

*Care Deeply*  
*Citizenship*

*Dare Greatly*

*Nature*  
*Think Boldly*  
*Live*  
*Passionately*



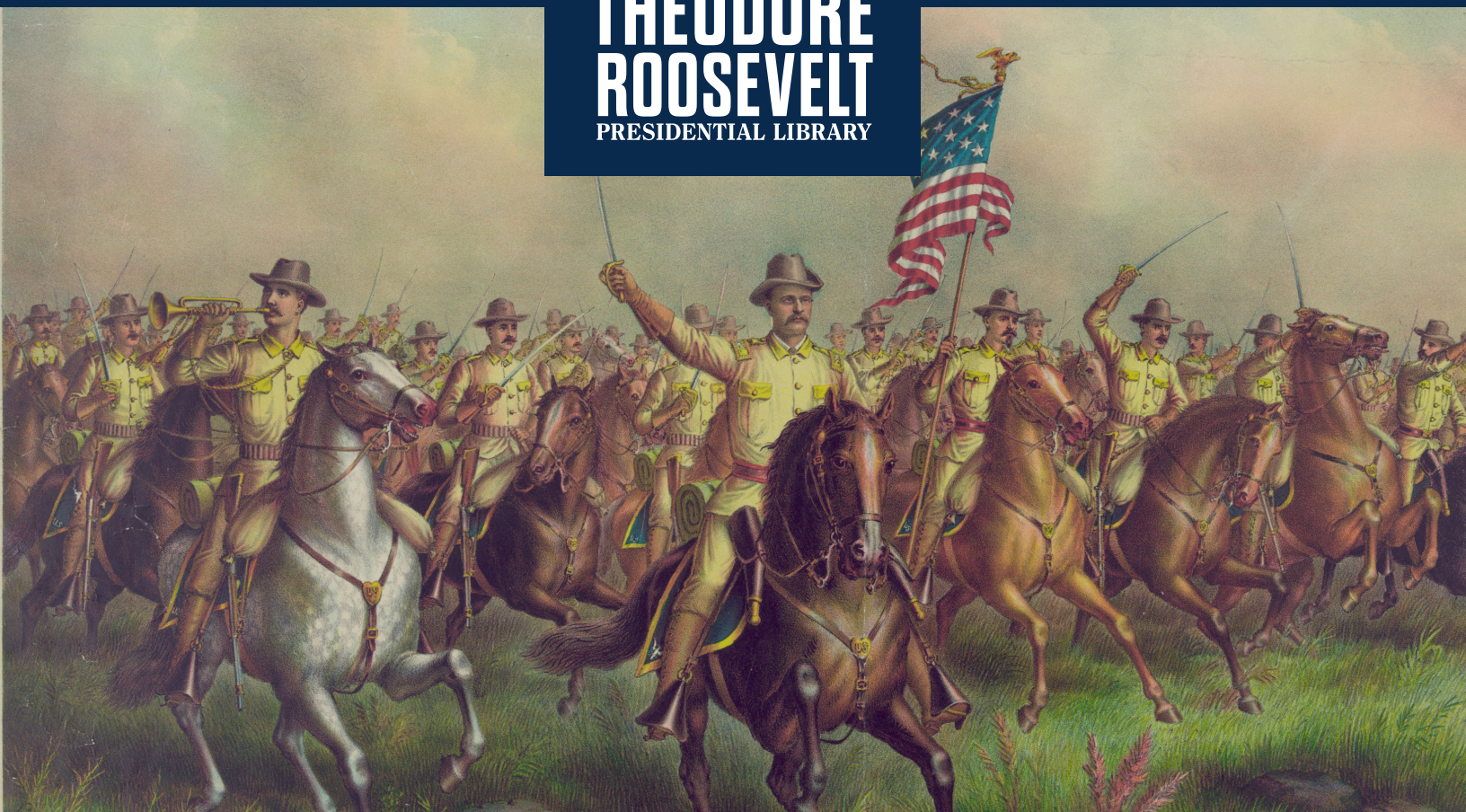
# THEODORE ROOSEVELT

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

Resource Packet

ROUGH RIDERS





## ROUGH RIDERS

After the sinking of the *USS Maine* on February 15, 1898, the United States declared war on Spain. Thirty-nine-year-old Theodore Roosevelt was eager to join the fight. On April 25, 1898, President William McKinley appointed him Lieutenant Colonel of the First US Volunteer Cavalry, which became known as the Rough Riders. The official uniform of the unit was a slouch hat, blue flannel shirt, brown trousers and leggings, and polka-dot bandanas. All in all, there were 1,060 Rough Riders.

On July 1, 1898, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders received the order to advance toward the San Juan River, which they eventually forded. The Rough Riders were ordered to support the US Army regulars attacking nearby San Juan Hill. Mounted on his horse, Texas, Roosevelt advanced up Kettle Hill with other Rough Riders and Ninth Infantry troops, penetrating the Spanish line. Eighty-nine Rough Riders lost their lives in the fight to gain control of San Juan Hill and Kettle Hill.

Primary sources pertaining to the Rough Riders and the Spanish-American War are available in collections across the country. Students and teachers can find over 70 pages of primary sources in the [Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library](#) related exclusively to the Rough Riders. **This resource packet includes 15 primary sources related to Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders.**

## Resource Packet: Rough Riders

### 1 Muster-in Roll of Theodore Roosevelt in the 1st Regiment of U.S. Volunteers



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The document is a muster-in roll for Theodore Roosevelt, a Lieutenant Colonel, called into the service of the United States Army by Colonel Leonard D. Owen on May 5, 1898. It includes fields for name, rank, company, and date of muster. The document is signed by the Muster Officer and the Adjutant General.

**Source 1** is the muster-in roll of Theodore Roosevelt in the 1st Regiment of the US Volunteers, which became known as the Rough Riders. Roosevelt's commission date is listed as May 5, 1898, for a term of two years. Encourage students to look for interesting nuances about the document. For example, the word "cavalry" is added after the words "United States Volunteers." What else can they find?

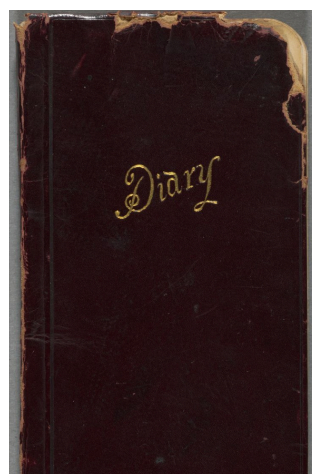
**DATE:** 05/06/1898 **CREATED BY:** United States Army

Courtesy of Harvard College Library, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, MS Am 1541 (310), Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University

### 2 Diary of Theodore Roosevelt from April 16 to August 20, 1898



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**Source 2** is the diary Theodore Roosevelt kept from April to August 1898 while training for and fighting in the Spanish-American War. There are entries from San Antonio, Texas; Tampa, Florida; and Santiago, Cuba. The diary discusses the activities of the Rough Riders and comments on individual soldiers. Encourage students to look at dates of interest like July 1, 1898, where Roosevelt writes, "Rose at 4. Big battle." What can they learn about the Spanish-American War from Roosevelt's perspective?

**DATE:** 1898 **CREATED BY:** Theodore Roosevelt

Courtesy of Harvard College Library, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, MS Am 1454.55 (12a), Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University

### 3 Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Kermit Roosevelt



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The image shows a handwritten letter on aged paper. The text is written in cursive and includes the date "May 16 1898" and the salutation "Blond Kermit,". The letter discusses the Rough Riders and mentions "young mountain lion in camp."

**Source 3** is a letter from Theodore Roosevelt to his son Kermit—then eight years old—that the elder Roosevelt wrote from camp outside of San Antonio, Texas. Encourage students to see what they discover about camp life. As one example, Roosevelt mentions the Rough Riders keeping a "young mountain lion in camp." How does this change their perspective of the Rough Riders, if at all?

**DATE:** 05/16/1898 **CREATED BY:** Theodore Roosevelt

Courtesy of Harvard College Library, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, MS Am 1541.1 (0031), Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University



## Resource Packet: Rough Riders

### 4 Theodore Roosevelt and Leonard Wood at Army campsite



[Download](#)



**Source 4** is a photograph of Theodore Roosevelt and Leonard Wood, the leaders of the Rough Riders, at camp outside of San Antonio, Texas. Encourage students to see what they can discover about camp life from this photograph and connections to what Roosevelt mentioned in other sources like his diary and letters to family. Does camp look like a place where they'd like to stay?

**DATE:** 05/1898      **CREATED BY:** David P. Barr

*Courtesy of Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*

### 5 Theodore Roosevelt in Rough Riders uniform



[Download](#)



**Source 5** is a photograph of Theodore Roosevelt in the Rough Riders uniform. Encourage students to pay attention to the small details like the letters on Roosevelt's collar. What can they learn by noticing small details?

**DATE:** c. 1898–1900      **CREATED BY:** Pacific & Atlantic Photos, Inc.

*Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*

### 6 Colonel Theodore Roosevelt in Texas



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**Source 6** is a photograph of Theodore Roosevelt with two Rough Riders in front of Mission Concepción in San Antonio, Texas. Encourage them to look at a modern-day photograph of Mission Concepción. Can they notice any changes in the mission's exterior in the past 100+ years?

**DATE:** 1898      **CREATED BY:** Unknown

*Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*



## Resource Packet: Rough Riders

### 7 Rough Riders dining in camp



[Download](#)



**Source 7** is a photograph of Theodore Roosevelt, Leonard Wood, and 14 Rough Riders seated at a makeshift dinner table with horses and a servant off to the side. Encourage students to describe what they see in the picture. What can they learn about race relations in the late 1800s?

**DATE:** 1898

**CREATED BY:** David P. Barr

*Courtesy of Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*

### 8 Theodore Roosevelt as a Rough Rider at Tampa, Florida



[Download](#)



**Source 8** is a photograph of Theodore Roosevelt at camp in Tampa, Florida. Encourage students to compare photographs of camp in San Antonio, Texas, and Tampa, Florida, and explain how they are similar and different. Which camp would they pick to stay in?

**DATE:** 1898

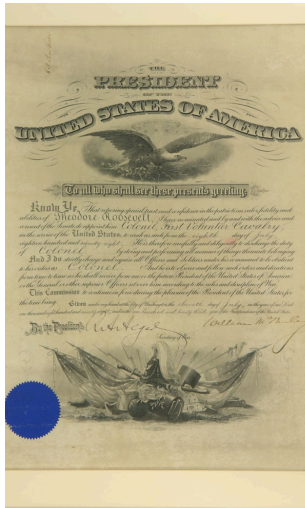
**CREATED BY:** Underwood & Underwood

*Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*

### 9 Commission of Theodore Roosevelt as Colonel, First Volunteer Cavalry



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**Source 9** is the commission of Theodore Roosevelt as colonel of the Rough Riders signed by President William McKinley and Secretary of War Russell A. Alger. Before the Rough Riders fought on Kettle Hill on July 1, 1898, Roosevelt had been appointed colonel. This commission made it official on July 11, 1898. Encourage students to note components of the commission that interest them. Did they notice there was a special section for the number of years since the independence of the United States from Great Britain?

**DATE:** 07/11/1898

**CREATED BY:** President William McKinley + Secretary of War Russell A. Alger

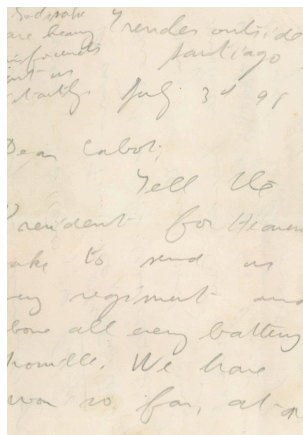
*Courtesy of Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*



## 10 Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to Henry Cabot Lodge



[Download](#)



**Source 10** is a letter from Theodore Roosevelt to his friend Henry Cabot Lodge, a senator from Massachusetts. Roosevelt reflects two days after the Battle of San Juan Hill: “I commanded my regiment; I think I may say with honor. We lost a quarter of our men.” Encourage students to notice other nuances about the letter. What can they learn about the battle from a letter written just two days after it?

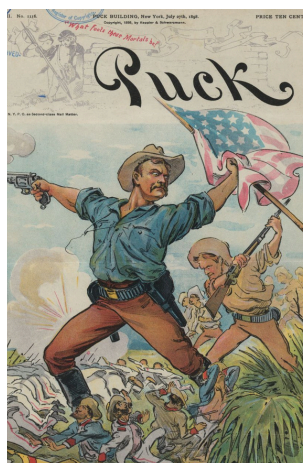
**DATE:** 07/03/1898 **CREATED BY:** Theodore Roosevelt

*Courtesy of Massachusetts Historical Society, Lodge-Roosevelt Correspondence, MS N-1584, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*

## 11 The rough riders



[Download](#)



**Source 11** is a cartoon of Theodore Roosevelt leading the Rough Riders into battle with a caption that reads, “They are rough on the Spaniards, whether they ride or walk.” Shortly after the Battle of San Juan Hill, Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders’ charge up Kettle Hill captured the American imagination, and depictions of it appeared in newspapers across the country. Encourage students to compare the cartoon with other original sources. How does the cartoon both reflect reality and obscure it?

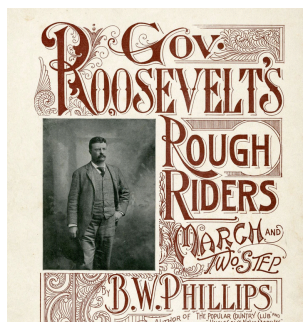
**DATE:** 07/27/1898 **CREATED BY:** Udo J. Keppler

*Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*

## 12 Gov. Roosevelt’s Rough Riders



[Download](#)



**Source 12** is a score for a march and two-step titled “Gov. Roosevelt’s Rough Riders.” Encourage students to ponder its significance even though there are no words. If possible, play the score so the students get a feel for the music. How can students tell the Rough Riders inspired this score?

**DATE:** 1898 **CREATED BY:** B. W. Phillips

*Courtesy of Gregory A. Wynn Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*



## Resource Packet: Rough Riders

### 13 Envelope “addressed” to Theodore Roosevelt



[Download](#)



**Source 13** is an envelope intended for Theodore Roosevelt with an ink and pencil sketch of Roosevelt the Rough Rider in lieu of an address. Encourage students to compare this drawing of Roosevelt in his uniform with photographs. What are the similarities and differences?

**DATE:** 09/26/1898 **CREATED BY:** Unknown

*Courtesy of Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*

### 14 Col. Theodore Roosevelt in uniform



[Download](#)



**Source 14** is a photograph taken of Theodore Roosevelt in his Rough Riders uniform. Encourage students to make observations about the differences between this photograph—which occurred after the fighting—and other photographs that were taken before Roosevelt and the Rough Riders charged up Kettle Hill.

**DATE:** 10/26/1898 **CREATED BY:** Unknown

*Courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*

### 15 Color lithograph of Theodore Roosevelt in Rough Rider uniform



[Download](#)



**Source 15** is a color lithograph of Theodore Roosevelt in his uniform. Encourage students to think about what color adds to a picture of Roosevelt in his uniform. Do they prefer a black-and-white photograph or this color lithograph?

**DATE:** 1899 **CREATED BY:** Howard Chandler Christy

*Courtesy of Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library, Dickinson State University*



### IMPORTANT DATES

- **February 15, 1898:** An explosion sinks the battleship *USS Maine* in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, killing 266 of the 354 crew members.
- **April 25, 1898:** The United States declares war on Spain, and President William McKinley appoints Theodore Roosevelt Lieutenant Colonel of the First US Volunteer Cavalry, which became known as the “Rough Riders.”
- **July 1, 1898:** The Battle of San Juan Heights takes place, and Theodore Roosevelt and the Rough Riders charged up Kettle Hill.
- **December 10, 1898:** The United States and Spanish governments sign the Treaty of Paris, officially ending the Spanish-American War, guaranteeing the independence of Cuba and ceding Guam and Puerto Rico to the United States.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

#### Books

- Gardner, Mark Lee. *Rough Riders: Theodore Roosevelt, His Cowboy Regiment, and the Immortal Charge Up San Juan Hill*. New York: William Morrow, 2016.
- Risen, Clay. *The Crowded Hour: Theodore Roosevelt, The Rough Riders, and the Dawn of the American Century*. New York: Scribner, 2019.
- Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Rough Riders*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899.

#### Articles

- *The Rough Riders*. Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal. <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record?libID=o308023>. Theodore Roosevelt Digital Library. Dickinson State University.
- “TR’s Slouch Hat.” Theodore Roosevelt Center Blog. Last modified August 29, 2022. <https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Blog/Item/TRs%20Slouch%20Hat>.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

**Research the life of one of TR’s Rough Riders:** Choose from a variety of different men included in a [list](#) on the Spanish American War Centennial Website as well as two lists on Family Search for [A-L](#) and [M-Z](#).

**Come up with your own Rough Riders uniform:** If you were in charge of a regiment, what uniform would your soldiers wear? Draw a uniform for your Rough Riders.