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Before Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919) became America's President, he served in the military. This image depicts him as a Colonel, during the Spanish-American War, wearing his Rough Rider uniform. He was part of the 1st Cavalry, U.S. Volunteers (hence the U.S.V. on his collar). This picture, circa 1898, is part of the Signal Corps Photographs of American Military Activity and is maintained by the U.S. National Archives (Identifier: 530951). Click on the image for a better view.

In front of the American Museum of Natural History, in New York City, is an impressive statue of a man on a horse. Who is he? Why was this person chosen to "welcome" visitors as they enter the museum?

The statue depicts Theodore R. Roosevelt, Jr., America's twenty-sixth president, astride his horse, Texas. He is known, among *many* other things, as:

- TR;
- Teddy (a nickname he disliked but after whom the "Teddy Bear" was originally named);
- A face on Mt. Rushmore;
- The driving force behind the Panama Canal;
- A passionate conservationist and student of natural history;
- A Colonel in the Rough Riders;
- Governor of New York;
- Badlands hunter and cowboy;
- Loving husband and father of six children;

- Nobel Peace Prize winner. (He was the first American to win a [Nobel Prize](#) in any category.)

In fact, TR's [disparate careers](#) provided fodder for contemporary cartoonists.

His unexpected rise to the presidency began when his career in New York politics ended. Thinking it would be better to have this man-with-different-views working at the national (not the state) level, New York Republican leaders urged President McKinley to pick TR as his [running mate](#) in the [1900 presidential election](#). (The sitting Vice President, [Garret Hobart](#), had died in late 1899.)

But ...

- Who could have imagined that a deranged assassin would shoot [William McKinley](#) six months after his second election?
- Who would have thought that TR - [at age 42](#) - would become America's youngest chief executive?
- Who could have predicted that a [Roosevelt presidency](#) would create a significant turning point in American history?

[Teddy Roosevelt's life](#) was filled with such twists and turns, joys and sorrows. He was smitten with [Alice Hathaway Lee](#), and they were married soon after his 1880 graduation from Harvard University. They had a little daughter, also named [Alice](#), who was born on the 12th of February, 1884. When the baby was two days old, TR lost his wife - [and his mother](#) - on the same day.

Alice had Bright's Disease, a kidney ailment, which was undiagnosed because of her pregnancy. [Devastated](#) - the link takes you to his diary entry for that day - Roosevelt could not bear to speak his wife's name again.

Later, he married a [longtime friend](#) - [Edith Kermit Carrow](#) - with whom he had five more children. He and [his family](#) lived in a 23-room mansion, called [Sagamore Hill](#), overlooking Oyster Bay Harbor and Long Island Sound in [Oyster Bay](#), New York.

Always an adventurer, TR and his [son Kermit](#) gave the American Natural History Museum some of the specimen collected on their [African safari](#). During a 1914 trip to Brazil, where he and Kermit [explored the River of Doubt](#) (later renamed Rio Roosevelt), TR became ill with a fever which may have contributed to his sudden and untimely death, at age 60, on 6 January 1919.

We can still hear TR's voice and see him in [silent movies](#). A few sound recordings of his speeches survive. Let's listen as he explains his beliefs and political philosophy.

- From [Social and Industrial Justice](#), a speech given at a time when [child labor in America](#) was common: "We hold that the night labor of women and children is abnormal and should be prohibited..." (For this segment, move the cursor to 3:10 into the tape.)
- From [The Right of the People to Rule](#), an [address TR gave](#) at Carnegie Hall, New York City, on 20 March 1912:

I believe in the right of the people to rule. I believe that the majority of the plain people of the United States will, day in and day out, make fewer mistakes in governing themselves than any smaller class or body of men, no matter what their training, will make in trying to govern them. (For these segments, listen to the beginning of the tape, then move the cursor to 2:52.)

The man who spoke those words would have been pleased that it is *his* statue welcoming every visitor to the [museum](#) he so loved.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/TEDDY-and-TEX-Night-at-the-Museum>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](#)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/TEDDY-and-TEX-Night-at-the-Museum>

Media Stream



Front of the American Museum of Natural History

Image online, courtesy the Jackson County Republican Women.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Front-of-the-American-Museum-of-Natural-History>



Theodore R. Roosevelt, Jr. - Photo

This photo is from the U.S. Library of Congress. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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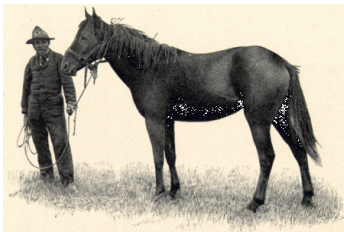


American Museum of Natural History

Image online, courtesy pbase.com website.

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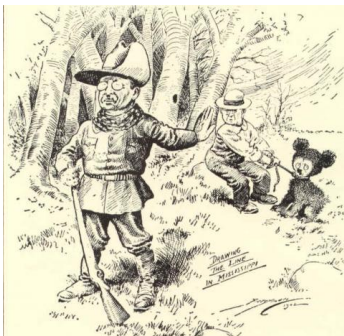


Texas - Theodore Roosevelt's Horse

Image online, courtesy the [bartleby.com](http://www.bartleby.com) website.

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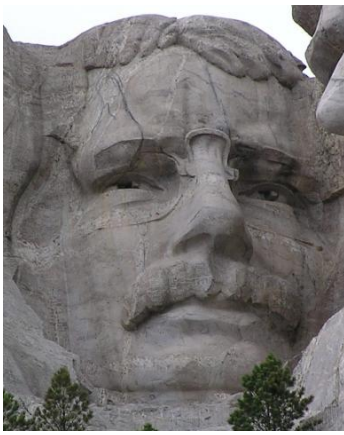


Teddy Bear - Named After President Roosevelt

"Drawing the Line in Mississippi," online courtesy the U.S. National Archives.

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Roosevelt on Mount Rushmore

This photograph was taken by Scott Catron in May, 2004. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.
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Mt. Rushmore

This photo was taken by Jim Bowen in August, 2005. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.
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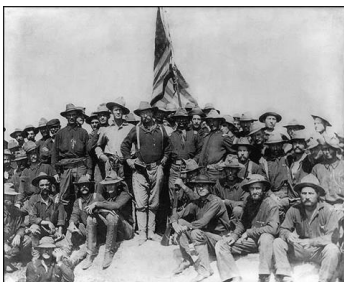


Theodore Roosevelt and the Panama Canal

Image online, courtesy the theodore-roosevelt.com website.

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Colonel Theodore Roosevelt at San Juan Hill

Image online, courtesy the U.S. National Park Service website.

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Theodore Roosevelt - Political Cartoons

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Theodore Roosevelt - Badlands Hunter

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Theodore-Roosevelt-Badlands-Hunter>



Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. - Family

Image online, courtesy the U.S. Library of Congress.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Theodore-Roosevelt-Jr.-Family>



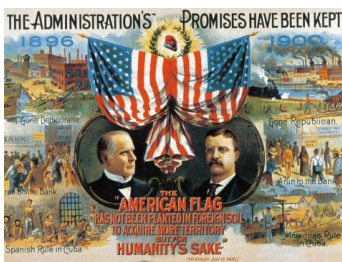
Theodore Roosevelt and His Various Careers - Cartoon

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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McKinley-Roosevelt - Campaign Poster

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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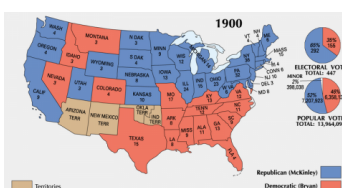


1900 - Election Poster

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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1900 Presidential Election - Map Detail

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Garret Hobart

Photo online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

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View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Garret-Hobart->



Alice Hathaway Lee

Photo online, courtesy U.S. National Park Service.

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View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Alice-Hathaway-Lee->



Martha Mittie Roosevelt - TR's Mother

Image online, courtesy Library of Congress.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Martha-Mittie-Roosevelt-TR-s-Mother>

"MY MOTHER, MARTHA BULLOCK, WAS A SWEET, GRACIOUS, BEAUTIFUL, SOUTHERN WOMAN, A DELIGHTFUL COMPANION AND BELOVED BY EVERYBODY."



Edith Kermit Carrow Roosevelt

Photo online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

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Sagamore Hill

Photo online, courtesy U.S. National Park Service.

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Oyster Bay, New York - Map Locator

Map image online, courtesy City Data.

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Oyster Bay, New York in 1900 - Drawing

Illustration online, courtesy U.S. National Archives.

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Kermit Roosevelt

Photo online, courtesy U.S. National Park Service.

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TEDDY and TEX

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Theodore Roosevelt - Right of the People to Rule

Sound recording, Library of Congress.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Theodore-Roosevelt-Right-of-the-People-to-Rule>