



"DE-LIGHTED!"

This was long before the word became a trade mark of T. R., but he must have been delighted to guard the captured river thieves in Dakota—just as he was delighted to be a deputy sheriff in his ranching days. In many of T. R.'s early photographs appears a delightfully stilted air of posing. He was never camera-shy

▷▷ Roosevelt: A Biography ◁◁

II—The Picturesque Gentleman Cowhand

After the tragic death of Alice Lee, Roosevelt hiked to the Bad Lands to forget and there lived a picturesque, sometimes almost turbulent life, with fist fights and rumors of impending duels. But politics kept calling and finally he left the West, as will be told in next week's installment, to resume the political career which led him finally to the Presidency.

By HENRY F. PRINGLE

found it, in the jagged prairies of the waste country. He told Bill Sewall, a Maine guide whom he had known for years and whom he attempted to transform into a Western cow hand, that his future was a matter of no concern. He might do a little writing; he made it plain that life stretched on as barren as the dusty prairie. Sewall disagreed. He pointed out that Roosevelt had an infant daughter "to live for."

"Her aunt can take care of her better than I can," was the answer.

There were, however, qualities in Roosevelt which halted introspection soon after it had started. He could surrender momentarily to depression, but it could not prevail against an innate robustness, against his adolescence. Again, I am conscious of the presumption which lies in charting the human mind. Let Roosevelt's contradictions speak for themselves. It must have been in the summer or fall of 1884, in one chapter of a book published the following year, that Roosevelt voiced

his true philosophy: "Black Care rarely sits behind a rider whose pace is fast enough." He must have written this within a few months of that other utterance, in the memorial to Alice Lee: "And when my heart's dearest died, the light went from my life forever." In December, 1886, he was married again.

Roosevelt could erect barriers against thoughts, and memories, too, that troubled him. Not primarily an optimistic person, he none the less tinted the past with rose color.

"Ah," remarked James Bryce, one day, when Roosevelt's name had come into a conversation with Owen Wister, "but Roosevelt wouldn't always look at a thing, you know."



IN HUNTING COSTUME, 1884
Obviously a posed photograph

It was wiser not to look at things in late 1884 as he faced a life remote from the one he had known. It was better to soften retrospection with a note of the whimsical, to live for the moment, to purchase the gaudiest of cowboy outfits, to mount his horse and take down his gun.

"My cattle are looking well," he wrote to Lodge, "and in fact the Statesman (?) of

UNDOUBTEDLY Isaac Hunt was right; Roosevelt "hiked away to the wilderness to get away from the world . . . went out there a broken-hearted man." Cattle ranching had been no more than a potentially interesting avocation when, in 1883, he made arrangements to buy a herd. He intended, probably, to make visits once or twice a year, but there is nothing to indicate that he planned to live in the Dakota Bad Lands. Even after the tragedy of February, 1884, and the bitter disappointment of the Chicago convention, Roosevelt went West for only one reason: he had nothing else to do. A neighbor asked whether he intended to make ranching his business.

"No," he answered. "For the present I am out here because I cannot get up any enthusiasm for the Republican candidate, and it seems to me that punching cattle is the best way to avoid campaigning."

He sought peace, and never quite

the past has been merged, alas, I fear for good, into the cowboy of the present."

Soon melancholy had quite vanished, and sorrow became as blunted as the sorrow of a child in the face of a new excitement. Yet for all that the West exhilarated him, Roosevelt went quickly back to public life when the opportunity came. The roar and the turmoil and the strife of politics were in his blood—and even the whirl of the roundup and the stalking of a grizzly could not take their place.

Life in the open had been part of the program whereby, as a boy, Roosevelt had built up his health. During a college recess in 1876 he went to the Maine woods with Arthur Cutler, his former tutor, and some cousins. William Wingate Sewall, the Maine woodsman whom he was to take West in 1884, was engaged as guide for the party. He recalled an eighteen-year-old youth who was "not remarkably cautious about expressing his opinion," but who was courageous and plucky. Sewall had been warned that the boy must be protected against overexertion, but the protection was declined. Roosevelt was already finding great satisfaction in physical pre-eminence. "... I found I could carry



IN THE OPEN

station called Little Missouri in the Dakota territory. He then had no idea of becoming a cattleman. He had gone to Little Missouri because of a letter written by Howard Eaton, who subsequently became famous as a dude rancher. This had declared the country unequalled for buffalo hunting, and Roosevelt's first demand was for a guide. After enduring considerable hardship, and experiencing excitement such as he had never before known, Roosevelt obtained his buffalo head. The important thing about this trip, however, was contact with Joe Ferris, his brother, Sylvane, and the latter's partner, A. W. Merrifield. He also met Gregor Lang, who dwelt on Little Cannonball Creek some fifty miles distant. These four men infected Roosevelt with en-

thusiasm for the cattle business. Before returning East that fall he had invested \$14,000. A year later he added \$26,000 and in April, 1885, he wrote a third check, this time for \$12,500. He was to lose nearly every cent of this \$52,500, but he never regretted the venture. The dividends were paid in intangibles.

"It was still the West in those days," Roosevelt wrote, and it was. Until recently, buffalo had roamed the Bad Lands in great numbers. The Indians who claimed the territory had capitulated only a few years before. The cattlemen had not arrived until 1882; the locomotives of the Northern Pacific were still a novelty to those who lived along the right of way. But by 1884 a boom was in progress. This was the land of plenty, enthusiasts said. This was the land where, somewhat mysteriously since there seemed to be no grass, cattle would

grow fat. The region was served by a great transcontinental railway which would ship cattle to such markets as Kansas City and Chicago at rates with which Texas and the rest of the Southwest could not compete. So men dreamed, as they consumed their liquor in the saloons that were the outposts of American civilization.

Little Missouri, which called itself a town, had a hotel, the Pyramid Park, near the railroad tracks. It had a dis-

orderly house, another outpost of American civilization. As in every frontier community, there was a ramshackle general store, in this case run by a Swede who supplied comic relief to the scene. A few houses dotted the barren landscape. How the residents of this prairie metropolis made a living remains a mystery. Some were guides, waiting for just such prey as young Roosevelt. Others lived by the wits they possessed, and often went hungry.

Little Missouri itself viewed with a jaundiced eye the optimistic boosters who were to make the land flow with honey. They viewed with particularly acute suspicion a young Frenchman who arrived in March, 1883. He explained that he was Antoine de Vallombrosa, the Marquis de Mores. He was the son of a Duke, a graduate of Saint Cyr, the husband of Medora von Hoffman, who was the daughter of a New York banker. The Marquis had heard of Little Missouri, he said, through a friend who had hunted there. He was, according to those who remembered him in later years, a striking fellow, "black of hair and moustache, twenty-five or twenty-six years old, athletic, vigorous and commanding."

The Marquis had large ideas. He told those who would listen that he intended to build an abattoir at Little Missouri and ship steers and hogs East after they had been slaughtered. The savings would be great. De Mores said that he had at least \$10,000,000 behind him, and before long he had formed the Northern Pacific Refrigerator Company. Little Missouri, however, had no use for a business prosperity which might bring sheriffs and jails and thereby disturb the accustomed routine of life. Coöperation was not forthcoming and so, in disgust,

de Mores started a new community on the other bank of the river. With true Gallic sentimentality, he named it Medora, in honor of his wife. This was on April 1, 1883, and the future seemed bright. De Mores actually spent



WILMOT DOW



MALTESE CROSS RANCH HOUSE

Photo by C. R. Greer, Hamilton, O.

heavier loads and travel farther and faster than either of them," he boasted, regarding his cousins, "and could stand rough work better." Sewall was even more impressed by the manner in which the studious-appearing youth "got in right with the people" wherever he went. He established contacts with woodsmen, lumberjacks and trappers.

Roosevelt first saw the Far West, as we have noted, in September, 1883, when he dropped off the train at the

Photographs by courtesy of the Roosevelt Memorial Association, 28 East Twentieth Street, New York

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some \$300,000 for warehouses along the route of the Northern Pacific. By February, 1884, Medora had a weekly newspaper, *The Bad Lands Cowboy*. The following June an item appeared among the personal notices:

Theodore Roosevelt, the young New York reformer, made us a very pleasant call Monday in full cowboy regalia. New York will certainly lose him for some time at least, as he is perfectly charmed with our free Western life. . . .

Roosevelt became the owner of two ranches, the first at Chimney Butte, seven or eight miles from Little Missouri's cluster of shacks, and more generally known as the Maltese Cross because of its brand. The other was the Elkhorn Ranch, twenty miles down the river. Sylvane Ferris and Merrifield had, when Roosevelt suggested it in 1883, agreed to become his partners in a cattle enterprise.

Ferris and Merrifield took care of Roosevelt's interests during the winter of 1883-84. They were at the Medora station when he returned on June 9, 1884. On the following morning all three rode to the Maltese Cross together and Roosevelt began, in earnest, the life of gentleman cowhand. A small cabin for his use had been added to the place; one of the rooms was to be a library and study. He had arranged to do some literary work between round-ups. The love of beauty, which had so marked Theodore Roosevelt as a child, and which had been so strangely lacking at Harvard, had returned. But he remembered, as much as the beauty, the vigorous life of his years in the West. He established himself with the cowboys whose riding, recklessness and exhibitionism he admired extravagantly. That Roosevelt, wearing eyeglasses and christened "Four-Eyes," was able to win their respect is no small tribute to his character. His somewhat precise tones, still flavored by exposure to Harvard culture, rang strangely in their ears. He did not smoke or drink. His worst profanity was an infrequent "damn," and his usual

ejaculation was "By Godfrey." The first time he took part in a roundup, some time during the summer of 1884, one or two hardened cowboys nearly fell from their saddles as he called in his high voice to one of the men:

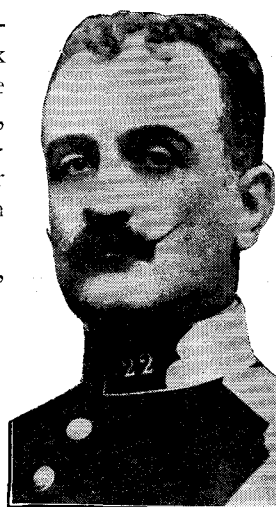
"Hasten forward quickly, there!"

The phrase became a classic in the Bad Lands. Riders passing distant ranches relayed it with guffaws. Strangers in Medora and Little Missouri saloons were puzzled as some thirsty customer ordered the bartender to "Hasten quickly" with his drink. Every one was eager to repeat the story.

Roosevelt's conception of a cowboy costume aroused additional merriment. "You would be amused to

see me," he wrote to Lodge—one of the few instances in which Roosevelt gave way to understatement—"in my broad sombrero hat, fringed and beaded buckskin shirt, horsehide chaparrajos or riding trousers, and cowboy boots, with braided bridle and silver spurs." To his older sister he confided that "I now look like a regular cowboy dandy, with all my equipment finished in the most expensive style." In addition to his colorful clothing he had a "pearl-hilted revolver and [a] beautifully finished Winchester rifle. . . . I feel ready for anything." On his return East in July, 1884, he was excessively patronizing to the effete young men of his acquaintance:

It would electrify some of my friends who have accused me of representing the kid-gloved element in politics if they could see me galloping over the plains, day in and day out . . . with a big sombrero on my head. For good, healthy exercise I would strongly recommend some of our gilded youth to go West and try a short course of riding bucking ponies and assisting at the branding of a lot of Texas steers.



ANTAGONIST

Relations between Roosevelt and his noble French neighbor, the Marquis de Mores, became so strained that cowboy gossip had them planning a duel with rifles, which never came off. But tart notes were exchanged

Photo by L. A. Huffman, Miles City, Mont.

On returning from this trip, on which he had announced his support of Blaine, Roosevelt brought Bill Sewall and his nephew, Will Dow, back with him, and prepared to transform them into cow hands. He had found that the Maltese Cross, located on one of the more traveled trails, was hardly a place where literary work could be done. So the two Maine guides built another house at Elkhorn. They also learned to ride horseback, amid jeers from the native westerners. They were intelligent men and they soon mastered the cattle business. But Sewall, with prophetic vision, looked at the increasingly parched landscape and insisted to Roosevelt that it was "not

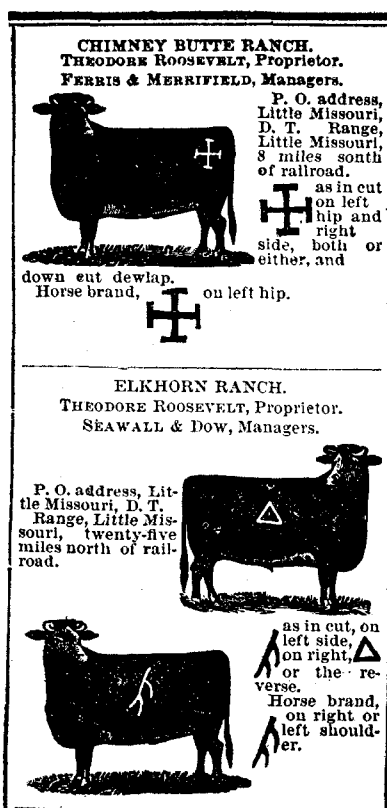
much of a cattle country."

Meanwhile, in the Bad Lands, there were demands that Roosevelt serve as one of the first Congressmen from the territory soon to become a state. The Mandan (Dakota) *Press* praised "this vigorous young Republican of the new school" and said that, should he run for office, signal honors would be his. Roosevelt had no desire for it. Either he still had aspirations in the East, which is probable, or he was disgusted with public life. His letters reflected merely his reluctant conclusion that he must assist in the Blaine campaign.

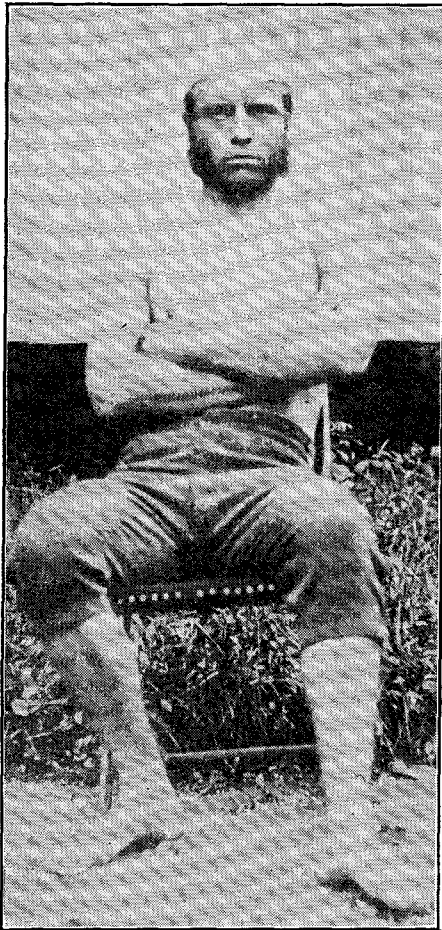
Grover Cleveland, Blaine, the Mugwumps, the tariff; all these must have seemed remote as Roosevelt watched the Bad Lands locked in winter. He had returned from his campaigning in November, 1884. Roosevelt would have been far more contented had he remained in the West throughout the winter of 1884-85. He did some hunting. He was active in organizing an association of stockmen which would inaugurate law and order and put down the cattle thieves. He was still restless, how-



BILL SEWALL



ROOSEVELT'S BRANDS



THE LIGHTWEIGHT BOXER

Roosevelt's skill as a boxer at Harvard, where he was runner-up for the championship, stood him in stead in the Bad Lands when he knocked out a tormentor with a single blow

ever. On December 20, 1884, he went East again, in order to be with his daughter at Christmas. While there, he began work on his series of hunting and ranching essays. He also dressed up in his cowboy costume and had some photographs taken. Facing the studio camera, with a painted backdrop behind him and imitation grass in the foreground, he leaned on his trusty rifle, assumed a fiercely western expression, and gazed out across imaginary prairies. One of the photographs was used as a frontispiece for his *Hunting Trips of a Ranchman*. He also found time, while in New York, to complete a lengthy article for *The Century* on *Phases of State Legislation*. This described his experiences of the past three years, and it did not increase his standing with the Republican machine in New York.

"Mayor Grace," he told Lodge, after returning to Medora in April, 1885, "wants me to take the position of President of the Board of Health. I don't know what to do about it."

He did nothing. During the next two years he was to be pulled this way and that way. Should he accept a nomination

for Mayor of New York? Should he spend a winter in Dakota or at home trying to write? Where was happiness to be found—in the western country that he professed to love so or among the milling crowds of the cities, whose allure he could never shake off? For the moment, in the spring of 1885, he was occupied with his literary work and his ranch. The cattle had survived the winter. At the Maltese Cross a half dozen men were now busy and Roosevelt's optimism rose again. He enjoyed the hard work. He treasured the respect which, despite his eccentricities, he had won from his hands. That spring he sent to Minnesota for still more steers, although Bill Sewall continued to protest that this was no country for cattle.

By summer, Medora was prospering. Joe Ferris, the brother of Roosevelt's partner, had opened a store. Brick houses were being built. There was a Catholic church, a barber shop, a drug store and a hardware store. One pioneer had built a roller skating rink where cowboys would stop after exhilarating hours in Bill Williams' saloon and delight their companions with plain and fancy skating. Bill Williams was the town Bad Man; its resident villain. He ran the faro game. He represented Sin, and sometimes he would stand in the doorway of his place and discharge his six-shooter.

Excessively moral himself, Roosevelt never failed to be fascinated by wickedness in others. "I am not in the least sensitive as to the past career of one of these Vikings of the border," he confided to Emerson Hough. He was particularly intrigued by "Hell Roaring Bill" Jones, so called to distinguish him from several

other Bill Joneses in the community, who was Sheriff at Medora during the boom days. Bill's profanity was an art-study in purple. Roosevelt never forgot the Sheriff, who in leisure moments had worked on the Maltese Cross as cowhand.

IN THE summer of 1903 he met the former guardian of the law, somewhat fallen in estate due to liquor, driving a team near Yellowstone Park. This brought back memories of the days in Medora, the days when there had been straight-shooting villains and all the world was adolescent. On his return to Washington, the President told his Secretary of State, John Hay, about "Hell Roaring Bill" and so entranced that connoisseur of good stories that he demanded a written version. It was duly supplied, and Hay read the letter "by a crackling brick fire . . . while a thunderstorm played a fitting obligato" at his country place in New Hampshire. Roosevelt had recalled a three-cornered conversation at Medora, some time in the '80's, with Sylvane Ferris and the Sheriff:

There was also a good deal of talk about a lunatic, and some cross-questioning brought out a story which cast light on the frontier theory of care for the insane. Sylvane began—"Well, the way was this. That lunatic was on the train and he up and shot the newsboy, and at first they wasn't going to do anything about it because they thought he just had it in for the newsboy. But someone said 'Why, he's plumb crazy and is liable to shoot one of us'—and they threw him off the train."

It was at Medora where this incident occurred . . . and Sheriff Bill Jones came forward. Here he took up the tale himself:

(Continued on Page 127)



ROOSEVELT'S NEIGHBORS—OLD TIMERS IN THE BAD LANDS

Photo by Ingersoll, St. Paul



It is legal. You can enjoy the full, matchless flavor and bouquet of the juice of California's finest wine-grapes in the full knowledge that you are not a law-breaker. This solves a great problem and fills a long-felt need. Section 29 of the National Prohibition Act permits it in your home. Our home delivery plan makes its complete enjoyment available to you in your own home without any fuss, bother or attention

THE PROMISE AND TWO OF THE PROMISERS

At the left, Mabel Willebrandt, former Assistant Attorney General in charge of prohibition prosecutions, and now counsel for the grape growers' cooperative, and right, Thomas C. C. Gregory, who helped to organize the growers. Above is a paragraph from the advertising of the organization



International

➤➤ "Grapes of Gall" ◀◀

California's Gift to A Noble Experiment

By RAY T. TUCKER

PROHIBITION, which wrecked so many thriving industries, including the manufacture of beer and whiskey, and the cultivation of rye, hops and barley, proved a boon and a boom to growers of grapes in Herbert Hoover's home state of California. It was one of the numerous vagaries of prohibition.

Vineyardists, who were about to tear out their terraced vines when the nation became dry, rubbed their eyes as orders for grapes poured in, not only from eastern cities where the foreign-born had been wont to press their own, but from all sections. People hitherto accustomed to stronger drink turned hopefully to wine. Acting upon advice subsequently given by Mabel Walker Willebrandt, the erstwhile political exponent of prohibition, they took to their cellars and cellarettes. Wines, for the moment, supplanted cocktails and highballs.

In the ensuing years California's acreage planted in grapes steadily increased, until by 1927 it was double the 1919 total—662,104 acres as against 322,000. More than 50,000 carloads of grapes were shipped to sinful sections annually, and it had become a \$60,000,000 industry. By 1928, however, the bubble broke. The expansion of the industry had been so rapid and so irregular that amateur wine-makers could not keep pace. Growers of grapes faced a \$10,000,000 loss for that single year, due to curtailment of markets and a drop of \$20 in the price per ton. There were "grape weeks," radio advertising and vaudeville

stunts designed to re-whet the American appetite for grapes, but to no avail.

Oddly enough, Coolidge prosperity was, in part, responsible for this depression. Foreign-born consumers, particularly of the Latin races, were imitating their American friends and investing in Wall Street with the result that their buying power for grapes declined. The younger set had developed the gin habit, and their parents, flush from profits in the market, were able to afford "stuff just off the ship." The brewers, largely as a result of the experiences of the grape industry, had begun to manufacture malt and wort extracts, and home-brew furnished competition. For all these reasons, the organizers and financiers of the Save-California-Grapes movement faced bankruptcy.

Then, for the first time, was it publicly admitted that the bulk of the grape crop since prohibition had been consumed in the making of wine. The California Vineyardists' Association blurted out the awful truth as it sought to organize 85 per cent. of the growers so that it could control both manufacture and distribution. With Mr. Hoover in the White House—or on his way there—his friends and associates found it not difficult to devise ways and means of salvaging their grapes that would be satisfactory to the federal government. Unlike producers of cotton and wheat, however, the California grape growers were not asked

to plow up one-third of their acreage.

Throughout California there were revival meetings at which the holy purpose of the new movement was explained in solemn terms. It was, the leaders insisted, designed only to control shipments so that the Association could assure the incoming California administration that the grapes were going into legal rather than bootleg channels. Donald D. Conn, dominant figure in the organization, and Paul Garrett, a New York manufacturer of grape by-products, tore away the mask and frankly told the growers that their salvation rested in development of a nationwide wine industry.

"The grape industry," said Conn, "is a legal industry. In 1927 90 per cent. of all grapes shipped from Fresno County went to make wine. But the making of wine is not in violation of the Volstead Act. Section 29 was written into the law to exempt fruit juices. We have the right to ship fruit juices and grape concentrates to any American in New York. The time has come when you can't preach dry unless you act that way. Let the householder make his juices and forget the bootlegger."

"The juice grape crop," said Mr. Garrett, "is taken by 10 per cent. of the population of the cities which is foreign-born. The American will not crush grapes, but he will drink his fruit juice if he can get it clean. We should give the American the same privilege as the foreigner. The biggest opposition will come from the bootlegger."