to Boston on 31 December 1812."⁵⁸ During the winter, the Boston Harbor froze, trapping the *U.S.S. President*, and thus, ending any further orders that year.

After many different ventures in the Caribbean and Floridian waters, the *U.S.S. President* captured twelve ships and took two 247 prisoners.⁵⁹ While the *U.S.S. President* was being serviced, Perry returned to the Newport Harbor, Massachusetts, on September 26, 1813. Being in Newport, Perry saw his family and was given a promotion. He was now a junior lieutenant. "Now, a full-fledged officer, he would be paid more than \$660 per year."⁶⁰

In the fall of 1813, Perry found himself transferred to the flagship of Commodore Stephen Decatur, the *U.S.S. United States*. At the time of this posting, the *U.S.S. United States* was one of three ships assigned to Commodore Decatur. This small contingent of ships was about one-sixth of the American war fleet. Perry found these ships ordered into New London harbor and then upriver to Gales Ferry for protection. There, Decatur and his squadron waited for a chance to escape. Waiting for a chance to escape the blockade Perry was tasked with recruiting trips.

⁵⁷ British Royal Navy expression for a dominant warship or frigate from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. This type of ship was customarily reserved for a vessel armed with cannons and propelled primarily by sails.

⁵⁸ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 16.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

By early 1814, Matthew Perry found himself transferred back to the *U.S.S. President* stationed in New York harbor to guard against British attacks on the city. New York is where Matthew would be stationed for the remainder of the war. This is when Perry married Jane Slidell.

During the winter of 1814, Matthew Perry was offered the chance to cruise in the Far East. Commodore Decatur had been assigned to command the *U.S.S. President*, there Commodore Decatur planned attacks on British merchants in the Indian and Chinese seas. Unfortunately, "at the last minute, Perry fell ill, and that disgusted the young Lieutenant was taken off the ship to recuperate ashore."⁶¹ By the time Perry was fit for service, the war was ending in a stalemate with the Treaty of Ghent. Perry took time off from active duty in the navy after the war ended. He spent time with his wife and new family.

As mentioned before, Matthew Perry joined the navy with not much to do but learn the trade of sailing. Later as part of the War of 1812, Perry was a junior officer and learned the ways of a Naval officer. His actions during the war did not directly advance American imperialism. It is essential to mention that the acquisition of new land was one of the driving forces for the war, but Perry was not involved in this acquisition.

In 1816, Matthew Perry applied for leave so he could enter the merchant service. He stayed active with the merchant service for two years. Perry returned to the navy in 1819. Lieutenant Matthew Perry found himself on the *U.S.S. Cyane* under the command of Captain Trenchard.⁶² "Orders were to escort the emigrants to Cape Mesurado, and then

⁶¹ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 72.

⁶² One of the last sloop-of-war to be captured from the British.

cruise the Gold Coast in pursuit of outlaw slave ships."⁶³ They were also ordered to defend the newly-formed American Colonization Society (ACS) on this voyage.⁶⁴ In 1821, the *U.S.S. Cyane* returned to New York harbor on Christmas Day. The crew was ill from scurvy and African Fever, winter storms had battered the ship.⁶⁵

On the next voyage to the colony started in Liberia by the ACS the Mediterranean Squadron added the sloop-of-war *U.S.S. Shark* to its convoy. Perry was made the acting commander for the *U.S.S. Shark*. Once Perry reached Sierra Leone, the *U.S.S. Shark* joined other American squadron of naval ships and hunted for European slave ships. The squadron captured a couple of vessels. An important one that the *U.S.S. Shark* caught was a French ship, *Caroline*, which carried a "The cargo of one hundred and fifty-three slaves, men, women, and children."⁶⁶ In 1822, Perry returned to the New York harbor six months after leaving.

These voyages to Africa were the first time Matthew Perry's career that seems to be imperialistic. When he was ordered to escort people to the new colony in Africa, this became one of the first attempts by America to expand out into the world. This colony was established in Africa, by an American businessman, and Perry was instrumental in this expansion of American influence by ensuring the protection of those first colonists. After dropping off the colonists, he joined the Mediterranean Squadron to stop the slave trade.

⁶³ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 86.

⁶⁴ The American Colonization Society or ACS was a group established in 1816 by Robert Finley to encourage and support the migration of free African Americans to the continent of Africa.

⁶⁵ The term for Yellow Fever.

⁶⁶ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 96.

Three months after returning from Africa, Matthew Perry found himself commanding the *U.S.S. Shark* and searching for pirates in the Caribbean. In March of 1822, the *U.S.S. Shark* arrived in Key West. "Skipper Perry had the honor of formally taking possession and raising the Stars and Stripes at Key West, then called Thompson's Island; Perry named the harbor Port Rodgers, but neither name stuck."⁶⁷ He then returned again to New York harbor in 1823.

Within fifteen months, Matthew Perry had one of his busiest moments during his command. Perry "had been over four hundred days under sail, had boarded nearly two hundred vessels, convoyed thirty, given relief to five in distress, and had captured three pirates."⁶⁸ Perry took much-needed leave to spend time with his family.

Matthew Perry was called back to the Mediterranean Sea once again and reunited under the command of Commodore Rodgers. They were once again fighting the slave trade and piracy. With each trip to the Mediterranean, Perry's interest grew in the ancient Greek world. Perry and the crew had to be quarantined because of an outbreak of smallpox.

In 1822, Matthew Perry reinforced American imperialist doctrine again, this time in the Caribbean. He was again patrolling the Caribbean, trying to stop the slave trade and piracy that was occurring near American ports. One year after the United States bought Florida from the Spanish, Perry sailed to Key West, located close to one hundred-and thirty-miles Southwest of Florida. He planted an American flag in Key West claiming the island for the United States. This action by Perry was done in a time when

⁶⁷ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 78.

⁶⁸ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 98.

the United States had recently adopted the Monroe Doctrine.⁶⁹ This land grab was right on point with the idea of American imperialism. Key West was not included with Florida when purchased from Spanish in 1819. Perry established Key West as part of the land grab for America. To solidify this, he changed the name of the central city and harbor. There is no actual documentation to clarify if the navy or Washington sent him to claim Key West or if he just took personal initiative to claim these lands.

From the end of 1827 to early 1828, Matthew Perry spent his time stationed in the Boston shipyard. Here is where he first wrote his thoughts on how to strengthen the navy. He moved his family to Boston and was promoted to captain of his beloved navy. "He supported the creation of a naval academy on Chesapeake Bay at Annapolis and sought the creation of additional senior ranks such as admiral."⁷⁰ Perry also addressed a number of issues in the navy and proposed solution to them. He knew that the navy was sorrowfully undermanned and needed to be modernized. "Viewing the navy as the right arm of our national defense."⁷¹ Perry was trying to convince Congress that they were in an era where the British and French were increasing their naval strength. He felt that now was the proper time to make sweeping changes and Perry cited many examples. In these writings he drew upon his early career and experiences of the day-to-day life of a sailor in the navy. He emphasized that an academy devoted to teaching recruits about vital sailing would improve the navy.

Perry first urged the navy to increase the number of its officers. He felt that there should be many immediate promotions of one hundred midshipmen to lieutenant as well

⁶⁹ The Monroe Doctrine was a policy adopted by the United States that opposed European colonialism in the Americas. The United States would honor the newly independent countries in the Americas.

⁷⁰ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 55.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

as the appointment of nearly four hundred new midshipmen. Perry knew this would be expensive, but in the long run, the navy would have properly trained men and would not have to rely on recruiting foreigners or men from the merchant services. With this sudden increase of men in the navy more men would be admitted to the naval academies. These academies would reach a high degree of excellence, just like West Point does for the army.

Perry also advocated for an expanded system of rank for the navy. These new ranks would help better organize the offices. Unlike European navies, the United States only had three ranks: lieutenant, master commandant, and captain. The title of commodore was the only given to captains that commanded a multiship station or squadron. Perry suggested the ranks of rear admiral and vice admiral. The navy would have one vice admiral and two rear admirals along with only six commodores at any given time.

Matthew Perry saw these changes as a massive increase in strengthening the navy. "As an officer, Perry had to recruit and train his crews, educate young officers, and manage the ships he commanded."⁷² Perry's arguments had no direct political influence, and Congress did not address the changes he promoted. The change Perry was trying to create was beneficial, but the issue was that Perry was trying to increase the navy at a time when America was not at war and the government did not want to spend the extra money.

When Perry was first stationed to the Boston Naval Yard, his motivations were not overly imperialistic. He spent his time trying to show how the United States navy

⁷² Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 58.

could improve to become a dominant force. He devoted his efforts to the improvement of ships and the advancement of the education of men that would crew these new vessels. These actions make Perry appear to be a willing participant in the United States' hunger for territory. On the other hand, it is a common thought throughout the biographies and teachings of Perry during this time that he just wanted the American fleet to be better to defend the current Union. He never mentioned that the United States should mimic Britain, but he did feel the navy had a chance to join the elite powers of the seas. Even if Perry was imperialistic with his actions of trying to increase the size of America's navy, he should still be remembered as one of the leading people to modernize the navy. If this modernization created a majority of the teachings that are still taught in modern society, then Perry should be remembered more and not be fading from the American memory.

Perry enjoyed the time spent with his family, but he missed being at sea. After two and a half years in Boston, Matthew C. Perry accepted command of the sloop *U.S.S. Concord* in April of 1830.⁷³ His first orders were to join the Mediterranean squadron. As a favor to Washington D.C. and Congress, Perry was to escort John Randolph, the newly appointed new United States minister to Russia, to his post in Kronstadt. Perry had a hard time recruiting a full crew for this journey.

The *U.S.S. Concord* left Norfolk on June 28, 1830, before leaving they honored Randolph with a thirteen-gun salute. John Randolph was a pompous and arrogant person, who made difficult demands of Matthew and his crew. After twenty-two days, the *U.S.S. Concord* neared Portsmouth, England. Randolph demanded to be let off the ship and told Perry he would travel by land. He said he would meet the ship in the next port, but he did

⁷³ The *Concord* was one of the new sloops-of-war authorized by Congress in 1825, was 127 feet long, mounted eighteen to twenty-four guns, and carried 190 officers and men.

not. After many stops along the coast of England; trying to get Randolph to Russia, Perry reached Kronstadt at the beginning of August. He repaired and resupplied the *U.S.S. Concord* while waiting for orders from Randolph. "Perry wrote daily to Randolph, begging him please to make haste with dispatches. The crew of *Concord* became sickly from drinking River Neva water, one died, and the ship was required to shift her anchorage to the uncomfortable outer roadstead."⁷⁴ After an audience with Emperor Nicholas the First, Perry returned to find Randolph's belongings onboard the *U.S.S. Concord*. Randolph had decided to leave Russia and return to England without finishing his diplomatic mission.

Perry dropped Randolph in London and started his duty of patrolling the Mediterranean. The *U.S.S. Concord* joined the American squadron that was charged with supporting the Greek Rebellion and assuring its safety for democracy. It was not until December of 1832 that Perry returned to the United States and New York shipyard. His return was at a crucial point in shipbuilding for the United States.

When Perry returned to New York, he gave up command of the *U.S.S. Concord*. "Matthew Perry wrote to Secretary of the Navy Levi Woodbury and asked to be considered for an open position in the New York Naval Yard."⁷⁵ As 1833 started, Perry received orders to report to Commodore Charles Ridgely, who was in command of the New York Naval Yard. Now that Perry was stationed there, he had a significant impact on progressing naval technology.

It was apparent that Captain Matthew C. Perry felt the navy needed to evolve so that it could be among the most powerful navies in the world. He had seen many different

⁷⁴ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 114.

⁷⁵ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 68.

technological advances through his voyages around Europe. "He had long been interested in steam power and wanted to develop a genuine steam warship rather than the harbor-bound floating steam batteries authorized by Congress and favored by some senior officers."⁷⁶ Even though Perry wanted to advance technology for naval ships, one of the first reforms he advocated for the navy was education.

Perry was instrumental to the creation of the Naval War College, Naval Institute, Naval Academy, and a complete educational extension system that covers every branch of the navy. It was in 1835 at the Brooklyn Navy Yard that a group of officers, including Matthew Perry, created these various education benefits for midshipmen. Because of these new educational creations, they also helped create a naval library and a museum. Perry was also known for promoting and connecting training of the naval marine force effectiveness.

At the time of Perry's appointment to the naval yard, the United States Navy found it had difficulties with the logistics of shipbuilding, and resources to create a modern navy. The need for everything from skilled labor to timber and steel, the country soon realized that wanting a stronger, larger navy would take time. "The American navy ranked eighth in size behind Britain, France, Russia, Turkey, Holland, Sweden, and Egypt."⁷⁷

The United States was starting to expand their commerce around the world, yet its navy was not large enough to keep up with the expansion. In 1836 the Royal Navy had 135 ships in their navy, and twenty-one of them were steamships. At the same time, the

⁷⁶ James Bradford, *Captains of the Old Steam Navy: Makers of the American Naval Tradition 1840-1880*, (Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1986), 8.

⁷⁷ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 72.

French Navy had 116 ships apart of its navy, and twenty-three of them were powered by steam. The United States Navy only had thirty ships in its navy, and unlike France and Britain, the United States had zero vessels powered by steam.⁷⁸

While Perry was advancing the education of the sailor and officers, the first steam warship was authorized, and the Navy Department placed Captain Matthew C. Perry in charge of the production of this ship *Fulton*. Captain Matthew C. Perry found himself unable to find qualified people to design and operate the massive steam engines. In 1837, the *Fulton* was finished, but Perry and the navy were faced with a new problem. Perry was now tasked with educating a crew that could work in the engine room and keep the ship running. It was not until January 1838, that Perry would see a fully staffed for the engine room crew.

Later in the year, Matthew C. Perry was given permission from the navy to do further armament testing. Until this time in the navy, ships were still using small solid shot and cannon like guns that fired them. Unlike Europe, who used heavy-guns and bombardments, the United States used the same weapons it had used during the War of 1812.

By 1842, Perry had gained more prestige while working in the New York Naval Yard. The United States Navy became a more educated and technologically advanced.

By 1842 the number of midshipmen had risen ludicrously out of proportion to the berths available on naval vessels. The Naval Register of 1840 shows that 62 vessels were in commission, manned by 7,419 seamen with 231 midshipmen - an average of about 4 middies to a ship. In 1842 there were 69 vessels, 9,784 seamen and 460 midshipmen - an average of nearly 8 middies to a vessel.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C Perry 1794-1858*, 127.

⁷⁹ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 139.

With the substantial increase of midshipmen, there quickly became a struggle for preference when it came to assignments. These new midshipmen would resort to older tactics to gain premium postings. They would appeal their appointments over the heads of their officers to political powers in Washington. The navy started a rule that any midshipmen or man wanting transfers must follow the chain of command. If they went over their officer's heads, then they would face a suspension. This newly instated rule blocked the application of Perry's second son Oliver Hazard to the navy.

Captain Matthew Perry was hoping that he would be commanding the *Somers*, one of the ships he had helped design.⁸⁰ Perry was permitted to assign the crew of apprentices trained on the *Fulton*. The *Somers'* first cruise was to take dispatches to the African squadron on the Sierra Leone coast. Command of the *Somers* was given to Captain Alexander Slidell Mackenzie.⁸¹ Matthew Calbraith Perry, Jr., was made sailing master, and Perry's other son, Oliver Hazard Perry, was made the captain's clerk. Oliver was quietly appointed midshipmen by Mackenzie. Captain Mackenzie also had appointed one of his other nephews and a brother-in-law as midshipmen. Captain Matthew Perry did not discourage this nepotism; he used it to his family's advantage. And he was okay with its use in the navy.

This nepotism caused dissension among the crew. Mackenzie was a harsh master officer and treated family differently. On the return trip, some of the midshipmen planned a mutiny. Mackenzie arrested the men who had designed the revolt. All three men Philip Spencer, Elijah Small, and Samuel Cromwell were hanged for treason and buried at sea. "The Navy Department refused to accept the decision as final and ordered the court-

⁸⁰ The *Somers* was a small brig that recently launched but had not been yet commissioned.

⁸¹ Mackenzie was Matthew C. Perry's brother in law.

martial of Mackenzie on charges of willful murder, oppression, illegal punishment, conduct unbecoming an officer and unnecessary cruelty."⁸² Matthew Perry, Jr., was acquitted after a lengthy trial. During the trial Mackenzie complained that there were too many midshipmen. Mackenzie's career was ruined, even though he was not convicted at this court-martialed. Oliver never obtained another midshipmen's commission and joined the Marine Corps. Captain Matthew Perry met a lot of backlash during these trials. Mainly because Perry was the one who approved the transfer papers for those, now dead, midshipmen. This voyage, and sequent trial, ended the apprenticeship program Perry helped create.

Bearing this minor disgrace, Captain Matthew Perry was assigned to command the African Squadron. The appointment to the African Squad was not a prized assignment. The African Squadron was famous for the guarantee of grueling hard work, exposure to yellow fever, and ridicule by others in the navy.

Once Perry reached Africa, he took charge and instituted his protocols to prevent coast fever. "Every man was compelled to sleep in cloth jacket and trousers, and fires were constantly kept burning between decks."⁸³ Perry also made it that none of his men could spend the night ashore. Matthew Perry had no direct order from Washington to help the American colony while commanding the African Squadron. He defended the American colonists that were being attacked by local African tribes. Perry used ship to shore artillery to keep the attackers at bay. On April 28, 1845, Perry returned to the New York harbor. When the Mexican American War started, Perry was on shore duty. During this leave he had won back the respect of Congress. By defending the colony in Africa,

⁸² Barrows, *The Great Commodore*, 152.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 162.

Perry was given praise by people who had political status. This praise helped Perry regain some of his lost credit.

The war with Mexico was not a popular war for a majority of the United States. As the war grew, the navy sent extra captains to the Gulf, to back up the older commanders. Perry was promised an assignment to Mexico and was ordered to relieve Commodore David Conner. As commander of the Gulf Squadron, Conner was due to retire but was kept on due to the need of skilled commanders. "The steamship *Vixen* arrived in Antón Lizardo on 23 September 1846. Perry's orders from the department were to take command of *U.S.S. Mississippi*, fly a vice commodore's red pendant if he thought 'proper,' and relieve Conner as commodore of the Gulf Squadron."⁸⁴ By October of 1846, Conner still maintained his lead in the Gulf Squadron even though Perry had reported to relieve him. Before returning to Washington, Conner planned another attack on Alveredo. Perry protested this action, but Conner ignored his advice went ahead with the mission.

The contempt Perry had for Conner led him to pursue an independent mission to the State of Tabasco. "Perry's orders were to examine the coast from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to Carmen, then enter the river of Tabasco, secure Frontera or any other river town he could, destroy enemy military stores and equipment, and capture any Mexican vessels encountered."⁸⁵ On October 23, Perry switched his flag from the *U.S.S. Mississippi* to the *U.S.S. Vixen* because the Grijalva River was too shallow for the *U.S.S. Mississippi*. Within two days, Perry had captured five Mexican vessels and converted them to his fleet. The next day Perry anchored near the town Villahermosa. He sent

⁸⁴ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 187.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 194.

Captain Forrest, Captain Sands, and his son Calbraith Perry Jr. ashore to demand the local garrison's immediate surrender. Don Juan Bautista refused and dared the Squadron to attack. Without hesitation Perry accepted the challenge and attacked. The *U.S.S. Vixen* bombed the barracks and any building that the Mexican flag. He also sent his marines into the city. Without much resistance, they occupied half of the town. With the fear of ambush in the narrow streets, Perry recalled his men. While the marines were attacking Perry had the rest of his fleet capture any vessels anchored near Villahermosa. The fleet captured two brigs, two schooners, and two sloops.

On the morning of October 26, the city raised a white flag in defeat. Matthew Perry honored the surrender. He left a sloop, the *Desada*, to maintain peace. As Perry started to sail further upriver, the resistance opened fire on the sloop Perry left behind. Perry sent one of his armed boats to assist the sloop. "Perry, incensed at what he considered treachery during a truce, resumed cannon fire on the public buildings of Villahermosa."⁸⁶ There were many civilian casualties from this second attack. After this bombardment, Perry returned to the main fleet and Commodore Conner. After several months and hard-fought battles, the *U.S.S. Mississippi* needed repairs. Conner sent the *U.S.S. Mississippi* back to Norfolk in January to get repaired, so Perry missed out on the Veracruz operation. Matthew Perry missed the largest naval landing in United States history. This landing would be the largest until the Second World War. If Perry were a part of this landing, he would have been one of the commanders that led the most massive landings in naval history. Unfortunately, Perry was not there, and it is hard to speculate how hard this affected the memory of him for America.

⁸⁶ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 196.

In March, Perry and the *U.S.S. Mississippi* reached Sacrificios. Vice Commodore Matthew Perry now had orders to take immediate command of the Gulf Squadron. Before returning, Perry had several meetings with the Secretary of the Navy and President James K. Polk. They talked about ways to improve the squadron's efficiency and how to win the war. Perry handed a letter to Connor from the secretary that read, "the uncertain duration of the war with Mexico, has induced the President to direct me no longer to suspend the rule which limits the terms of the Home Squadron."⁸⁷ Connor was told to transfer his command flag to the *U.S.S. Princeton* and return to Philadelphia. With Connor leaving the Gulf, Perry now was promoted to "Commodore" Matthew Calbraith Perry.

Commodore Perry devised plans of attack with General Winfield Scott. Scott's ground forces proposed to invade Veracruz while the Commodore would bombard the city from the Gulf. On the 25th March, Scott told Perry that he would invade the city the next day if no flag of surrender waved. By the evening, Veracruz flew a flag of truce before United States forces assembled to invade the city. By the 29th March, the Castle of San Juan de Ulloa surrendered. Perry sent a letter to the Secretary of the Navy stating that United States troops controlled both Veracruz and the castle. Perry and Scott only lost fourteen officers and men during the fighting and had only fifty-nine men wounded. A senior British commander reported Mexican casualties. Eighty Mexican soldiers were killed and injured, but there were around one hundred non-combatants killed. The city was left in ruins.⁸⁸

After Veracruz capitulated, Scott began his march toward Mexico City. The Secretary then told Perry to send a large number of his marines to aid Scott. Perry

⁸⁷ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 213.

⁸⁸ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, 139-141.

anticipated this order and organized the first infantry brigade in the history of the navy. This infantry was to land further upriver. In the campaign of Mexico City, the Commodore was informed that his nephew Alexander Perry Rodger, son of his sister Anna was killed. The Commodore turned his view toward the city of Alvarado.

Alvarado was a critical city that Commodore Conner could not take after two separate assaults. Matthew sent Lieutenant Charles G. Hunter, commander of the *U.S.S. Scourge* to scout the town. When the Commodore arrived with the rest of the Squadron, he found that Hunter had already taken the city. Even though Hunter gained the surrender, he allowed the town's people to drive their horses away and burn the ships of the Mexican Navy anchored near the city. Hunter was arrested, court-martialed, and sent home.

By April of 1847, every major Mexican town on the coast was under the United States control except Tuxpan. Perry decided that the only way to capture Tuxpan was to have a coordinated attack by land and sea. After only a four-day occupation, the Commodore evacuated all the land forces. He left two ships to watch the mouth of the river.

In June, Matthew Perry planned another attack. This time he planned an inland attack. He moved forty ships, weapons, coal, and about a thousand men upriver. Perry was never attacked by any enemy but was molested by mosquitoes.

During his push upriver, the vessels got entangled in low hanging branches and ran aground in shallow waters, so Perry started his landing party. Perry and his staff accompanied thousands of marines and began marching toward Tuxpan. The Commodore only encountered opposition of 300 men before traversing through a swamp.

Quickly, the Commodore's troops surrounded Tuxpan. Commodore Matthew C. Perry took the last Gulf port in Mexico with only five wounded men. Perry spent five days in Tuxpan, destroying ammunition and demolishing fortifications.

Returning to the *U.S.S. Mississippi*, Commodore Perry started sending the most heavily damaged ships and wounded men back to Norfolk for repairs. While hundreds of cases of yellow fever broke out in the squadron, Perry had to take action to keep his men healthy. With many of his men suffering from illness, Perry spent 1847 fighting minor skirmishes with the Mexican force trying to retake different Mexican cities. On May 28, 1848, Perry received a communiqué from Washington that President Polk had ratified the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This treaty immediately recalled tens of thousands of American troops and sent the Gulf Squadron back to home ports.

By July 1848, the Commodore returned to New York. With this return, he received public recognition. "The Commodore, now fifty-five years old, cared little for public applause."⁸⁹ As Commodore of the Home Front, his blue flag flew on the *Cumberland* in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. He was now in charge of the order of ship repairs and deciding which ships were fit for service. Perry spent the next four years working in the Brooklyn Naval Yard.

Matthew C. Perry found himself in command of the Gulf Squadron during the Mexican American War. He found himself defending the unpopular imperialistic attitudes of Washington again. He did his duty and fulfilled his orders leading the squadron's ships up the Tabasco River. He captured many Mexican vessels. He secured the surrender of the town of Villahermosa. After that day, Matthew Perry forced Mexican

⁸⁹ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 252.

forces into submission. The joint attack between American naval and ground forces on Veracruz gave American diplomacy an upper hand at the negotiating table. By 1847, the United States had captured all of Mexico's major port cities except Tuxpan. There he instituted a blockade.

All the actions of Commodore Matthew C. Perry during the Mexican American War were another example of imperialism. The only reason Perry found himself fighting in this war was because the United States annexed Texas from Mexico. President Polk saw the annexation as the first step toward furthering American expansion. Perry occupied land in Mexico during the war, while crippling a majority of the infrastructure in the port cities. Perry's attacks left many cities destroyed and many civilian's dead. The actions taken by Perry on behalf of the United States caused Mexico to sign the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Mexico was forced to agree that Texas was now part of the United States. United States would pay fifteen million dollars for physical damages and gain territory that what would become California, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, and Utah.⁹⁰ As the war came to an end, the United States started to focus on Manifest Destiny for the newly claimed land.

After the Mexican American War, Commodore Matthew Perry took time with his family. Considering himself retired, he had to be begged and told that this was his last voyage in the United States Navy. The Commodore was placed in charge of the East Indian Squadron and was tasked with obtaining open trade with Japan.

In 1851, the United States was trying to start diplomatic relations with Japan. At this time, Japan only had one port open for trade and they would only trade with the

⁹⁰ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*, 259.

Chinese and the Dutch. The United States had purchased some of Japan's goods from the Dutch. The United States wanted more of a presence in Asia, and what better way than gaining access to a country that does not trade with most of Europe? Then in January 1852, Commodore Perry was summoned to Washington. He was awarded the East Indian Squadron and ordered to Japan. Perry was also given any ship and officers he chose. He was also allowed to spend any amount of money needed to modify these vessels before leaving. While the ships were being prepared, the Commodore read as many books on the Japanese and their culture as he could. Perry departed on the *U.S.S. Mississippi* from New York on September of 1852.

By January of 1853, the Commodore had reached Jamestown Island of St. Helena on the coast of Africa. While there they took on supplies of hundreds of tons of coal, along with water, fresh beef, and vegetables. Perry and his entire crew visited the tomb of Napoleon. They set sail and headed south around Africa.

By January of 1853, Perry reached the Cape of Good Hope and Table Bay. Perry noted that the bay was easy to access, but the price to moor and to keep the various ships of the squadron docked was high. The squadron left the Cape as February started.

After an uneventful trip around India and a couple of stops, Perry reached Singapore at the end of March 1853. This voyage to Japan was recorded in one of the surviving journals of Perry. Having this journal is helpful because it helps researchers understand what Perry's actions during this trip were. Matthew Perry wrote, "this is a place of great resort for ships of all nations. Here you can see at anchor at the same time Chinese, Siamese, Malay, and Sumatra vessels bringing cargos, the produce of the respective countries from which they come and taking away European and American

goods."⁹¹ Singapore was a port where goods of any kind could be found. Here Perry was able to refill his ships with coal before leaving. He then planned to reach Shanghai.

Commodore Perry and the Squadron reached Shanghai on May 4, 1853. The officers attended many fancy dinners. Perry spent nearly two weeks in Shanghai before moving the squadron. By the end of May, the squadron reached the island of Lew Chew in China and the village of Nara. Lew Chew was an essential location for maritime trading in South East Asia. When Matthew Perry reached Nara, it was still under the control of China. The Commodore learned a lot about Japan from the traders in Nara while in port. After a quick sail, Perry reached the Bonin Islands. The Bonin Islands were under British control when the Squadron arrived. Perry bought land for himself at Port Lloyd; it was turned into the colony of Peel Island. The Squadron returned to Nara for more coal and then headed toward Edo.

On July 8, 1853, Commodore Matthew C. Perry and the East India Squadron reached Edo Bay. Perry wrote, "the land on both sides of the Bay of Jeddo (Edo) is precipitous toward the shore and gradually rising into abrupt eminences inland. Here and there small bays are formed at the bottom of ravines, furnishing small tracts of level land on which villages have been reared, protected by batteries erected upon the projecting headlands."⁹² Before Perry dropped anchor, he noticed many Japanese guard boats were in pursuit of the Squadron. After the Squadron was anchored, a boat came alongside the *U.S.S. Mississippi* and read a scroll written in French. Perry noted, "in the form of an order for the ships to go away and not to anchor at their peril."⁹³ Matthew Perry was told

⁹¹ Matthew C. Perry, *The Japanese Expedition 1852-1854* (City of Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1968), 46.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 89.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 90.

through his Dutch translator that he would need to name an officer of the same rank as the Japanese officer to confer with him. Perry appointed his aid, Lieutenant Contee. Neither the Japanese officer nor anyone on his boat could take any of Perry's communication to the shore. The Japanese official would go back to shore and make sure the Governor of Edo would allow any communications. This back-and-forth stalled all formal negotiations and troubled Matthew Perry.⁹⁴

The Commodore sent surveying boats that were well manned and armed at daylight on the 9th of May. The Japanese Governor inquired what Perry's boats were doing near their harbor and fishing boats. The Governor told Perry that it was against Japanese laws to allow such examinations. "He was replied to that thought the Japanese laws forbade such surveys, the American laws command them, and that we were as much bound to obey the American as he was the Japanese laws."⁹⁵ The Japanese did not seem to accept or listen to Perry's demands. On the 11th, Perry sent the survey boats back out. The Commodore then sent the *U.S.S. Mississippi* to protect the survey ships. "I had purposely sent *Mississippi* and the boats on this service, being satisfied that the very circumstance of approaching near Edo with a powerful ship would alarm the authorities and induce them to give a more favorable answer to my demands, and so it happened [*sic*]."⁹⁶ Matthew Perry let the Japanese Government know that he would return in the coming spring with a significant force. He also demanded to be anchored closer to Edo, which would aid in easier communication.

⁹⁴ Perry, *The Japan Expedition 1852-1854*, 92-95.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 94-95.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 95.

The Governor of Edo made his way to Perry's ship and started having short meetings. On Thursday, 14th of July, Perry made his first landing at Edo Bay. He brought a formidable escort of four hundred men; all were armed. The Japanese troops that met Perry neared seven thousand and were all also armed. Perry did not spend much time onshore. He did leave the letter from the United States President and a personal letter wrote, for the Emperor.

As the Commodore reached his ship instead of ordering his ships to depart like the Japanese asked, he moved them closer in the Bay to examine the channel toward Edo. Matthew Perry wrote many letters to the Emperor and never had a response. So, on July 17th, Perry had the Squadron raise anchor and departed toward Nara.

The first thing the Commodore did when he re-anchored in Nara was to establish a trade deal with Nara. He also had other demands that Nara needed to agree with if the squadron was going to be in the area. They would erect a building to house coal for safekeeping as well as accommodations for officers and men sent ashore because of illness. The market should be able to sell what they have to the Commodore's crew any time of day, and the fishermen will sell their fish at the prices decided by the sailors. The government of Nara agreed to all of Perry's demands.

As August started, Matthew Perry headed toward Hong Kong. Because it was the start of typhoon season, the Commodore decided to have his steamers overhauled. These repairs took sixty working days. Before leaving to return to Nara, Perry stocked up on grain and rice. Perry changed course and headed to Macao, China. Here he viewed the country and traded with locals. In November, Perry heard a French minister had obtained

a letter from Europe.⁹⁷ The letter claimed that a Russian Admiral just arrived from Nagasaki. "I determined rather than allow either the French or Russians to gain an advantage over me to encounter all the inconveniences and exposures of a cruise to Japan with so large a force in mid winter."⁹⁸ Perry quickly sent word for other American ships around China to join the Squadron at Lew Chew.

By February 11th, Perry and the Squadron were outside Edo Bay. The Japanese said the Emperor wanted the negotiations to happen in Kamakura. The Commodore spoke for himself and told them he would negotiate in Uraga where the Squadron was anchored. The Japanese agreed. They erected a tent and appointed a high-ranking official to meet Perry. On February 22nd, he sent Captain Adams ashore for the meeting with the Japanese. The Japanese had a treaty for the Commodore, and they would meet for a conference. Perry had Adams survey the site where the conference was to be held before returning to the Squadron. Perry was not confident with the treaty that the Japanese gave him saying, "It struck me that it was better to have no treaty than one that would in the least compromise the dignity of the American character. To agree to any arrangement that would recognize in the remotest degree the restrictions submitted to by the Dutch could not for a moment be thought of."⁹⁹

In the early days of March 1854, Perry was informed that the construction was finished for the conference. Five commissioners would receive him at noon on the 8th of March. At 11:30 Commodore Matthew Perry landed once again in Japan. For the meeting, he was accompanied by five hundred men. Two days before the conference

⁹⁷ Perry, *The Japan Expedition 1852-1854*, 134-136.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 136-138.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 164.

started, one of the marines on the *U.S.S. Mississippi* died. At this first meeting the Commodore's first order of business to discuss was the suitable for burial of his fallen sailor. After a long back and forth, the fallen marine's body was brought ashore and buried in a Christian religious service.

The Japanese gave the Commodore seven propositions. The first allowed American ships to obtain any supplies they may need at Nagasaki's port and, after five years, they would open another one of their port for trade. Perry agreed but added that these other ports needed to be approved prior to opening. He wanted to make sure that these ports were not out of the way of American trade routes.

One of the major concerns Perry negotiated focused on shipwrecked Americans. Rather than being jailed and tortured, they would be transported to Nagasaki by sea and held until another ship could collect them. The third point was that shipwrecked men are to be imprisoned, just in the case the sailors were pirates. The Commodore rejected this proposal, only because he felt no American should be detained. Perry countered that shipwrecked men should have the same freedoms as the Japanese and be subjected to the same laws.

The fourth forbade American sailors' intercourse with the Dutch and Chinese at Nagasaki. Perry countered if American are subjected to these regulations then the same must be imposed on the Dutch and Chinese. The fifth point applied to the ports the Japanese would allow open after five years. Perry demanded that if there was a contention with any of these articles, both sides must have deliberation, and settle the issue. The Commodore agreed, but he would name the place for these talks, and it would not be Nagasaki.

Lew Chew was the topic of proposition six. Since Lew Chew was a different country, Japan would have no say about those harbors. Perry agreed with Japan. The seventh proposition was similar to the sixth in that Japan felt Matsmai was a distant country and had no say in their harbors. Perry agreed to this term also.

"I told them that I should expect in the course of time, five ports to be opened to the American flag."¹⁰⁰ The negotiations ended when the Japanese said they would give the Commodore definite answer on Thursday, March 23rd. Days later, the Japanese officials arrived to let Perry know that the Government agreed to the first proposal, and American ships could dock for supplies.

On April 4, 1854, Commodore Matthew Perry arrived in Kanagawa to sign a treaty between the United States and Japan. He signed the Kanagawa Treaty. Perry achieved the mission he was sent on by President Fillmore. The Commodore sent Commander Adams and the *U.S.S. Saratoga* back to Washington via California with the documents. Perry then presented the Japanese officials with an American flag. The Commodore had his ships give a twenty-one-gun salute for the Emperor of Japan. Perry and the Squadron left Edo on April 18, 1854.

When Commodore Perry reached Japan for the first time, he was met with many armed Japanese ships that demanded he leave Japanese waters. Unimpressed and under orders to secure a treaty, Perry disregarded the Japanese officials. Instead, he sent armed survey boats to scout the Japanese coast and rivers. Perry told the Japanese officials that they had no right to ignore American laws. He made sure the Japanese knew he meant business and would not let them boss America around. When it looked like the Japanese

¹⁰⁰ Perry, *The Japan Expedition 1852-1854*, 170.

were going to attack the survey boat, Perry sent one of his warships to protect the smaller vessel. After the Commodore met with the Japanese governor, he moved the Squadron closer to Edo Bay. Perry still had no response from the Japanese Emperor, so he told the governor that he would be back in one year with a bigger Squadron, and he will expect a trade treaty. So, in July of 1853, the East Indian Squadron left Edo Bay.

In February 1854, Commodore Matthew C. Perry and the East Indian Squadron returned to Edo Bay earlier than expected. Japanese officials told Perry that they would hold negotiations in Kamakura. The Commodore replied that negotiations would happen in Uraga, where the Squadron was already anchored. Perry did not agree with the first treaty the Japanese presented. He felt that he would not sign a deal that demeaned the American character. After a long conference, the Japanese agreed to all the changes that Commodore Matthew Perry made to the treaty.

When the Commodore left Japan, he secured a trade treaty with the island of Nara in Southeast Asia. With the overwhelming might of the East Indian Squadron, the isle of Nara agreed to Perry's demands. American sailors were able to set the price for any goods they bought while on Nara. And the people were happy to sell their goods whenever the sailors wanted them. In Nara and Japan, Perry showed the strength of America. Matthew Perry made sure that he did what he was told to do by the President. By doing this, Perry did not care how aggressive he was, or if these trade deals were unfair to one side. Perry did everything he was tasked with, and that was the reason he was chosen for this diplomatic mission to Japan.

Much of the Great Commodore Matthew C. Perry's career furthered America's imperialistic views. At times, Perry imposed American policies on other countries or

occupied sovereign land of another country. These actions do not mean that Matthew Perry was an imperialist. He may have agreed with the policies he enforced, but with the loss of most of his journals, it is hard to know his thought process during his career.

Several attributes stand out from following Perry's long career. The first is he loved the navy. From a young age he wanted to see the navy, and the United States, become a powerful force. He wrote about how the navy needed to improve the training of its sailors. Commodore Perry also championed the health and safety of the sailors, believing that sick or injured men affected the morale of the other sailors. He believed in fairness in discipline no matter the rank; everyone was equal under the law. He thought current forms of punishment were barbaric and cruel. The current maritime laws were outdated and hurt the growth of the navy. He also felt the navy needed to evolve to be on the same level as Britain and France.

Another attribute was that Perry strived for a high degree of competence and do whatever it took to succeed. Perry was tasked with different duties during his career, and he made sure he achieved them to his superior's satisfaction. He captured European ships to stop the slave trade while in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean. He made sure that during the Mexican American War, he captured any vessels that he encountered. He also made sure that the Mexican military could not fight back after he left a city, as he would destroy any military depot in the cities. Perry made sure that the Mexican army could not attack the United States. When he reached Japan, he made sure that his actions favored the United States. The steps he took toward the Japanese to gain the upper hand and make sure that the Japanese knew the United States was a mighty nation.

When Matthew Perry's career appears to be imperialistic, one has to question if it was Perry himself that acted in an imperialistic manner, or is Perry simply obeying the imperialistic orders of his superiors. Perry learned from a young age about how his family fought to create the United States. He saw his father and brothers join the navy to protect the country. When he was able, he followed in the family tradition and joined the navy. Throughout his career, Perry made sure that he followed the teachings of his mother. Perry brought his religious teaching into his command and made sure his men were also devout. All the highs and lows of his career, Perry made sure he brought more honor to his family name.

The Great Commodore Matthew C. Perry worked hard to climb the ladder to become an officer in the United States Navy. During his advancement, Perry saw issues that the navy needed to fix to make the navy one of the greatest in the world. He studied how the Royal Navy and the French Navy worked when he was stationed in the Mediterranean. Perry knew that he should not copy the Royal Navy but restructure the American Navy.

Commodore Matthew Perry was loyal to a changing government that believed in its Manifest Destiny and expanding its borders through imperialism. After breaking away from Great Britain, America had to struggle to achieve the same growth as the other leading countries. As the United States expanded its borders, America encroached on established colonies.

America started expanding its border with gaining the Louisiana Purchase to add land to its country. With this acquisition, America had become more friendly with the French, which angered the British. This gain caused America to fight the British in a war

again. Then America turned its attention southerly, to impose its ethos on the Caribbean to stop piracy, and challenge Europe and Britain's rule of those islands. Simultaneously, the United States pushed its will in the Mediterranean areas to stop the slave trade. America continued spreading out into the world by forming a colony in Africa, and later bought more of the southern mainland, adding Florida. Then America's final push of Manifest Destiny claimed more central mainland area, which started another war - this time with Mexico. Finally, America sent the navy west toward Asia to demand new trade deals.

All of this need to expand the United States' territory oddly occurred while Matthew C. Perry was a driving force of America's navy, yet most of the politicians and early historians would deny this was imperialism. Early America tried to disguise its efforts as something different than just mimicry of the British. In some ways, America was trying to catch up with Europe, but they did not want to look like the country they broke away from during the American Revolution. It could also be looked at as acquiring land on the same continent was not imperialistic. However, America was forcing other countries to follow their ideals out on the open seas, just like the British.

In the end, it is hard to determine if Perry was imperialistic or if he was following the changing political ideals of the country. Without a majority of his journals, Perry's thoughts on the actions he took during his career will go unanswered. In Perry's journals, written while he was traveling to Japan, and during his time there, his reasoning is quite clear. In the memoirs that have survived, it is easy to see that most of his actions were ones that followed the orders given by the American government. Matthew Perry's involvement with imperialism seems to at a time when the United States needed strong

and determined men to guide the fledgling country and that Commodore Matthew C. Perry was one of those men.

Chapter 3

This paper focuses on the memory of Commodore Matthew Perry. Therefore, it is prudent to examine what recent authors have done to keep the memory of Perry's life and legacy pertinent. When modern historians write about the Commodore, the focus of the stories and events that created his legacy, this means the way someone perceives Perry alters the way others remember him. Perry's memory is retained in the United States and Japan differently because of the way those cultures were affected by his actions. To figure out when and how the perception of Perry changed, various types of sources need to be examined. These sources are newspaper articles, biographies, textbooks, and history books.

Even though the sample size of these sources is small, they can be beneficial. Perry is a person who helped reshape America's Navy and spent his life in service to America. Decades after Perry's death, the United States arrived in Japan to reach a peace treaty that would end the Second World War. When Douglas MacArthur sailed into Tokyo harbor, he flew the thirty-one starred American flag that had flown when Perry first arrived in Japan. The message is subtle, but the meaning was clear; America is here again.

One of the popular forms of media that needs to be investigated as an outlet for the memory of Commodore Matthew C. Perry are newspaper articles. These can provide a sense of how contemporary Americans thought about Perry and his accomplishments. The main problem that arises is that there are only very few newspapers that have survived time. Those that did manage to survive fewer still are digitized for anyone to

view. There were only a handful of articles that survived and recalled the memory of Perry.

The first article was published in the *Washington Sentinel* in Washington, D.C., on May 5, 1854, titled "The Japan Squadron."¹⁰¹ This article was about the fleet that Perry gathered to sail to Japan. In the article, President Millard Fillmore sent Commodore Matthew C. Perry to meet with the Emperor of Japan and gain a trade deal. The article recounts President Fillmore and the political side of this venture. The report reads that the President wanted to let Japan know that the United States had large amounts of gold for trade. Near the end of the article, Perry commented on the navy's next visit to Japan. He recommended taking a smaller steamer to make it into Edo Bay. This article was among one of the first newspaper accounts informing the nation of Perry's return from Japan. It gave the American populace some insight into the reason why a voyage to Japan was needed.

The next article was written in *The National Era* in Washington, D.C., on September 9, 1858, and titled "The Perrys."¹⁰² This article was written five months after Commodore Matthew Perry died and forty-five years after the Battle of Lake Erie. Because of the anniversary of the Battle of Lake Erie, the article first looks at the career of Perry's brother, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry. After a brief memorial on Oliver's death, it went on to talk about Matthew Perry. As with Oliver, the article shows the highlights of Perry's career and life. It also ends as a standard obituary, starting when Perry died, and who in his family survived. This article lets people reflect on what the Perry did for the country, with a brief highlight of his career. It showed the naval

¹⁰¹ *Washington Sentinel*, May 5, 1854.

¹⁰² *The National Era*, September 9, 1858.

bombardment of Veracruz, and the “bloodless victory” when Perry gained a trade deal with Japan.

Four months after the last newspaper article on Perry, multiple newspapers, including the *Nevada Journal* and the *Saint Paul Weekly Minnesotian* published "famous deaths" from 1858.¹⁰³ In these articles, they just named the famous or people that made an impact in the country. In most cases, Perry was listed under notable naval deaths in the previous year. Sometimes, they put a sentence noting his voyage to open Japan. These different articles of famous deaths stretched the country from the east to the newer states in the west.

The next article, "Japan To Honor Perry," was published in Montana by *The Kalispell Bee* on April 22, 1901.¹⁰⁴ This article was a preamble announcing that Japan planned to commemorate the awakening of Japan caused by Perry arriving by creating a monument honoring the Commodore. The article explains Perry's arrival in Japan and how much it has changed fifty years later. The article also talks about how this monument will be unveiled in the summer.

Five months later, in 1901, the newspaper *The San Francisco Call* in San Francisco, California, ran an article "The Japan of 1853 and the Japan of Today."¹⁰⁵ This article is the largest one written that commemorates Perry. It is one whole page and shows different photos with different historical facts. The report starts with a brief look at how Japan of today (1901) is different from Japan when Perry arrived. One focus of the article was how well people in Japan remembered Matthew Perry. The author found he

¹⁰³ *Saint Paul Weekly Minnesotian*, January 29, 1859.

¹⁰⁴ *The Kalispell Bee*, April 22, 1901.

¹⁰⁵ *The San Francisco Call*, September 15, 1901.

was vital for the evolution of Japan, but few people knew how important Perry was until the monument for Perry was created. The article showed a photo of this memorial built and dedicated to Perry in Japan.

One of the next articles was published on January 20, 1924, by *The Sunday Star* in Washington, D.C. This article was titled "Clever American Naval Officers Are Statesmen of Seven Seas."¹⁰⁶ In this article, the paper looked at different naval officers. In the middle of the article, they focus on Commodore Matthew Perry. The main point of the section on Perry was to explain how vital his voyage to Japan was. It also mentioned his contribution to advancing the United States Navy. This article displays two photos of Perry. The first is one of his naval portraits. The second is a drawing done of Perry getting grain loaded onto his ships before leaving Japan. This article shows how vital Commodore Perry was for the navy.

The article "First American Landing In Japan" was published on September 16, 1945, in Washington, D.C. by the *Evening Star*.¹⁰⁷ This article is small, but it tells about Perry's first landing in Japan. There is a short passage explaining the date when Perry landed. Next to the article are two drawings. One is a caricature of Perry as he arrived at the treaty negotiation. The second drawing depicted Commodore Perry accompanied by Marines as they were getting ready to leave Japan.

The last notable article, titled "Americana," was published on October 18, 1945, by the *Roanoke Rapids Herald* in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.¹⁰⁸ Like the previous article, "Americana" showed a small paragraph and a sketch. The section explained that

¹⁰⁶ *Evening Star*, January 20, 1924.

¹⁰⁷ *Evening Star*, September 16, 1945.

¹⁰⁸ *Roanoke Rapids Herald*, October 18, 1945.

Perry and the *U.S.S. Mississippi* were the first to land in Japan, and the only ship looking for a treaty to visit Tokyo (Edo) until the Japanese surrender after the Second World War. The sketch depicts Matthew Perry and his men standing on the beach as a Japanese delegate hands a scroll over.

These two articles, "First American Landing In Japan" and "Americana," are two valuable articles. They came at the end of the Second World War. In a time when America and Japan were re-introducing themselves after a ferocious war. Some people could look at these articles and see two countries looking back at Perry to show how Americans and the Japanese could peacefully interact. Others indicated that the United States walked into Japan once and got what they wanted and that now, after the Second World War, Americans would again get peace on their terms.

Many newspaper articles mention Commodore Matthew C. Perry. Each time Perry received mentioned, the memory of him was refreshed in the public's mind. From what survives as articles that referenced Perry, most come near the end of the Second World War. These articles mainly focused on Commodore Perry opening Japan to trade and being the first American diplomat to set foot in Japan. Even if Perry was mentioned just after his death, the articles still mainly focus on him gaining trade for the United States with Japan. His death was posted among famous people who died in 1858. It was published throughout the country from Massachusetts to California. Fifty years after Perry's death, more photos and sketches became fashionable in the newspaper. Once the Second World War came to an end, Perry again fell out of print.

The most natural type of resource to cite and look at how Matthew C. Perry is remembered is through biographies. Each time a biography was written, it shows how the

memory of Matthew Perry contributed to the advancement of the United States Navy, American expansion, and the Asian world. Edward Barrows, John Schroeder, and Samuel Morison are among the few scholars that devoted an entire book documenting the life and career of Matthew Perry.

Edward Barrows was the first author to write a biography on Commodore Matthew C. Perry. That book is *The Great Commodore: The Exploits of Matthew Calbraith Perry*.¹⁰⁹ In 1935, Edward Barrows wrote about Perry merely seventy-seven years after his death. Barrows starts the biography off with Commodore Perry's father, Christopher Raymond Perry. Barrows shows how Matthew Perry's morals began with his father. Barrows writes about the family's difficult start in this country, and Christopher's role in defending the would-be nation's fight to free the colonies from Great Britain. Barrows spends the first two chapters, of twenty-two, writing about Perry's father and older brother, Oliver. Barrows focused on Perry's father and brother, showing how Matthew Perry was raised to honor the country and gave him the driven to join the navy. Barrows gives a sane, no-nonsense, regurgitation of the facts. With little embellishments, or side stories. His look back at Matthew Perry encompassed Perry's whole life. Barrows also spent a considerable amount of the biography focused more on the policies and evolution of the navy when Matthew was alive.

Each biography has its way of preserving the memory of Matthew C. Perry. Barrows is the earliest author to write about Matthew using the form of a biography. His use of the biography shows what Perry meant for the early United States Navy's physical and moral growth.

¹⁰⁹ Barrows, *The Great Commodore*.

As a researcher, Barrows' book is challenging to use because it is nearly impossible to distinguish between facts and opinions. One has to flip-flop between the text and the back of the book to reference his bibliography. At no point in his book does Barrows use footnotes or endnotes. Barrows recounts the memory of Matthew Perry to the world once again. One thing Barrows did add that the other two neglected was to tell the history of this period through personal details. When Barrows focuses on Perry's first years in the navy, he showed what punishments and living conditions were like on the ships in the early navy. He also indicates ship life was like after Perry left its crew. Both of these were to show the changes that occurred to the navy later in Perry's career.

Samuel Morison is the second author to write a full biography of Matthew C. Perry titled, *"Old Bruin" Commodore Matthew C. Perry 1794-1858: The American Naval Officer Who Helped Found Liberia, Hunted Pirates in the West Indies, Practiced Diplomacy with the Sultan of Turkey and the King of the Two Sicilies; Commanded the Gulf Squadron in the Mexican War, Promoted the Steam Navy and the Shell Gun, and Conducted the Naval Expedition Which Opened Japan*.¹¹⁰ Morison, an American historian, noted for his works of maritime history, published his biography on Matthew Perry in 1967. Released thirty-two years after Barrows' book, Morison's biography advances our review of Perry's life and career. Morison has written several books looking at different naval commanders and the wars in which they fought. Morison, in some ways, gives the same layout to his biography as Barrows. He provided background on how Perry's family arrived in the colonies and how generations of sailors shaped the early

¹¹⁰ Morison, *Old Bruin Commodore Matthew C. Perry*.

American navy. Morison adds a more humanistic tone than Barrows. Morison takes twenty-five chapters to show Perry's full career up to the end of his life.

Morison released his biography during the middle of the Cold War. Even though he focuses on the changes Perry brought to the United States Navy, he does add more to the legacy of Matthew Perry as a commander. Morison pulls in more first-hand resources and accounts from the few surviving journals of Perry and the men that served under him. Morison adds more to the memory of Matthew Perry than Barrows in the fact that his book gives more depth to Perry's career.

Morison is the first author to use footnotes when writing about Perry's life and career. Morison also added many excerpts from letters that the Commodore sent, or received, from the government or other naval officers. Morison showed a side of Perry that Barrows did not; he portrayed Perry as a naval officer that made sure he did everything he was asked to do while improving naval conditions. Morison brought a more logical approach when describing Perry's career. He showed that communication was of paramount importance for Perry to be successful. In the epilogue, Morison helps anyone wanting to learn more about people connected to Matthew Perry after his death. He looks at how the Civil War ended up dividing the men who served under Commodore Perry. The truth is a majority of the men that sailed with Perry joined the Confederacy. Morison explains that Perry's family stayed in the service and fought for the Union during the war. Unlike Barrows, Morison does not spend time looking at old forms of naval discipline. Morison keeps to the historical timeline of Matthew Perry's career. His focus is narrowed to that memory of Matthew Perry that helped shape the United States Navy and the diplomacy of America.

The third author to write about Matthew Perry is John Schroeder. Schroeder's book *Matthew Calbraith Perry: Antebellum Sailor and Diplomat*, is the most recent biography of Matthew Perry, being published in 2001.¹¹¹ It puts this biography 143 years after Perry died. Schroeder's book was released thirty-four years after Morison's. Schroeder follows a similar layout as Barrows and Morison. He documents the Perry family from the early years of Perry's father and ends with Matthew Perry's death. Schroeder showed Matthew Perry's career in just ten chapters. Even though it is a modern rendition of Perry, it is abbreviated in length and discussion of the events. This alone may be deciphered as to Perry's importance in this modern era of history.

Schroeder takes his approach to Perry's career differently. Schroeder's biography is almost as long as Barrows, but it does not have the same rhythm for telling the story of his career. In the ten chapters of Schroeder's book, he looks at the career of Matthew C. Perry matter-of-factly. No embellishments. He only focuses on the significant events of Perry's career.

Schroeder recalls the memory of Commodore Matthew C. Perry differently than the others. Schroeder writes an abbreviated timeline of Matthew's career. He shows Matthew Perry as a sailor and a diplomat for the United States. He does not clutter the writing of the period with trivial matters, and he stays with the main topics of that era.

Schroeder does not use footnotes; he cites his findings with endnotes. When writing about Matthew Perry's career, Schroeder does not focus on Perry's actions during the War of 1812 or the Mexican American War. He does focus on the naval reforms that took place before, during, and after those wars. One of the most significant differences in

¹¹¹ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*.

the writings of these men is that Schroeder focuses on Perry's diplomatic mission to Japan. Where Morison and Barrows spend a few chapters on that mission, Schroeder dedicates half of his book to this event. Schroeder explains that, when he was in school, the only mention of Matthew Perry was explaining how he opened trade with Japan for the United States. At the beginning of his book, Schroeder accounts for all the essential social advancements that Perry and his family achieved. Schroeder also explained all of the times Perry was called upon to help negotiate treaties with other foreign countries.

Schroeder's book brings up two points about the memory of Matthew Perry in his introduction. "Every high-school student learns about 'Perry and the Opening of Japan,' and naval historians know Perry was a leading reformer who advanced both the adoption of steam propulsion and professional education."¹¹² The first is how high school students only learn about Matthew Perry opening Japan. He laments about how naval historians remember Perry as the man that reformed the early navy.

When wondering how Americans remember Commodore Matthew C. Perry, one focus should be on how he is taught in schools. Researching older American textbooks has its difficulties. The first problem is finding the ones that have survived over the decades. The second issue is that the curriculums have changed. The use of textbooks in schools use changed. Unfortunately, this modern history taught in high schools do not include the career of Matthew Perry.

A Basic History Of The United States by Charles and Mary Beard, which was published in 1944.¹¹³ The Beards' history textbook starts with the beginning of the

¹¹² Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, xi.

¹¹³ Charles Beard and Mary Beard, *A Basic History of the United States* (New York: New Home Library, 1944).

colonies and covers up to the start of the Second World War. In an American history textbook that focuses on the evolution of the United States, they do not entirely mention the War of 1812 or the Mexican American War. In this text they mainly focus on how the early government changed along with the economic development of America. In 1944, Matthew C. Perry was mentioned once in the Beard's book when teaching "continentalism."¹¹⁴ The Beards explained how Matthew differed from this policy.

This is not to say that no Americans-in thought, ambition, and enterprise-had gone beyond the continental borders. Keels of American ships had plowed the waters of all seas bearing masters and merchants in search of foreign markets and opportunities to garner in large profits from foreign trade. American warships had bombed many ports in distant foreign lands in retaliation for native interference with the operations of American traders. Ambitious naval officers, such as Commodore Matthew C. Perry, who opened to American commerce the barred gates of Japan, had dreamed of and proposed the seizure of islands and territories in far-off lands.¹¹⁵

This small passage in their textbook showed how they felt when it came to Matthew Perry's actions. The Beards wording shows that the action of forcing Japan to open their borders for trade fits with American imperialism. So, the Beards are very clearly associate Perry with American imperialism.

The next American history textbook found was *The American Republic*, written by Richard Hofstadter, William Miller, and Daniel Aaron.¹¹⁶ This textbook was originally written in 1959, but it was used through the early 70s. In the first volume of the textbook, which started with Europe discovering America and ended just after the Civil War, these authors describe Commodore Matthew C. Perry much the same as the Beards had. *The*

¹¹⁴ A policy favoring the restricting of relations as political and economical to countries of the same continent.

¹¹⁵ Beard et al., *A Basic History of the United States*, 337.

¹¹⁶ Richard Hofstadter, William Miller, and Daniel Aaron, *The American Republic: Through Reconstruction* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc, 1959).

American Republic textbook first mentions Perry when teaching about expanding markets. After explaining how, in 1844, America and other nations enjoyed new rights in treaty ports of China they mention "in 1854, Commodore Matthew Perry, with a fine show of American naval power, opened up the 'Hermit Kingdom' of Japan to American trade."¹¹⁷ The only difference that occurred between the Beard's textbook and Hofstadter's textbook was that Hofstadter added a portrait done by a Japanese artist of Perry.

The newest textbook was *The Americans*, written by five authors and was published in 2012.¹¹⁸ This textbook was used for four years and was updated in 2016. This newest textbook followed the same formula. It does not mention the War of 1812 or the Mexican American War. Then, when it reaches the time when Matthew Perry journeyed to Japan, it does not even mention the trip, opening Japan for trade, or Commodore Matthew C. Perry.

By 2012, the 'Great Commodore' is no longer mentioned and is hardly remembered by Americans. If Schroeder's statement about high school students still being taught that Commodore Matthew C. Perry opened Japan for trade is false, then do naval historians still remember Matthew Perry? Analyzing the work of Harold and Margaret Sprout, along with James Bradford, will help answer this question.

Harold and Margaret Sprout wrote *The Rise of American Naval Power 1776-1918*.¹¹⁹ In the history of the United States Navy, the Sprouts try to show whenever a captain or commodore added some vital impact to the growth of the navy. The Sprouts

¹¹⁷ Hofstadter et al., *The American Republic*, 531-532.

¹¹⁸ Gerald Danzer, J Jorge Klor de Alva, Larry Krieger, Louis Wilson, and Nancy Woloch, *The Americans* (Florida: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing, 2012).

¹¹⁹ Harold Sprout, and Margaret Sprout, *The Rise of American Naval Power 1776-1918* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967).

mention both Matthew Perry and his brother, Oliver Hazard Perry. When it comes to the memory of Oliver, the Sprouts only write about his victory during the Battle of Lake Erie. He gets one small paragraph explaining what his success meant to the War of 1812. Then they mention Matthew Perry. Matthew gets two brief passages, which is one more than his brother, Oliver.

The Sprouts' first mention of Commodore Matthew C. Perry is explaining how the American navy started to switch from sail to steam. "It was one thing to authorize the ships; another to build them successfully at this transitional stage in the evolution of naval architecture. Credit for the letter is due chiefly to the imagination, enterprise, and expert knowledge of Captain Matthew C. Perry."¹²⁰ In these short two sentences, the Sprouts remind anyone learning about these changes to the United States Navy was attributed to Matthew Perry. With the Sprouts noting his title as "Captain" shows the fact that Matthew spearheaded this change before he was given control of a fleet and the title of Commodore.

The second time the Sprouts mention Perry was by exploring a more significant moment in his career. At a time when the American government refused to increase the size of its navy, Perry was given the authority to venture to Japan. "In 1854, Secretary Dobbin noted with manifest approval the display of force used by Commodore Matthew C. Perry in opening the ports of Japan."¹²¹ This small passage mentions Perry opening Japan. It is interesting to see the Sprouts use the memory of Matthew Perry creating a steam navy as an essential point of his career over opening Japan. The Sprouts showed

¹²⁰ Sprout et al, *The Rise of American Naval Power 1776-1918*, 114.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 144.

how Matthew advanced America's Navy. They felt that the memory of Matthew Perry should be changing the style of ships, not his voyage to Japan.

James Bradford is the author of *Captains of the Old Steam Navy Makers of the American Naval Traditions 1840-1880*.¹²² His book covers the captains in the steam navy from its creation through the Civil War. Bradford devotes the whole first chapter to Commodore Matthew C. Perry. Here, a quick overview of Perry's career is written. The final third of the chapter was about Perry's voyage to Japan. The section on Perry was at the start of Bradford's book because Perry is credited with creating America's steam navy. The memory of Matthew Perry is one that Bradford and Sprout's deemed essential for the creation of the steam navy and one that helped reform the navy.

Many historians have written about Japan's history. These books cover almost all of Japanese history, from the stone age to the modern era. Japan has faced some of the same issues the United States faced. They both fought horrible civil wars. They both also practiced a policy of isolationism and experimented with imperialism. These similarities did not happen at the same time in history, but they were moments that shaped the United States and Japan. One other thing that both countries share is Commodore Matthew C. Perry. In some ways, Matthew Perry was more impactful for Japan than the United States. When exploring how and when the memory of Matthew Perry is covered by Japanese history, it is essential to start with older writings and move toward the twenty-first century.

The first book to look at is Chitoshi Yanaga's book *Japan Since Perry*.¹²³ Yanaga wrote this book in 1949 and took on the task of showing how integral Japan's

¹²² James Bradford, *Captains of the Old Steam Navy*.

¹²³ Chitoshi Yanaga, *Japan Since Perry* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1949).

development had been for the world. He looked at how Japan's "impelling needs for national economic and military strength set the course of the nation."¹²⁴ Yanaga starts his book looking at Commodore Matthew C. Perry arriving in Edo Bay. He mentions how the Japanese first saw four "Black Ships" off the coast of Uruga. Yanaga then goes on to explain how Perry planned to have his twelve-ship squadron enter Edo Bay, but only four ships arrived first in Japan. Yanaga moved to show how impatient the Commodore became because there was no suitable person to take his letter ashore for the Emperor. He then wrote about how Perry threatened to take a sizable force ashore to deliver the messages. Yanaga tells how the Commodore refused to wait for a replay from the Shogun. Commodore Matthew Perry told the Japanese officials that he would be back in one year with the rest of his fleet.

Yanaga jumped to when Matthew returned earlier than he promised, and a few weeks later, the Treaty of Kanagawa was established. This treaty gave the United States government diplomatic representation at the port of Shimoda. The Treaty of Kanagawa changed the way Japan was able to regulate trade with western powers. Yanaga starts his book by looking at how Commodore Matthew C. Perry began to shift Japan's history. The next Japanese history book was written fourteen years after Yanaga's book.

William Neumann's book *America Encounters Japan: From Perry to MacArthur* is the next Japanese history book that recounts Matthew Perry.¹²⁵ In many ways, Neumann's book discusses the memory of Commodore Matthew C. Perry, the same as Yanaga's book. Neumann first focuses on Perry leaving the United States for his

¹²⁴ Yanaga, *Japan Since Perry*, vii.

¹²⁵ William Neumann, *America Encounters Japan: From Perry to MacArthur* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1963).

journey to Japan. Then, he looked at Perry's first interaction with the Japanese officials and how he left, promising to return in one year. Neumann then moves to Perry's return and to the treaty between the United States and Japan. Neumann uses Perry's task to explain the changes in Japan and how the United States established a new trade partner. Like Yanaga, Neumann uses the memory of Commodore Matthew Perry's voyage as the starting points for his book and explains how this encounter started a new era of Japanese history. Perry is used as a framing device for Japanese history. His arrival is the divide between pre-modern Japan and modern Japan.

W. Scott Morton takes a different approach to Japanese history in his book *Japan its History and Culture*.¹²⁶ Morton's book was released seven years after Neumann's book, in 1970. Morton intended his book to be an introduction to Japanese history. Because it is a book focusing on Japanese history, Commodore Matthew C. Perry is not mentioned until the final third of the book. Even though Perry is not mentioned until later in Morton's book, he still mentions all the same facts as in Yanaga and Neumann's books. Like the first two authors, Morton shows how Perry is important for understanding the creation of modern Japan. Morton gives no evidence on how the Japanese felt about Perry after he changed Japan.

Kenneth Henshall's *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower* reflects changing attitudes toward Perry at the turn of the twenty-first century.¹²⁷ Henshall follows the same path as Morton, but at a different speed. Henshall intended his book to be used as a teaching tool about Japanese history. With this in mind, he covers Japanese history

¹²⁶ W. Morton, *Japan: Its History and Culture* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1970).

¹²⁷ Kenneth Henshall, *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999).

until 1990 in two hundred pages. Henshall's mention of Commodore Matthew C. Perry is short and similar to how Perry is mentioned in American history textbooks. Henshall gives no mention how the Japanese felt about Perry. He shows Perry arriving in Japan and then he left with a treaty. The only difference between Henshall's book is that he mentioned Perry again when he discusses the Meiji Era in Japan. Henshall shows that the Japanese remembered the Commodore. Perry was the reason Japan learned how to become a modern nation. Henshall showed how Japan celebrated Commodore Matthew Perry ten years after his death.

Compared to all of the other authors cited so far, Marius Jansen shows how Commodore Matthew C. Perry is remembered throughout Japanese history the most. In his book, *The Making of Modern Japan*, Jansen looks at when Japan transitioned from a modern nation and then into a superpower.¹²⁸ Jansen could have started his book as Yanaga and Neumann did, but Jansen started recounting history around the Warring States Period in Japan. By his third chapter, Jansen has reached the point of Perry arriving in Japan. Jansen discusses the same facts as the previous books on Japanese history.

Where Jansen adds to the memory of Commodore Matthew C. Perry is once the Tokugawa government fell in Japan. He mentions how some people depicted "Perry as a Buddhist devil."¹²⁹ In this period they also blamed the Commodore for ruining the government and country. Jansen then shows Perry was brought up again when Japan went to expand into Korea in 1874. The Meiji government claimed they had perfected the tactic that Commodore Matthew Perry used against them two decades before. Jansen

¹²⁸ Marius Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000).

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 325.

talks about how the actions Perry took to open Japan rippled through much of the culture during the Meiji period in Japan.

The next time that Jansen showed the Japanese memory of Matthew Perry was when it resurfaced around the Second World War. A faction of people in Japan blamed Matthew Perry for the aggression Japan felt toward America during the Second World War. It was claimed by some after the war, that America had brought forth Japan's anger when Perry first arrived. Jansen shows that these few Japanese never forgave Matthew Perry for the role he played in modernizing Japan.

James McClain, author of *Japan A Modern History*, gives a modern look at Japanese history.¹³⁰ Because of this approach, McClain starts his book with the unification of Japan. McClain first brings up Commodore Matthew C. Perry when explaining why the Meiji Restoration happened. Like the other authors, he quickly explains Perry opening Japan to the world. Then McClain states how the people in Japan joined together to overthrow the Tokugawa government. They claimed it was because of "Perry's gunboat diplomacy and the signing of unequal treaties."¹³¹ McClain then showed how others in Japan saw Perry's arrival as a weakness in the Shogunate. The last time that McClain brings up the memory of Matthew Perry is near the end of the Second World War. McClain explains that when the United States arrived in the waters off of Japan to sign the official surrender, the *U.S.S. Missouri* flew two flags. The first was the American flag that flew over the White House during Pearl Harbor, and the second was a thirty-one

¹³⁰ James McClain, *Japan A Modern History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002).

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 144.

starred Old Glory that flew from the mast of Commodore Matthew Perry's ship when he arrived in Japan for the first time.¹³²

One of the most recent books written is *Inventing Japan 1853-1964* by Ian Buruma.¹³³ Buruma looks at Japanese history like Yanaga and Neumann. Buruma focused on how Japan became a modern nation and later a superpower. He shows some of the issues that arose once Perry arrived in Japan. Buruma wrote about how the commodore's translator misinterpreted some of the situations. He looked down on the Japanese natives, which caused a disconnect between Perry and the Japanese officials. Buruma showed how "Commodore Perry's arrival turned the slogan 'Respect the emperor, expel the barbarians' into an anti-bakufu war cry."¹³⁴ Like McClain, Buruma writes about Perry's flag being flown during the peace signing in Japan that ended the Second World War.

Some authors, like Morton, Henshall, Jansen, and McClain show Japan's history and mention Perry when he abruptly enters their history. He is not good or bad, as far as history is concerned. They just show the history of Perry arriving and changing Japan. Other authors like Yanaga, Neumann, and Buruma showed how Japanese history changed when the Commodore arrived and opened Japan for trade depicting Perry as a wedge that, over time, divided the Japanese people causing rapid change to Japan's culture.

One of the main differences that can be seen is how Japan and America remember Commodore Matthew Perry arriving in Japan. In all of the Japanese history books, they talk about how the Japanese felt threatened and strong-armed into signing an unfair treaty

¹³² McClain, *Japan A Modern History*, 523-524.

¹³³ Ian Buruma, *Inventing Japan 1853-1964*, (New York: A Modern Library Chronicles Book, 2003).

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

under the threat of war. Perry altered the future of Japan, and the Japanese people held onto the anger that made their country conform to be more modern.

Besides the biographies, the memory of Matthew Perry has been remembered better in Japanese history than in American history. Perry is credited with so many advancements for the United States Navy, yet he has been dropped from American history and textbooks. Even in more recent Japanese history books, Perry is mentioned multiple times. In some way, the memory of Matthew Perry lasts longer when it is remembered angrily. The Japanese kept the memory of Perry alive through the generations they use him to facilitate understanding as to why the change occurred in their country.

The memory of Matthew C. Perry has been covered in many works of non-fiction. Newspaper articles distinguish how important Perry's career was for the United States. After his death, he was honored in multiple ways by a couple of articles on his career and family. He was also mentioned as one of the famous persons who died in 1858. The same could not be said when Perry is discussed in Japanese history.

In many ways, this part of the memory of Matthew Perry is the only importance for Japan. For the history of Japan, Perry was a wedge that divided a majority of the people. Japanese history books do not focus on the entire career of Perry. A majority of the publications only mention Perry as a man that forced Japan to open for trade.

'The Father of the Steam Navy' is one of the nicknames given to Commodore Matthew Perry. This name was given to Perry because of his contributions to creating steamships. When American textbooks mention Matthew Perry, they focused on his mission to Japan. American naval histories differ on what part of Perry's career is

remembered. Some only show what he did while transforming the United States Navy, while others look at his service during the wars or diplomatic missions. For someone who helped push America's navy closer to a dominating power as the U.S. grows to become a world leader, Perry is rarely mentioned. The memory of Matthew Perry may still be brought up in naval history, but currently, he is no longer part of American history textbooks.

Commodore Matthew C. Perry had a lengthy career and devoted a large amount of it to improve the navy. When a biography was written about him, it covered his entire life and career. The number of biographies documenting Matthew Perry is small, but he is still remembered in the twenty-first century. Notwithstanding a few of the Japanese histories, the biography by Schroeder is one of the better works that recalls the memory of Matthew Perry. Schroeder still condensed Perry's career to just the main highlights. But Schroeder also started his biography out by wondering why the memory of Perry has stopped being taught. "Every high-school student learns about 'Perry and the Opening of Japan,'" ¹³⁵ He ponders this question into a complete biography. The memory of Matthew Perry was something that became more popular during the Second World War.

¹³⁵ Schroeder, *Matthew Calbraith Perry*, xi.

Chapter 4

After sifting through Commodore Matthew Perry's life and career, one more focus is on how the memory of Matthew Perry is depicted in works of fiction. Oddly, the country of his birth has very few examples, whereas Japanese pop culture memorializes Perry in both films and works of literature. Most of these works center around Perry's late career when he opened Japan for trade. When deciphering these works, a few questions need to be answered. Why is Perry still remembered in Japan? How is Perry portrayed? How has the memory of Matthew Perry been accepted in Japanese culture?

These works of fiction include a musical, movies, anime, manga, and a video game. The use of these new media has been used to show many moments in history. Major wars like the American Revolution, the United States Civil War, the First and Second World War, and the Vietnam War have become the main theme or an event that is occurring in the background of popular fiction. Alternate histories fantasized about in books and movies are used to pull the audience into the plot and ground the tale in a quasi-reality. When it comes to remembering Matthew Perry, more sources have come from Japan.

The first movie to mention Commodore Matthew Perry was *Sword of the Beast* (1965).¹³⁶ This movie was set in 1857 at the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate created by the Japanese production company Shochiku. The story follows a fugitive samurai who killed a counselor of his clan. The central theme that runs through the movie is how Matthew Perry changed the ideology of samurai in Japan by exposing Japan to western

¹³⁶ *Sword of the Beast*, directed by Hideo Gosha (1965; Japan: Shochiku), DVD.

ideals. As the Tokugawa Shogunate was coming to an end, samurai were being rounded up. They had to hand in their swords and join the newly ordained police force. This movie shows how much of an impact Commodore Matthew Perry had on the Japanese government, and how the people were not ready for the modernization and change. The public in the movie was divided. Some like the new changes to Japan and felt that the country needed a new form of government. While others hated the actions of Perry because their way of life had been destroyed due to Japan modernized.

For the first movie to mention Matthew Perry, *Sword of the Beast* shows the fact that Japan was divided when the people spoke about Perry. This movie sets an ominous tone during a critical time for Japan. The Tokugawa Shogunate is rapidly losing power, and Japan is starting to be flooded with new cultural influences. This movie's portrayal of Perry makes it is easy to see why some people in Japan hated Perry. This movie not only showed the memory of Matthew Perry; it also showed how his intervention of Japan disrupted the flow of the country.

The next form of fiction was the musical *Pacific Overture* produced in 1976.¹³⁷ This musical is set in Japan beginning in 1853, as Commodore Matthew Perry arrived, and then at a time during the difficult westernization of Japan. The first showing of this musical was on Broadway in 1976, and finally left Broadway in 1984. This musical then got a revival on Broadway in 2004. It remained on Broadway until 2017. This musical looks at the problematic westernization of Japan told from the viewpoint of the Japanese. It was staged in the Kabuki style of theater. This musical not only includes historical facts about Matthew and the treaty negotiation, but it adds comedic changes to the events. At

¹³⁷ *Pacific Overtures*, directed by Stephen Sondheim (1976; United States: Harold Prince), Broadway Play.

one point in the first act, Commodore Perry tells the Japanese officials that he would shell the city in six days if he does not meet with the Shogun. Some of the Japanese devise a way for the Americans to be received but not set foot on Japanese soil. They lay mats down and construct a raised treaty house.

The second act does not show Perry, but it does show what his visit caused. The Shogun is no more. Now there is a child emperor who is manipulated by his advisers. Japan has changed since Perry arrived. Other Western countries were trying to gain trade with Japan. Near the end, the emperor's robes were peeled away to reveal modern Japanese attire, the land of Toyota, air and water pollution, and market domination. This musical depicted Perry as an aggressive man that was willing to destroy a country to see the Shogun and sign a treaty. In the end, it shows Perry got his way; the old culture of Japan died and all that was left was a consumer-driven, commercial Japan.

Another work created was the movie *The Bushido Blade*, released in 1981 by the American publishing company Rank/Bass.¹³⁸ In this film, Richard Boone portrayed Commodore Matthew Perry. This movie was Boone's last film appearance. Boone died just prior to its release in January of 1981. *The Bushido Blade* is a fictional sideline to the actual situation surrounding the treaty Matthew signed with the Tokugawa Shogunate. The premise of the movie revolves around the theft of a samurai sword. This sword was to be presented to the president of the United States as a token of goodwill. A servant sent by Lord Yamato took the sword. Yamato did not approve of the changes or the treaty; he wanted to maintain Japan's isolationism. The treaty could not be signed until the sword was returned. Japanese officials saw it as a matter of honor. Commodore Perry sends one

¹³⁸ *The Bushido Blade*, Tsugunobu Kotani (1981; United States: Rankin/Bass Trident Films), DVD.

of his captains and several crewmembers to retrieve the stolen sword. The moments that Perry is shown in the movie, he is depicted as a strong leader who delegates his men to a mission instead of taking the lead.

This movie's underlying theme attempts show the American public about the imbalance that this trade agreement caused to the Japanese political psyche. Commodore Matthew Perry's arrival in Japan split the ruling class of Feudal Japan into two volatile factions. This divide was close to erupting into a second civil war in Japan until the Meiji Restoration occurred. The sword represented the honor of both sides that had created the Treaty of Kanagawa. In this instance, Perry showed his honor by regaining a treasure entrusted to him by the president. It also showed how the Japanese officials felt when they discovered one of their lords orchestrated the theft. Even though this movie was not historically accurate, it is the closest movie showing the events of Matthew arriving in Japan and the forming of a new trade agreement for the United States.

The first anime to use the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry was *Rurouni Kenshin* entwined him in the plot of one of the arcs.¹³⁹ It was made 1996 by the Japanese animation companies Studio Gallop and Studio Deen.¹⁴⁰ This anime takes place eleven years after the Meiji Period started in Japan. It follows a former Samurai assassin from the Bakumatsu named Kenshin Himura.¹⁴¹ He has become a wandering swordsman protecting the people of Japan. He also vowed never to take another life.

¹³⁹ *Rurouni Kenshin*, directed by Kazuhiro Furuhashi (1996; Japan: Studio Gallop & Studio Deen), DVD.

¹⁴⁰ Anime is the Japanese word for cartoon.

¹⁴¹ Japan ended its isolationist policy and changed from Tokugawa shogunate to the empire of the Meiji government. The ideological-political divide was between the pro-imperial nationalists, and the Shogunate forces the elite Shinsengumi swordsmen.

The arrival of Commodore Perry is mentioned a few times at the beginning of the show, when newly formed police forces and other people comment that the main character needs to lose his sword because of the new laws in Japan. The new laws made it illegal for people to carry swords in public. They mention "Black Ships" arriving in Edo Bay, and that the era of samurai has ended. The term "Black Ships" is used by the Japanese people when talking about Perry's arrival in Japan. Later in the series, Perry is mentioned again when one of the villains thanked him and the United States, for "new technologies" just as he starts firing a Gatling gun.

Rurouni Kenshin shows the impact of the changes that happened as a result of Matthew Perry arriving in Japan. It also illustrates the political struggle in Japan by showing that the samurai are not ready for the new laws that made them obsolete. These new laws also showed how Perry's arrival divided the country and how the Japanese government should have handled the western world. All of the villains in this show hate that Japan is changing and have ruined the lives of samurai. The anger the changes to the country is hatred for Perry because he caused these changes. Most of the other characters all mention that they enjoy the new laws and changes for Japan. *Rurouni Kenshin* also shows the impact that the sudden trade with the West had on their technology. The advancement of technology and opening trade swiftly thrust the people of Japan into the modern era.

The anime *Fruits Basket* was created in 1998 by the Japanese animation company Studio Deen.¹⁴² In this anime, while the main character, Tohru Honda, is studying she learns about the events of Commodore Matthew Perry arriving in Japan. Being in school

¹⁴² *Fruits Basket*, directed by Akitaro Daich (2001; Japan: Studio Deen), DVD.

was not the main focus of the anime, but it was interesting to note that while she was studying Japanese history, it involved the one part of history that shifted political policies in Japan. The arrival of Perry had no significant impact on the central theme of the anime. So why is this the history Tohru is studying? There is no explanation for this by the creator, but many anime and manga creators reflect on subjects they learned when they were in school. So, it could be inferred that the study of Matthew Perry could have been a historical focus for the creator Natsuki Takaya when she was in school.

In 2001, the anime *Hikaru no Go* was produced by the Japanese animation company Pierrot.¹⁴³ This anime is based around the main character Hikaru Shindo, who finds a haunted Go board which helps Hikaru become a master Go player.¹⁴⁴ In the first episode, Hikaru discovers the board is inhabited by the spirit of Fujiwara-no-Sai. Hikaru finds out Sai was the greatest Go player in the Heian Era of Japan. Sai then appeared to Honinbo Shusaku, the top player during the Late Edo Period. While learning about Sai's background, the arrival of Commodore Perry is mentioned. The political change in Japan is shown through how strategic one must be to win a game of Go, and in this anime, Japan's future was being played out like a game of Go.

Samurai Champloo was released in 2004 by the Japanese animation studio Manglobe.¹⁴⁵ This anime is set in an alternate version of Edo Japan. Like several of the anime before *Samurai Champloo* Commodore Matthew Perry is mentioned. Unlike the others, Perry is involved in one of the episodes of the series. The eighth episode titled "Baseball Blues" deals with the opening of Japan to foreign trade. Although Perry is not

¹⁴³ *Hikaru no Go*, directed by Susumu Nishizawa (2001; Japan: Pierrot), DVD.

¹⁴⁴ Is an abstract strategy board game for two people. Originally created in China but gained popularity in Japan.

¹⁴⁵ *Samurai Champloo*, directed by Shinichiro Watanabe (2004; Japan: Manglobe), DVD.

mentioned by name, the character Admiral Joy Cartwright is based on his likeness. The author called him Alexander Joy Cartwright because this was the name of the founder of the New York Knickerbockers Base Ball Club in 1840. The character Admiral Joy Cartwright recruits the main characters to be on his baseball team. The Admiral's fleet was challenged to play a game of baseball by Kagamaru. If Kagamaru won, the Admiral left Japan, but if the Admiral's team won, Japan would sign a trade treaty.

Even though the Admiral's name was not Matthew Perry, he looked like Matthew Perry and he was on the same mission as Matthew. *Samurai Champloo* brings a different take to how Commodore Parry negotiated the treaty with Japan. In the end, Admiral Cartwright won the baseball game and Japan and the United States signed a trade treaty. A lot of the people of Japan in *Samurai Champloo* were happy to gain trade with America. One of the main characters, Mugen, wanted to play baseball again. The only ones that did not like the trade deal were the people that played baseball against the Admiral.

By 2007 the image of Commodore Matthew Perry started to change. This change was seen in the anime *Sayonara Zetsubo Sensei* produced by the Japanese company Shaft.¹⁴⁶ This anime follows a very pessimistic high school teacher named Nozomu Itoshiki. Each episode of the series revolves around different aspects of life, Japanese culture, or common phrases of the Japanese language. In the episode "The Forelock That Has Just Been Opened," Commodore Perry visits the school on the anniversary of its founding.¹⁴⁷ Perry then walks around the school, opening different items like jars, doors,

¹⁴⁶ *Sayonara Zetsubou-Sensei*, directed by Akiyuki Shinbo (2007; Japan: Shaft), DVD.

¹⁴⁷ The Japanese phrase "opening the school" is pronounced the same as "opening the ports."

windows, and bags. Near the end, Perry learns he should not try to open everything in the world and that some things are better left unopened.

This whole episode depicts Perry as a troubled foreigner. It also makes it seem that opening the Japanese ports was not satisfying Commodore Perry. He feels that he needed to open everything. *Sayonara Zetsubo Sensei* uses a significant moment in Japanese history to create a funny gag in one episode. This anime first depicts Perry as a menacing figure, and then it shows he is a mad man that must open everything after he opened Japan for trade with the United States. This anime then changes the meaning of menace and how Perry is getting in the way as he forces everything open in the school.

Ryomaden is a Japanese by Nippon Hoso Kyokai for Japanese television in 2010.¹⁴⁸ *Ryomaden* is a Taiga drama.¹⁴⁹ This show was forty-eight episodes long and centered on the life of the nineteenth century Japanese people Iwasaki Yataro and Sakamoto Ryoma. During the drama, Perry serves as a menacing figure. In different discussions between Yataro and Ryoma, Perry is honored as a steadfast military commander who subjected the invincible Tokugawa Shogunate to brutal and blunt negotiations. Others blamed the Shogun for agreeing to trade with America and the changes the West brought. In the end, they are angry that Perry could force the dominant Tokugawa Shogunate into signing an unfair treaty. The series then focused on the ever-changing Japan and the issue of the political divide in the country. It also shows the problems the Japanese faced as their country slowly started to westernize.

¹⁴⁸ *Ryomaden*, directed by Keishi Otomo (2010; Japan: NHK), Television Drama.

¹⁴⁹ Taiga is the name given to the annual year-long historical drama for television.

Jikkyo Powerful Pro Yakyu is a Japanese video game that let people play as if they are on a professional Japanese baseball team.¹⁵⁰ The version of the game released in 2011, had a secret boss, added to the end of the baseball season. That secret boss is Commodore Matthew Perry. When playing against Perry, players face one of the most difficult antagonists in this baseball games. It is interesting to see Perry depicted as a tough baseball player. This use of baseball can be seen as a metaphor for the trade treaty and Perry being given the honorable position as the toughest player you face in Japan. By defeating Perry, the player wins the negotiations, saving Japan from the Americans. This is an interesting take because without Perry creating trade with Japan, Japan might not have had baseball as a popular sport played in their country.

In 2011 the popular anime series *Code Geass* had its fourth manga adaptation called "Tales of an Alternate Shogunate."^{151;152;153} In this adaptation, the main character of the series, Lelouch, lives in an alternate 1853 Japan. He finds himself in charge of the Shogunate military counterinsurgency brigade - the Shinsengumi. Lelouch is fighting the Black Revolutionaries, who are led by a masked figure. Later this leader of the Black Revolutionaries is revealed to be Commodore Matthew Perry. He is in control of the Geass ability.¹⁵⁴ Using this ability, Matthew opens Japan's ports and attempts to control the whole country. Perry's fortress is a black ship that flies and can transform into a giant combat robot.

¹⁵⁰ *Jikkyo Powerful Pro Yakyu*, directed by Isao Akada (2011; Japan: Konami), Video Game.

¹⁵¹ *Code Geass: Lelouch of the Rebellion*, directed by Goro Taniguchi (2006; Japan: Sunrise), DVD.

¹⁵² Goro Taniguchi, *Code Geass: Tales of an Alternate Shogunate* (Japan: Kadokawa Shoten, 2008).

¹⁵³ Manga are comics or graphic novels created in Japan. Outside of Japan the word is used to refer to comics originally published in Japan.

¹⁵⁴ The power known as Geass or the "Power of Kings," allows the user to command anyone to do whatever they want, including bending their will to live, fight, or die on the user's behalf. The is power can only affect an individual once and must have direct eye contact.

After the original series, where the fictional Holy Britannian Empire took over Japan and a majority of the world, this adaptation portrayed another person attempting to take control of Japan. In this version, Goro Taniguchi uses a leading figure from Japanese history (Perry) to re-write an alternate history.¹⁵⁵ In this manga, the Japanese had to unify to fight the might of Matthew Perry and continue traditional Japanese values. This version of Code Geass made Perry the villain. Whereas other anime that show Perry as incompetent, a savior, or even menacing, in this series Perry is the first villain that attacks Japan and tries to control the whole country.

Bakumatsu Gijinden Roman is anime produced by TMS Entertainment in 2012.¹⁵⁶ *Bakumatsu Gijinden Roman* depicts Commodore Matthew Perry as the enemy like *Code Geass*. In it, Perry returns to Japan ten years after his historic visit. During this fantasized return to Japan, Perry is commanding a high-tech Ironclad. He now has the ambition to conquer the whole country of Japan for himself. The main character Roman has to fight the Commodore to keep him from taking over the country. Matthew manages to destroy much of Edo before Roman defeats him and destroys his Ironclad. This anime is the first to show the Japanese repelling Perry and the United States. It also depicts Perry is a manipulator because he can brainwash people to obey him.

The most recent anime to show the memory of Commodore Matthew Perry is *Dagashi Kashi*, created by the Japanese company Feel in 2016.¹⁵⁷ This series takes place in a countryside shop selling candy and snacks. The Shikada family has owned the store for nine generations. In episode eleven, it has the characters waiting at the train

¹⁵⁵ Goro Taniguchi is a Japanese anime director, writer, producer, and storyboard artist. He has worked on many different anime for Sunrise Studio.

¹⁵⁶ *Bakumatsu Gijinden Roman*, directed by Hirofumi Ogura (2013; Japan: TMS Entertainment), DVD.

¹⁵⁷ *Dagashi Kashi*, directed by Shighito Takayanagi (2016; Japan: Feel), DVD.

station. While they were enjoying a Ramune there, they talk about the origins of the drink.¹⁵⁸ They spoke about how Commodore Perry sailed into Edo Bay, seeking a trade treaty. The discussion recounts that Perry forced the Japanese to open their ports through deception. He brought lemonade to a meeting. The Japanese loved it, so they agreed to trade with the United States if lemons were part of the trade. In the end, it is laughed about how the Japanese mispronounced 'lemonade' as 'Ramune.' *Dagashi Kashi* shows Perry as a man that needed to acquire trade with Japan. He brought lemonade as something to a sure the treaty got signed. By *Dagashi Kashi* having Perry use lemonade instead of a show of force changes the intent of Perry and the United States. In this anime, Perry is not depicted as a bad guy because he brought a delicious drink to Japan.

The memory of Commodore Matthew Perry is still brought up in different works of Japanese fiction. As seen, there are not that many American works of fiction that include Perry, and when they did, they depict Perry in specific ways. This exploration into Japanese works of fiction found when and where Perry is remembered. It does show that when it comes to various works created in Japan, Perry is believed to be a betrayer. Perry has been used in different anime, manga, and movies. These forms of Japanese pop culture are set in an alternate history. They shift the uses of Perry to fit the new world and create a hero or villain.

Some questions were brought up when looking at these works of fiction. What makes Perry's memory so important to the Japanese culture that is used him as an antagonist. Each of the media setting starts when Perry arrived in Japan. Five of the works have acts or scenes that show the negotiations and the signing of the Treaty of

¹⁵⁸ A type of carbonated soft drink created in Japan. The Brand name comes to the Japanese expression for the English word lemonade.

Kanagawa. Each portrayal form of the negotiation ranges from a game of baseball to the use of lemonade as a trick played on the Shogun. All of these works of fiction lament Perry establishing trade with Japan. This cultural anger is one of the reasons Matthew Perry is remembered in Japan decades after his death.

Even though outwardly, the Japanese appear to be pleased with the past, there is obviously deep-rooted angst about the Perry event. Their frictional depiction of that period of time is not kind to Perry or America. At first, Perry was depicted in two ways. He was either championed by the people of Japan for helping create a modern nation or he is hated for destroying their old way of life.

It does not take long for the image of Perry to change again in these works of fiction. Starting in 2007, with *Sayonara Zetsubou-Sensei*, Perry is no longer depicted positively, as a man that helped change Japan. He was shown as an idiot, someone that could not stop himself habitually opening everything he came in contact with. Then Perry's persona quickly becomes an egotistical villain. He is scapegoated as the person to blame for Japan's political awakening and destroying centuries of culture.

The last work of fiction changed how Perry was remembered. Suddenly the memory Perry softened. No longer an invasive monster who opened Japan, but Perry was the man that brought lemonade to the island nation. A whimsical portrayal, but a friendlier remembrance of Perry's contribution to history. Possibly it is a need to start embracing Perry as a positive participant in their inevitable culture change.

Commodore Matthew Perry has been in different forms of fiction in Japan. He has been hated, loved, laughed at, and tolerated, but he still is shown as the main catalyst in Japan not only modernized but westernized. Japan took its culture and combined it with

the western world to form a modern nation. Even though the number of fictional works remembering Perry is small when compared to the amount created yearly, Perry has more examples of memory being focused on more in Japan than in the United States. This means that Matthew Perry has been absorbed into Japan's culture. Perry forced himself into the history of Japan and later became a keystone in their modern culture.

Conclusion

To understand the man that reformed the United States Navy took time. Commodore Matthew Calbraith Perry had little written about him, even though he was an integral part America's early history. Perry fought in the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. He fought piracy and the slave trade in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean seas. Perry helped revolutionize the United States Navy's warships and the training of naval personnel. At the end of his career he once again answered the call for America by negotiating a trade treaty with Japan. After all of this, the memory of Perry has become weak over the decades. His legacy is reduced to a brief paragraph for the American public in history textbooks. What ended up causing the American people to forget Perry gradually over time?

Many of the works that mention Commodore Perry reveal a possible cause for his memory to fade. A majority of the sources infer how Perry's career and American imperialism became intertwined. All of the biographies chronologically map Perry's career. That career begins with young Lieutenant Perry helping quell the slave trade in the Mediterranean and Caribbean. From there, he helped establish and protect an American colony in Africa. Soon after, he claimed Key West for the United States, apparently without orders to do so. Perry then found himself enforcing American views in Mexico as he laid siege to various Mexican vessels and cities during the Mexican American War. Lastly, he traveled three-quarters-the-way around the world to Japan to strong-arm a trade deal. A majority of Perry's career was enforcing America's imperialistic whims.

When it came to how Perry is remembered in biographies, there are only three. Each one explores Perry's career, but they go about it in different ways. Barrows and Morison try to show every moment in Perry's life and career. Schroeder only focuses on the significant moments in Perry's career. Even as he discusses this he does not go into as many details as Barrows and Morison.

American textbooks educated American children about Commodore Perry, but recently, he has been left out. When textbooks did cover Perry, his trip to Japan was their singular focus. Because most commonly used American history textbooks overlook the War of 1812 and the Mexican American War, it is not difficult to understand how they came to this conclusion. Omitting these seemingly simple events Perry goes from joining the navy directly to opening Japan for trade. To them, the last years of his career does not matter. Unfortunately, the wars had a great influence on Perry, and the reason he was chosen for that final tour of duty. The Beard's textbook described Perry's excursion as "opportunities to garner in large profits from foreign trade."¹⁵⁹ They further portrayed Perry as one of the "ambitious naval officers."¹⁶⁰ The Beard's viewed Perry as someone the United States used to expand America's borders and its influence.

In the century following Perry's expedition to Japan, his appearance in newspapers came in waves. Perry had several articles championing him when he first returned from Japan. Then again when he died in 1858. His memory faded until the Second World War, when the United States was at war with the Japanese. Perry's exploits and fame began to reappear when America and Japan met to sign the treaty to

¹⁵⁹ Beard et al., *A Basic History of the United States*, 337.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 337.

end the war. Symbolically Commodore Matthew Perry could be seen as founder of foreign relations between the United States and Japan.

The memory of Matthew Perry appears in all of the Japanese histories. Hero or villain, Perry is known to most Japanese students. The texts may be different and may be exaggerated, but he is important enough to their culture to endure. Some histories started with Perry arriving in Japan and explain how Japan changed after he left. Others discuss the full history of Japan and, once Perry arrives, they show how the culture changed. After Perry, the Tokugawa Shogunate came to an end, the samurai class was reformed by the new Meiji government, and Japan started to westernize. Some of the histories are like McClain's, who explains how the Japanese remembered Perry in the Meiji Era and during the Second World War. At times, Perry is looked at as the man that helped create the modernization of Japan. More often, these Japanese histories portrayed Perry initially as a devil or the man that destroyed Japan.

Commodore Matthew Perry has been remembered in other various types of Japanese popular media. Some portrayed Perry's actions as good for Japan's trade and helped modernize Japan. Other works of fiction claim the Commodore is an evil man that ruined Japan and its culture. There are a rare few, like the anime *Rurouni Kenshin*, that sees Perry as both good and evil.

After all of the research, there is one common moment that is always recalled. All of these works revolve around Perry and Japan. No matter how detailed their appraisal of Perry's career, Japan becomes the primary focus when remembering Perry. Commodore Perry's trip to Japan was one of the most significant moments in his career, but it is not often considered an important event in American history.

What has caused Matthew Perry to fade in the memory of the American people? It is understandable to see that imperialism and Matthew Perry's career are entwined. But was Matthew Perry imperialistic, or was he following the orders from the American government? There is not a lot of evidence that Perry acted of his own accord to advance America's imperialistic views. It appears Perry was the tool that America used to advance its imperialistic views. With Commodore Matthew Perry enforcing American ideology around the world, American pushed its views onto other countries around the globe.

Even Matthew Perry's involvement in the expansion and professionalization of the navy might be read as imperialistic. His push to modernize the navy, however, it was done through necessity. He saw the fledgling American navy being outperformed time and time again by advanced foreign navies. His love for the institution and for naval philosophy, provided motivation for him to demand improvements. Advancement in design and training is crucial for the American navy, and the growth of the navy helps push American imperialism.

We know there is a difference between memory and history. Some historical figures like Franklin, Washington, and Jefferson, have risen above history to become a part of collective memory. These figures have become legends for an American identity that embodies the way many Americans think about themselves. Many others, like Matthew Perry, made historical contributions but never became immortalized in America's popular memory. This thesis suggests that timing played a significant role. Perry was of paramount importance in Americas two forgotten wars. His role during the imperial expansion for America makes him problematic. The modern American identity

has changed in that people want to believe that America fights for their views, without forcing these values on others around the globe.

Usually history is considered so valuable that society holds it in high esteem. The stories and legends that make up its culture is full of heroes with larger than life personalities. These men and women are remembered and celebrated throughout the generations. After all of this discussion, it looks like Commodore Matthew Perry will remain a part of America's history but will not be remembered by the masses.

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