

The Rough Riders Three



*By Joe Cummings**

“War is Declared” was the headline on the April 28, 1898, issue of the *Enid Weekly Sun and Farmers’ News*. President McKinley signed the bill passed by both houses of the US Congress declaring war against the kingdom of Spain. He also issued a call for 125,000 volunteer troops to serve for two years from “among the several states and territories,” which included Oklahoma Territory.¹ Congress authorized three regiments of cavalry to be formed from the West, as cowboys would be the ideal cavalrymen.² Recruits had to “be a good shot . . . able to ride anything of horseflesh . . . a rough and ready fighter . . . and above all, [have] no fear.”³ When it was formed, the First Volunteer Cavalry Regiment consisted of twelve troops. Three were from New Mexico Territory, and the rest were from the Arizona, Oklahoma, and Indian Territories. The Second and Third Volunteer

Cavalry regiments were recruited in Wyoming and the Dakotas. According to the Theodore Roosevelt Association, "The 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry included cowboys and gamblers, hunters and prospectors, Buffalo soldiers, college boys, and Native Americans from all 45 states then in existence, four U.S. territories and 14 countries."⁴

There had been longstanding Spanish misrule in Cuba. To protect US interests, the battleship *Maine* was sent to Havana harbor in January of 1898. On February 15, 1898, an explosion blew it up, killing 260 officers and men. All eyes looked to Spain. An outraged American public blamed Spain, and the rallying cry was "Remember the *Maine*!"⁵ On March 29, the front page article in the *Enid Weekly Sun* reported that President McKinley issued to Congress the *Maine Inquiry Report*, which forms a document of about one hundred thousand words. The message was read in both houses of Congress and promptly referred, without debate, to their respective foreign affairs committees. Two thousand copies of the report and findings were printed for use by senators and representatives. In the opinion of the court at the time, the *Maine* was destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine, which caused the partial explosion of two or more of her forward magazines. The mine exploded under the bottom of the ship at about frame eighteen, and somewhat on the port side of the ship. The loss of the *Maine* was not in any respect due to fault or negligence on the part of any of the officers or members of the crew of the *Maine*.

Many recruits from Oklahoma Territory came to join the First US Volunteer Cavalry, including Walter Cook, William S. Crawford, Icem J. David, Charles E. Hunter, Shelby F. Ishler, and James E. Vander-slice, who were all from Enid, with Francis M. Staley and Joseph A. Randolph from Waukomis.⁶ Also, Frank Frantz from Prescott, Arizona, who, like his brother Edmund, "was one of six [Frantz] brothers who . . . had much to do with making Enid the biggest town in the Strip." They opened a hardware store, lumberyard, brickyard, and the Frantz Hotel among other business ventures in Enid.⁷

Theodore Roosevelt, the assistant secretary of the Navy, was offered the command of this new regiment by Secretary of War Russell A. Alger.⁸ Roosevelt, who felt he was too inexperienced, recommended US Army Surgeon Dr. Leonard Wood. Wood had served in General Nelson A. Miles's campaigns against the Apache. Though a surgeon, he led more than one campaign against the Apache. He was such a gallant fighter and displayed such courage that he received the Medal of Honor. In the summer of 1886, Wood voluntarily carried dispatches through a region filled with American Indian combatants, making a journey of seventy miles in one night and walking thirty miles the next

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Frantz Brothers Hardware and Tin-Shop, Enid (20472.22, Oklahoma Historical Society Photograph Collection, OHS).

day. Also, he commanded a detachment of infantry that was without an officer for several weeks while in close pursuit of Geronimo's band.⁹

President McKinley commissioned Wood as a colonel and Roosevelt as lieutenant colonel of the First US Volunteer Cavalry. Roosevelt wrote, "For some reason or other the public promptly christened us the 'Rough Riders' . . . we fought against the use of the term . . . finally . . . we adopted the term ourselves."¹⁰ Their uniform was a slouch hat, blue flannel shirt, brown trousers and leggings, boots, and polka dot bandanas. Roosevelt had his uniform tailored by Brooks Brothers in Boston.¹¹

Frantz was in Troop A; Cook, Crawford, David, Hunter, Randolph, Vanderslice, and Ishler were in Troop D; and Staley was in Troop K.¹² On May 6, 1898, the recruits were sworn in, went to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, were assigned horses, and trained for nineteen days. The Rough Riders, consisting of 1,060 soldiers and 1,258 horses and mules, departed for Tampa, Florida, on May 29, 1898, via the Southern Pacific Railroad to join thirty thousand other soldiers to invade Cuba.



Rough Riders, still in civilian clothing, lining up for enlistment in Muskogee, Indian Territory, 1898 (19607.22, John R. Thomas Jr. Collection, OHS).

Due to lack of space on the transport ships, most of the horses were left behind.¹³ The unit stayed on the grounds of the newly constructed Tampa Bay Hotel where Roosevelt and his wife, Edith, enjoyed a final visit together before he deployed.¹⁴

The ships landed in Daiquirí, Cuba, on June 22, 1898. The objective was to take Santiago. Cook from Troop D, Frantz from Troop A, and Roosevelt were in the battles described in the following paragraphs.¹⁵ The Rough Riders and the Buffalo Soldiers, numbering 1,300, fought at the Battle of Las Guasimas on June 24 against 1,500 Spanish troops.¹⁶ Each man carried three days' field rations and one hundred rounds of ammunition, and the regiment acquired two rapid-fire Colt automatic guns and a dynamite gun. Roosevelt was reunited with his horse named Little Texas when it swam ashore after it jumped from the transport.¹⁷

Once in Cuba, the Rough Riders were ordered to advance toward the San Juan River. In the stifling heat of more than one hundred degrees, they moved out but had to find cover from enemy fire wherever they could. In the dense jungle, the Rough Riders' location was given away by the smoke from their guns. Because the Spanish used smokeless powder, the Rough Riders would hear the Mauser bullets come by them from the Spanish firing, but the enemy remained invisible. However, by using his glasses, Roosevelt could spot the Spanish

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The beginning of debarkation of troops at Daiquirí, Cuba (image courtesy of the Cabinet of American Illustration, Library of Congress).

soldiers' hats, which gave them away. They forced the Spanish to retreat.¹⁸ Next, east of Santiago lay Kettle Hill and San Juan Hill, which were controlled by Spanish troops. The order came to "move forward and support the regulars in the assault on the hills in front." Roosevelt wrote, "The instant I received the order, I sprang on my horse."¹⁹ The race up Kettle Hill had begun.

Walter Cook of Troop D was no stranger to an all-out charge. Shortly after noon on September 16, 1893, he was one of more than one hundred thousand people lined up along the border of the Cherokee Strip to race to stake a claim on one of the available 37,000 160-acre homesteads. Good river bottom farmland, well-watered with timber on it, would be the best land. The slower riders would have to settle for a lot in town or nothing. However, a 160-acre farm near town could be divided into city lots and bring a good price for homes or business property. The postmaster, his assistant, officials of the land office, and perhaps some members of the townsite board all looked to the south horizon for a sign of the racing riders. A dust cloud was forming along the horizon. Out of the dust cloud emerged a lone rider, riding hard. Walter Cook:

was the kid cowpuncher from the Chickasaw Nation. On a range pony that looked like the kind any good trader could get for forty dollars, he had ridden into the ground fifteen thousand rivals and some of the fanciest horseflesh that could be imported from Kentucky. Pat Wilcox, also, was on hand—behind a desk in Art Ste-



The camp at Daiquirí, Cuba (photograph courtesy of the Library of Congress, found in Harper's Pictorial History of the War with Spain [New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1899], 326).

phenson's bank—to give you the stirring picture of little Walter on that little horse tearing down South Hill, across the Square, and to the claim that formed the Square's north boundary; swinging down as lightly as a cat, throwing off his saddle, looping his reins about the horn and then setting his stake a good two minutes ahead of Albert Hammer, the second comer. . . . Walter Cook, the historical figure: undisputed winner of the Run, and by every rule of the game winner of the one hundred and sixty acres, worth, at the depression prices prevailing in 1911, more than a million dollars.²⁰

Cook probably saw Roosevelt start at the rear of the regiment, open to Spanish fire as he was the only one on horseback in the open, calling the troopers to go forward, waving his hat, rasping directions to captains, until he found himself at the head of the attack.²¹ Roosevelt sent his two aides, Captains Mills and McCormick, on special duty to get the different groups of men to go forward. Frank Frantz was the deputy commander of Troop A. His commander, Captain William "Bucky" O'Neill, moved to and fro while his men begged him to lie down. One of his sergeants said that a bullet was sure to hit him. O'Neill laughed and said a Spanish bullet had not been made that could kill him. Then he was killed instantly when a bullet hit him in the mouth. Frantz immediately took the lead, charging his men up the hill amid a hail of Spanish bullets and staked the troop flag in the ruins of the Spanish fortifications.²²

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Roosevelt “galloped toward the hill, passing the shouting, cheering, firing men . . . on the top of Kettle Hill.” He ran into a wire fence. He turned Little Texas loose as the horse had been scraped by several bullets. Roosevelt jumped the wire fence, “thinking that the men would all come” but, they did not hear him as he led the charge on the adjacent San Juan Hill. At one hundred yards, he only had five men:

Bullets were ripping the grass all around us, and one of the men, Clay Green, was mortally wounded; another, Winslow Clark, a Harvard man, was shot first in the leg and then through the body. He made not the slightest murmur, only asking me to put his water canteen where he could get at it, which I did; he ultimately recovered. There was no use going on with the remaining three men, and I bade them stay where they were while I went back and brought up the rest of the brigade.

Roosevelt rushed back to lead the Rough Riders to charge San Juan Hill. Two Spanish soldiers charged at Roosevelt. He fired his revolver that was from the sunken battleship *Maine*, killing one and causing the other to run off.²³

Long before the Rough Riders got near them, the rest of the Spanish soldiers ran off. Once the heights above Santiago were held by the Americans the Spanish Fleet fled, but were destroyed by the US Navy. The Spanish surrendered on July 17, 1898. The July 21, 1898, issue of the *Enid Weekly Sun* read that Spanish General Toral and 25,000 troops surrendered to US Major General W. H. Shafter. The August 11, 1898, issue of the *Enid Weekly Sun* carried an article that read that the Rough Riders came to the Santiago docks in formation, each company preceded by a red and white banner bearing its regiment number, with Colonel Roosevelt riding his horse at the head. The troops boarded ships to come home on August 15, 1898.²⁴

The Rough Riders had won. Roosevelt noted that, after the Battle of Las Guasimas on June 24, “in the evening, as the bands of regiment after regiment played the ‘Star-Spangled Banner,’ all, officers and men alike, stood with heads uncovered, wherever they were, until the last strains of the anthem died away in the hot sunset air.”²⁵ Roosevelt promoted Frantz to captain and commander of Troop A for his bravery in leading his troops.²⁶ He also nominated Frantz for the Silver Star for gallantry under enemy fire. Frantz gained Roosevelt’s lifelong trust and friendship. The Rough Riders had the highest casualty rate of any unit in the Spanish-American War, with one-third killed, wounded, or stricken by disease. Captain Capron, whom Roosevelt considered “the



Rough Riders reunion with Theodore Roosevelt, Ben Colbert (Chickasaw), Theodore Stidham (Muscogee/Cherokee), Charley Lynch, and Charles E. Hunter, 1910 (6394, Robert L. Williams Collection, OHS).

best soldier in the regiment,” was the first US officer killed in combat. According to Jon May in *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, “Seven Oklahoman Rough Riders were killed, and twenty-seven were wounded in Cuba.”²⁷ Many experts believe that Roosevelt’s personal valor and leadership led to the victory of the day.²⁸

On September 1, 1898, the *Enid Weekly Wave* reported that Walter Cook was home and looked as “bad as all the boys do who went through that terrible Santiago deal.” Walter married the widow of a policeman with two children. He settled down as a family man and opened a café next to the Monarch Saloon in Enid. Frank Frantz went to California, but settled in Enid where he joined his brother, Montgomery, in the hardware business. On April 9, 1901, he married Matilda Evans of Oklahoma City. The couple had five children: Frank Jr., Louise, Matilda, Virginia, and James who died in infancy.²⁹ Roosevelt became the Republican candidate for New York governor in 1898 and won.³⁰ Little did these Rough Riders Three realize the impact they were about to make on Oklahoma Territory and Enid.

Theodore Roosevelt was chosen by the Republican Party as President McKinley’s vice-presidential candidate in its successful election in 1901. On September 6, 1901, McKinley was in Buffalo, New York, for the Pan-American Exposition. At 3:30 p.m. he was at the massive,

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ornately decorated Temple of Music concert building for one of his favorite activities—a meet and greet with citizens. There were columns of soldiers to protect the president. In line was Leon Czolgosz, a deranged anarchist, who believed that killing President McKinley would lead to the end of capitalism and return power to the masses. His hand was wrapped in a handkerchief to conceal his gun. When his turn came to meet the president, Czolgosz fired two shots at close range. The first was superficial, but the second lead bullet pierced the president's stomach. The local hospital was more ready for a stomachache than gunshot wounds, as the staff were interns on a one-month assignment. The best surgeon found was a gynecologist and obstetrician who operated without proper surgical equipment and adequate lighting. The surgery led to gangrene. President McKinley died eight days later, making Theodore Roosevelt the president. Leon Czolgosz was executed in the electric chair seven weeks later.³¹

Somehow the friendship between Roosevelt and Frantz grew, and Frantz became a frequent visitor to the White House. Roosevelt appointed Frantz postmaster of Enid in 1902 and Osage agent at Pawhuska in 1904.³² It was a period of great turmoil for the Osage. Their land holdings were in the process of being dissolved from tribal ownership to each family receiving an allotment of land. There was a great controversy over the tribal role among the full bloods, mixed bloods, and intermarried tribal members. Also, the Osage Nation had a vast oil pool and had 243 oil wells and 21 gas wells in production. With fewer than 2,500 names on the tribal rolls, each Osage was worth an estimated \$25,000 to \$30,000. In addition, the towns of Cleveland, Blackburn, Ralston, and Ponca City arose adjacent to the reservation, ignoring the liquor laws and illegally selling alcohol to the local American Indians.³³ The *Daily Oklahoman* wrote that "his [Frantz's] conduct . . . has been all that could have been desired." On November 10, 1905, the same newspaper reported that "Frantz was in the Osage nation to clean up the graft, and his administration has been clean throughout."³⁴

In the Wednesday, November 15, 1905, issue of the *Edmond Sun* headlined "Captain Frantz is Appointed Governor," the lead article read:

Captain Frank Frantz, at present agent of the Osage Indians, is to be appointed governor of Oklahoma at the expiration of the term of Governor Ferguson. . . . He was a rough rider captain under Roosevelt . . . and has been close to the president ever since. He was backed by the Congressman McGuire faction of the republican party in Oklahoma . . . but it is believed here that he won



Badge from Roosevelt's Rough Riders Reunion in Oklahoma City, July 1-4, 1900 (19156, Grant Foreman Collection, OHS).

strictly on his rough rider record. Gov. Ferguson's administration has been clean throughout and he asked re-appointment on his record and his friends believe that only because Frantz was a rough rider was his appointment made. Frantz is about 35 years old, and will be Oklahoma's youngest governor. He was a democrat prior to his rough rider career.³⁵

Both Roosevelt and Frantz enjoyed boxing. Frantz boxed and had always been active in sports, and played on a semiprofessional baseball team in northern Oklahoma Territory. Roosevelt had boxed as a light heavyweight at Harvard. The basement of the White House was lined with training mats for the sparring to begin. This was a first, especially for the White House.³⁶ Former Enid Mayor Doug Frantz, whose great-grandfather was William Douglas Frantz, a brother of Frank Frantz, provided from his family archive an article from the *Washington Times* entitled "Floored President and Won Good Place" from November 20, 1905. The article read:

As an amateur boxer, the opinion prevails that President Roosevelt is "there with the goods," and can hold his own with the best

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Frank Frantz, c. 1906 (170, Oklahoma Historical Society Photograph Collection, OHS).



of them. It has just leaked out, however, that one of his former associates in the Rough Riders proved to be “too many” for him in a friendly bout at the White House. Capt. Frank Frantz, at one of his first visits to the White House, remarked to Mr. Roosevelt that he had heard about the President’s prowess as a boxer. The President seemed surprised but agreed to a bout. The pair sparred a few seconds. Then Captain Frantz, seeing an opening, whipped over a cross counter to the point of the President’s jaw. “Good,” said Mr. Roosevelt, “Do it again if you can.” The first blow seemed to smart a little as the President rubbed his jaw now and then as a few more light exchanges were made. Then: “Biff!” A right hook to the jaw and Mr. Roosevelt was down “for the count.” The President, however, was simply getting warmed up to his work. He arose and went at it again. He had failed to measure the staying qualities of his adversary. The President and the floor met again. The third rap took the stamina out of the advocate of the “square deal” and the bout ended.³⁷

Frantz had knocked down the president of the United States three times. “Captain Frantz is a brawny fellow and ‘roughed it’ in the West



The inauguration of Territorial Governor Frank Frantz in front of the Carnegie Library in Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory, January 15, 1906 (204, John E. Shanafelt Collection, OHS).

for many years. The President has never forgotten the man who conquered him in that little bout. From that time on, Frantz's political career has been going up."³⁸

President Roosevelt traveled through Oklahoma Territory in April 1905.³⁹ He also went to the Big Pasture area of Oklahoma Territory with Quanah Parker, chief of the Comanche, to hunt wolves with John R. Abernathy, who caught wolves alive with his bare hands.

[Abernathy] took the lead alongside the President as the riders started again traveling south toward Red River. Soon we sighted two gray wolves about half a mile ahead. Inside another mile and a half of chasing, [Abernathy] leaped from [his] horse, caught the wolf by the under jaw, and held the animal up so that the President could see him. "Bully!" exclaimed the President. "I haven't been skunked. This catch pays me for the trip to Oklahoma."⁴⁰

President Roosevelt would later appoint Abernathy the US marshal over Oklahoma, the youngest US marshal so appointed.⁴¹

According to Marquis James, Walter Cook became Enid's bootlegger. He was arrested many times for his trade, as in May 27, 1910, when the *Enid Daily Eagle* reported that he received six months in jail

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and a \$500 fine. The *Enid Weekly Wave* of December 26, 1895, reported that Cook was arrested by a deputy US marshal from Ardmore, Indian Territory, on a US warrant for forgery. The complaint alleged that, a little over a year before, Cook forged the name of Ardmore citizens on checks to the amount of \$240. A *Wave* reporter interviewed Cook at the depot. He denied the allegations against him, said he had no fears, and that he would be back home. The *Enid Events* paper of September 28, 1911, reported that the county attorney was short on evidence on the bootlegging case against Cook and it was thrown out of court.

The years had worn Walter's cockiness down to a kind of brisk geniality. Without hard feelings he accepted the periodical sojourns in jail as an unavoidable hazard of his calling, which was selling liquor. There were no hard feelings on any side. The judge who usually sentenced Walter was one of his customers. As this jurist was a sly drinker, enjoying the support of the better element which kept the prohibition law on the books, he distrusted the integrity of the average bootlegger who might be inclined to talk too much with his mouth. So the payment of installments on Walter Cook's debt to society probably inconvenienced the judge as much as it did anybody.⁴²

James wrote that Enid distinguished between the man and the historical figure. No account of the Cherokee Outlet Run was complete without the mention of Walter Cook. However, there was no connection between the image and the actual man. Judge W. O. Cromwell had been Cook's lawyer and represented him in the epic battles on his claim. Cook staked the first claim, but three hundred others came and claimed the same spot. They split it into town lots and called it Jonesville.

On January 12, 1894, J. D. Bennett and others applied to the board of county commissioners to incorporate the quarter section into a town they would call Jonesville. The application was granted. Within two weeks a whole slate of city officials was elected, schools set up and homes started, all this without anyone having clear title to the land. Walter Cook, in order to keep his claim to the property alive, built a shack to live in and settled back to let justice take its course.⁴³

The *Enid Weekly Wave* of November 14, 1895, reported that Cook won the court decision in the Jonesville case. Cook had gone to the

Chickasaw Nation to work, but fell very ill with pneumonia. Sadly, he was gone more than six months and Jonesville claimed that Cook had abandoned his claim. The Department of the Interior agreed, which left Cook with nothing. Jonesville was later annexed by the city of Enid.⁴⁴

Cook expanded his café with bootlegging. If he was in jail, residents could not enjoy his steaks in his café. Judge Cromwell said no one else could turn out a T-bone that was half as good. The first thing Cook did when he finished his spell in jail was fix a steak for the judge.⁴⁵ In a Rough Rider twist, Cook was helped because President Roosevelt made Frank Frantz governor. Frantz appointed W. O. Cromwell as district attorney for Oklahoma Territory, and Cromwell then became a judge who aided Rough Rider Cook.

Frantz was inaugurated on January 15, 1906, on the steps of Guthrie's Carnegie Library with an escort of forty Rough Riders. He was the seventh and youngest governor of the territory. His brother, Edmund, brought a special train full of one thousand Enid neighbors to add to the ten thousand people already there to witness a parade thirty blocks long.⁴⁶ He led the state during the constitutional convention process. Governor Frantz made an invaluable contribution to the future of the Oklahoma educational system. Discovering that oil companies were drilling on school land (sections of land reserved for funding education and public buildings after statehood) in Pawnee County without obtaining permission, the governor established a policy of requiring those companies to lease the mineral rights. Then he acted to safeguard the state's ownership of mineral rights on state-owned land by securing the removal of the Warren Amendment from the Oklahoma Enabling Act. After passage of the Enabling Act of 1906, Frantz took steps to locate the remaining school land by filing all the claims in the Panhandle. His agents acquired virtually all the federal domain in that region for the state. By leasing the land to farmers, the state earned millions of dollars in revenue.⁴⁷

President Theodore Roosevelt signed the forty-sixth statehood proclamation with an eagle quill pen on November 16, 1907, declaring, "Oklahoma is now a state."⁴⁸ These Rough Riders Three had come full circle.

Walter Cook continued as a colorful character in Enid, including a stint in Wild West shows. He died at age sixty-eight. His father's obituary in the *Garfield County Democrat* of July 24, 1907, described his son's exploits, saying, "[Walter] will be remembered as at one time a contestant for the Jonesville quarter and was later a Rough Rider in the Spanish War."⁴⁹

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Frantz ran for governor of the new state of Oklahoma but lost to Charles N. Haskell. He moved to Colorado to enter the oil business. He returned to Tulsa in 1915 to head the land office of Cosden Oil Company before working in the oil royalty business. In 1935 the US Congress finally bestowed the Silver Star for gallantry under fire to Frantz for his actions as a Rough Rider. He died on March 8, 1941, and was buried with full honors in Tulsa's Memorial Park Cemetery. Chris Madsen, Oklahoma Territory's last federal marshal and a Rough Rider sergeant, attended the funeral with two other Oklahoma Rough Riders, Tom Meagher and Bill McGinty.⁵⁰ There are two paintings of Frantz that are part of the Oklahoma State Capitol's art collection: one of him as territorial governor and one depicting him "leading a charge in the Battle of San Juan Hill," per the Frantz family archive.⁵¹

President Theodore Roosevelt is considered by many to be one of the United States's greatest presidents. There is a reason he was labeled "a human locomotive in pants." He was president of the US Civil Service Commission, head of the New York Police Department, assistant secretary of the Navy, the most famous Rough Rider with his gallant charge up Kettle Hill, governor of New York, and twenty-fifth vice president and twenty-sixth president of the United States. He set aside 230 million acres of federal land for National Parks, monuments, forests, wildlife refuges, and game preserves.⁵² In Oklahoma, he created the present-day Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge.⁵³ He took a hunting trip to Africa, took another run at the presidency in 1912, and a 1914 expedition to Brazil that nearly killed him. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906 for settling the Russo-Japanese War with the Treaty of Portsmouth on September 5, 1905. On January 16, 2001, he received the Medal of Honor posthumously from President Bill Clinton for his charge as a Rough Rider that "changed the course of the battle and the Spanish-American War." President Clinton stated, "TR was a larger-than-life figure who gave our nation a larger-than-life vision of our place in the world. Part of that vision was formed on San Juan Hill." He is the only president to ever be awarded the Medal of Honor and the Nobel Peace Prize.⁵⁴ He was a brilliant orator and had a huge literary output. He wrote twenty-six books, more than a thousand magazine articles, thousands of speeches, and the Library of Congress has some 150,000 Roosevelt letters among countless drafts of state papers and speeches.⁵⁵ He died peacefully in his sleep at age sixty from a blood clot in his lung on January 6, 1919, in his home, Sagamore Hill, at Oyster Bay, New York, and is buried there in Youngs Memorial Cemetery. Vice President Thomas Marshall summed up the old warrior's passing

best: "Death had to take him sleeping, for if Roosevelt had been awake there would have been a fight."⁵⁶

In 1976 the explosion of the *Maine* was opened to new investigations by Rear Admiral Hyman Rickover of the Department of the Navy. The American Court of Inquiry held its first meeting on February 21. Ib S. Hansen of the David W. Taylor Naval Ship Research and Development Center and Robert S. Price of the Naval Surface Weapons Center volunteered to look at the evidence. The characteristics of the damage were consistent with a large internal explosion. The analysis concluded that the primary source of the explosion was centered in the six-inch reserve magazine, which caused a partial detonation of the other forward magazines. In this area, the explosion blew out the sides and ruptured the decks. The bottom was driven downward, although its displacement, because it was supported by water, was less than that of the sides and the decks. The forward section was separated from the aft section except where it was attached by the keel and adjacent bottom plating, mostly on the starboard side. As the forward section turned on its starboard side, the keel at frame eighteen was raised upward. At the same time, the aft section was flooding, inclining downward at the part through which the water was pouring. This area that attracted the attention of the original investigation showed no evidence of a rupture or deformation that would have resulted from a contact or near contact with a mine. The investigation concluded that a fire in bunker A16 caused by spontaneous combustion of bituminous coal created the explosion. Such fires were difficult to detect. Often they smoldered deep below the exposed surface of the coal, giving off no smoke or flames and not raising the temperature in the vicinity of the alarm. The bunker on the *Maine* had not been inspected for nearly twelve hours before the explosion, a period that was ample time for a bunker fire to begin, heat bulkheads, and set fire to the contents in adjacent compartments. There is no evidence that a mine destroyed the *Maine*.⁵⁷ It seems the Spanish had not blown up the *Maine*.

The Rough Riders united the many dissimilar members of our society: the American Indian with the cowboy and soldier, people of color with whites, the westerner with the easterner, and the poor with the privileged.⁵⁸ In Enid, the Rough Riders united the historical winner of the Cherokee Outlet Run-turned-bootlegger, Oklahoma Territory's governor, and the president of the United States to form the legacy of the Rough Riders Three.

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Endnotes

* Joe Cummings is a native of Enid whose family has owned Brown-Cummings Funeral Home in Enid since 1926. He earned bachelor of arts and master of arts degrees in English from Oklahoma State University and a bachelor of science degree from the University of Central Oklahoma. Cummings is happily married to Becky, his wife of forty-eight years, and has three children and seven grandchildren. He enjoys learning about the early history of Enid and visiting with families with roots in the community. The photograph on page 468 is Theodore Roosevelt riding in the Rough Riders Reunion parade in Oklahoma City, July 3, 1900 (2094.1, Virginia Sutton Collection, OHS).

¹ "War is Declared," *Enid (OK) Weekly Sun*, April 28, 1898, 1, microfilm, Enid Public Library, Enid, OK.

² Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York: P. F. Collier and Son, 1899), 9.

³ Poster 1, City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial, Las Vegas, NM. The museum had three wall-sized posters. The author visited this museum August 16, 2018.

⁴ "The Soldier," Theodore Roosevelt Association, www.theodoreroosevelt.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=991271&module_id=339473.

⁵ Poster 2, City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial, Las Vegas, NM.

⁶ Rough Riders roster, City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial, Las Vegas, NM.

⁷ Marquis James, *The Cherokee Strip: A Tale of an Oklahoma Boyhood* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993), 232.

⁸ Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 10.

⁹ "Leonard Wood," The Hall of Valor Project, valor.militarytimes.com/hero/2198.

¹⁰ Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 5–6, 11.

¹¹ "The Soldier," Theodore Roosevelt Association.

¹² Rough Riders roster, City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial, Las Vegas, NM.

¹³ "The Soldier," Theodore Roosevelt Association.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Jon D. May, "Rough Riders," *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=RO034; "The Soldier," Theodore Roosevelt Association.

¹⁶ Poster 3, City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial, Las Vegas, NM. "Buffalo Soldiers" was the name given to African American cavalry soldiers on the Great Plains after the Civil War. Bruce A. Glasrud, "Buffalo Soldiers," *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=BU005.

¹⁷ Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 71–72.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 88, 90, 120.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 124.

²⁰ James, *The Cherokee Strip*, 277.

²¹ Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 125–26, 129.

²² *Ibid.*, 122.

²³ *Ibid.*, 130, 134–35, 137.

²⁴ Poster 3, City of Las Vegas Museum and Rough Rider Memorial, Las Vegas, NM; *Enid Weekly Sun*, July 21, 1898, 1; "Rough Riders Coming Home," *Enid Weekly Sun*, August 11, 1898.

²⁵ Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders*, 110–11.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 235.

²⁷ May, "Rough Riders."

²⁸ "The Soldier," Theodore Roosevelt Association.

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