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## ***Through an Officer's Eyes* Offers Rare Glimpse into the Late-1800s U.S. Army**

MACKINAW CITY, MICH. — *Through an Officer's Eyes: The Photo Album of Edward B. Pratt, U.S. Army 1873-1902*, the newest title published by Mackinac State Historic Park and authored by Curator of History Craig Wilson, illustrates the experiences of an infantry officer in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Throughout his three decades as an officer Pratt was stationed at outposts around the world, including Fort Mackinac. His experiences with the people and places he encountered are shared through the pictures he took, which capture the essence of his time in the army and give insight into an army officer's life.

The photo album was most likely assembled by someone in Pratt's family and was later donated to the Parks in the early 1990s. After being in the parks' collection for 30 years, the album has now been formally published for the public to view.

According to Wilson, this book provides a unique opportunity to see the development of an early officer's career and personal life. It is unusual to have an entire album of pictures to analyze, so it's interesting to step into Pratt's daily life and watch it unfold.

“He’s not special in any way. He was very average,” said Wilson. “[The album] gives a candid look into the army.” The ordinary and uncontrived nature of the photos is an intriguing aspect of the album, Wilson added, that showcases normal life in the army.

The album not only shows the common life of an officer, but it also provides an interesting snapshot into Mackinac’s history. As a collective, the pictures create a cohesive story and present additional documentary evidence to Fort Mackinac’s later years in operation.

Wilson is the Curator of History for Mackinac State Historic Parks. He worked as an historical interpreter at Fort Mackinac while pursuing academic studies at Michigan Technological University, from which he holds a B.S. in anthropology and an M.S. in industrial archaeology. He joined the permanent staff of Mackinac State Historic Parks in 2011. He resides in Mackinaw City.

*Through an Officer’s Eyes: The Photo Album of Edward B. Pratt, U.S. Army 1873-1902* is available at all Mackinac State Historic Parks museum stores, or by mail by calling (231) 436-4100. It retails for \$32.95. More information can be found at [mackinacparks.com](http://mackinacparks.com). A downloadable version of this release can be found [here](#).

*Mackinac State Historic Parks, a family of living history museums and parks in northern Michigan’s Straits of Mackinac, is an agency within the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Its sites—which are accredited by the American Alliance of Museums—include Fort Mackinac, the Biddle House, The Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Art Museum, Historic Downtown Mackinac, and Mackinac Island State Park on Mackinac Island, and Colonial Michilimackinac, Old Mackinac Point Lighthouse, Historic Mill Creek Discovery Park and Michilimackinac State Park in Mackinaw City. Mackinac State Historic Parks is governed by the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, established in 1895 to protect, preserve and present the parks’ rich historic and natural resources for the education and recreation of future generations. Visitor information is available at (231) 436-4100 or on the web at [www.mackinacparks.com](http://www.mackinacparks.com).*

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