

31 Teddy Bear President

Cliff Klingenhagen had
me in to dine
With him one day; and
after soup and meat,
And all the other things
there were to eat,
Cliff took two glasses
and filled one with wine
And one with wormwood.
Then, without a sign
For me to choose at all,
he took the draught
Of bitterness himself,
and lightly quaffed
It off, and said the other
one was mine.

And when I asked him
what the deuce he meant
By doing that, he only
looked at me
And smiled, and said it
was a way of his.
And though I know the
fellow, I have spent
Long time a-wondering
when I shall be
As happy as

Cliff Klingenhagen is.

—EDWARD ARLINGTON ROBINSON,
1897



TR knocks down the trusts. But he wasn't as tough on big business as this cartoon makes out.

Roosevelt made a great president. But you knew he would. He was "delighted" to be president, he said. It was a "bully" job, he added. No president has ever had such a good time at it—and worked so hard, too.

Andrew Jackson had made people feel welcome in the White House, but not the way TR did. Remember when Jackson escaped out a White House back door to get away from the admiring mob? Roosevelt couldn't

seem to get enough of "the people." On New Year's Day in 1907, anyone who wanted to could go to the White House and shake their president's hand (anyone who was clean and not drunk). Roosevelt set a record that day: he shook 8,150 hands.

The people loved him; the press did, too. He was always doing things that made good stories. Like the time he went hunting for bear but refused to kill a helpless little bear. When that story got out, a candy maker in Brooklyn, New York, made a toy bear and called it a "Teddy bear." He sent it to the president

TR never stopped talking. He had a high voice that squeaked when he got excited.



and asked his permission to use the name on more bears. Theodore Roosevelt said yes, and soon people were calling him "Teddy" Roosevelt. He hated that nickname, but he was stuck with it. The candy maker became a toy maker and got rich. Everyone wanted those bears, and that's how teddy bears came to be. (That first teddy is now in the National Museum of American History, in Washington, D.C., where you can see it.)

Reporters found TR's children were worth writing about, too. Alice, the oldest and a teenager, sometimes kept a snake in her purse. Quentin, the youngest, stood on the second-floor White House balcony and dropped a huge snowball on a White House guard. It knocked the guard over. All six children roller-skated in the basement, slid down the



"We demand that big business give the people a square deal," said TR. "When anyone...in big business...endeavors to do right he shall himself be given a square deal."

banisters, and played hide and seek in the attic. Sometimes government business waited while the president played tag with them.

On President Roosevelt's 46th birthday, his friend Elihu Root sent congratulations: "You have made a very good start in your life and your friends have hopes for you when you grow up."

But Theodore Roosevelt wasn't just fun and games. He was a strong president. He brought his energy, habit of working hard, and intelligence to the job. He helped see that pure food and drug laws were passed. He found ways to control

some of those corporations that were acting as if they were above the law. The biggest of them had turned into "trusts." Congress had passed the Sherman Antitrust Act, but no one had enforced it. TR went "trustbusting."



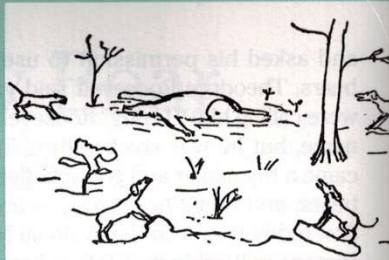
This is the original "Teddy bear." You can see it at the National Museum of American History, in Washington, D.C.

Coal Crisis

It was 1902. Coal miners were striking and winter was fast approaching. The strike had been long and bitter, and coal was needed for fuel. The price of coal rose from \$5 to \$25 a ton. Homes became cold. Some schools closed. John Mitchell, representing the mine workers' union, was demanding an eight-hour day for coal miners, a 20-percent wage raise, and union recognition. George Baer, representing the mine owners, said that workers' rights were the responsibility of the owners, to whom "God has given control of the property and rights of the country."

No president had ever before interfered with a strike. The attorney general told the president he had no power to intervene. But TR called both sides together. See if you can do some research and find out what happened next.

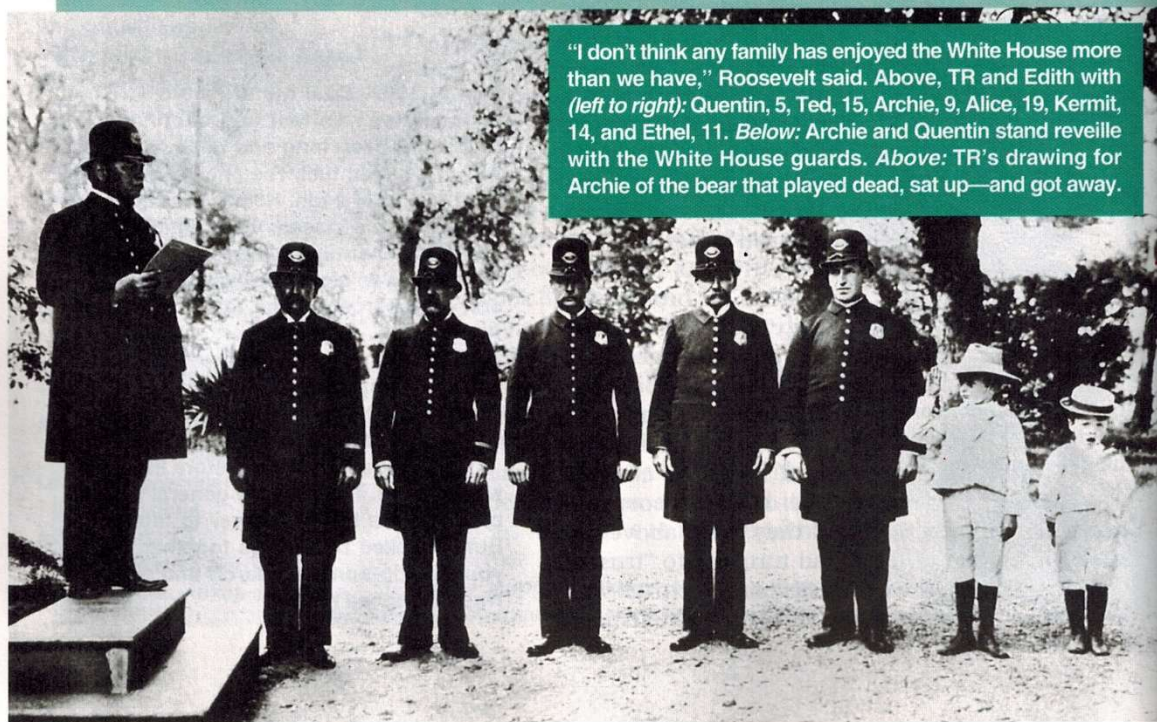
A Roosevelt Family Album



The Bear Plays Dead



The Bear Sits Up



"I don't think any family has enjoyed the White House more than we have," Roosevelt said. Above, TR and Edith with (left to right): Quentin, 5, Ted, 15, Archie, 9, Alice, 19, Kermit, 14, and Ethel, 11. Below: Archie and Quentin stand reveille with the White House guards. Above: TR's drawing for Archie of the bear that played dead, sat up—and got away.



Senator John Sherman, for whom the Antitrust Act was named (he had little to do with it, really).

One day in 1905 a struggling poet named Edward Arlington Robinson went to his mailbox and found a letter from the president. It offered him a job that would allow him time to keep writing poetry. Theodore Roosevelt invited the great black educator Booker T. Washington to the White House for dinner. Some prejudiced people objected; that didn't stop TR.

President Roosevelt was responsible for the building of the Panama Canal. That created a water passageway from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean at the midsection of the American continents. Just think about

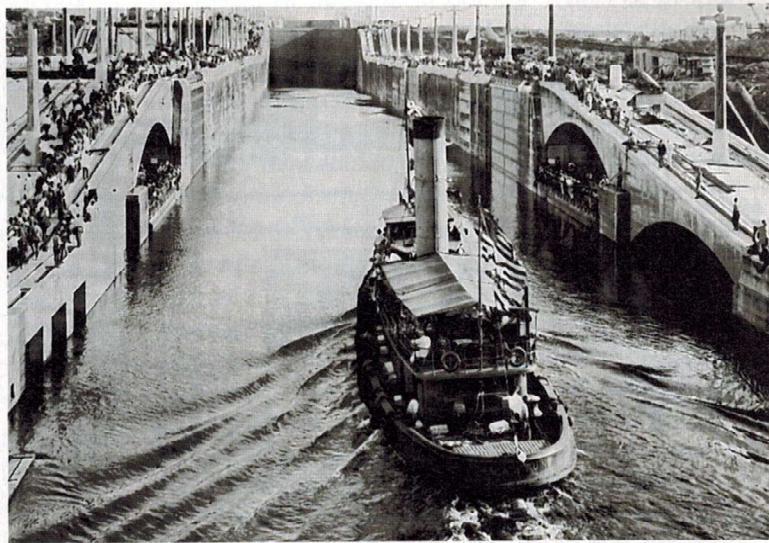
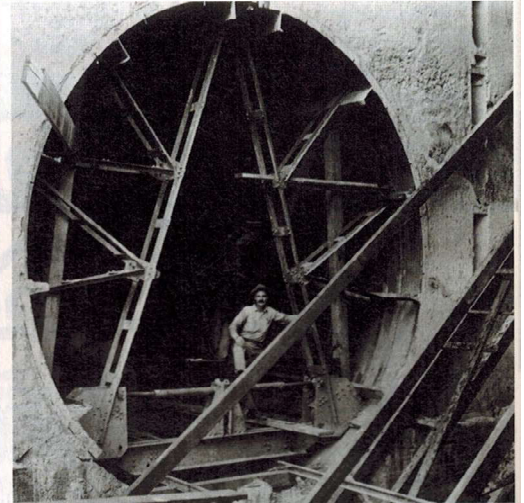
that. It took most ships more than two months to make the trip from San Francisco to the East Coast by sailing through the Straits of Magellan at the tip of South America. Cutting through Panama was like unlocking a door between the oceans.

Look at the map on the next page. It should be a simple thing to take some steam shovels to Panama and dig out a canal, shouldn't it? Ha. Digging that canal was a nightmare. The map does not show thick jungle, but that was only one of the things the canal builders had to contend with. The worst problem may have been the tiny mosquitoes that carried malaria and yellow-fever germs. Nearly 6,000 men died, mostly from disease. There were also accidents and political hassles and enormous engineering problems. It is worth going to the library and finding a

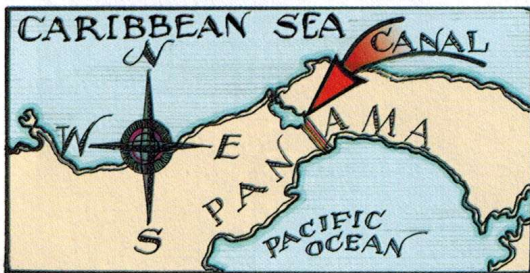
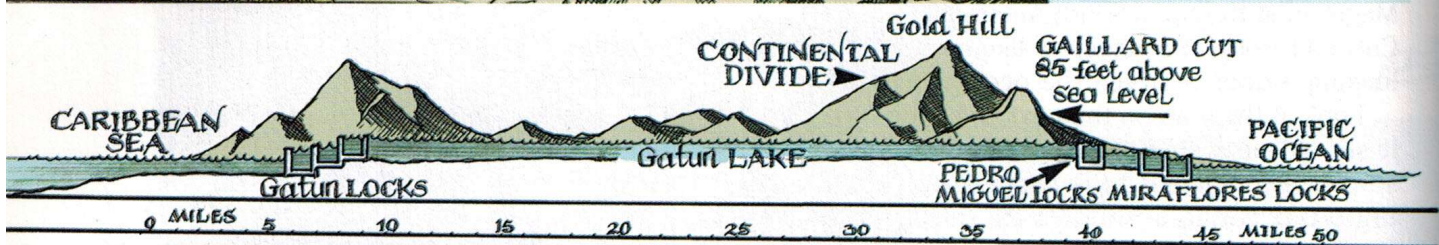
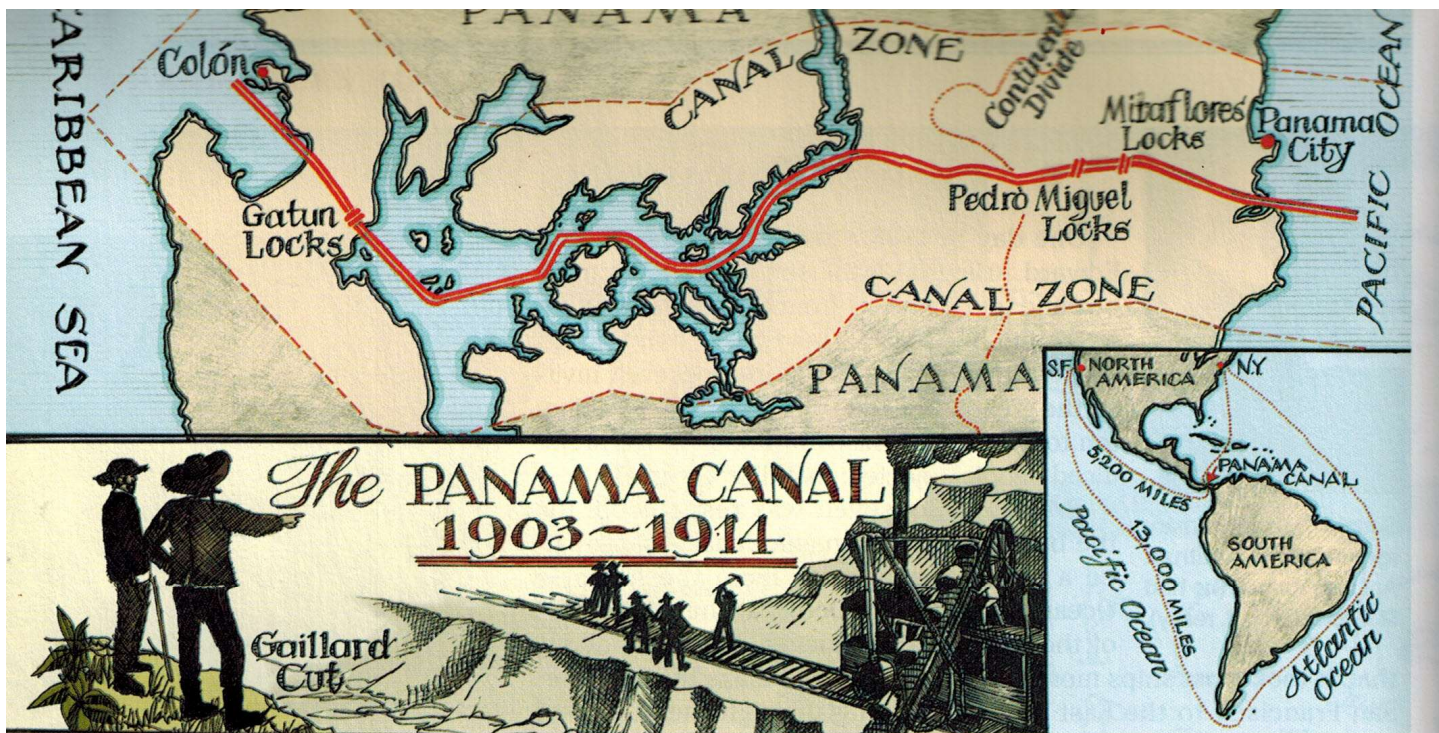
book about the building of the Panama Canal. It is some story. Without Theodore Roosevelt it would have been even more difficult.

He had a favorite saying: *Speak softly and carry a big stick*. It was an African proverb, and TR was always quoting it. He believed that if you show you are strong no one will pick on you. The big stick he wanted for the nation was a strong navy. He helped build one.

Roosevelt talked a lot about war and soldiering, but his presidency was a time of peace. He was a good diplomat and was able to deal well with other countries. After he helped settle a war be-



Top: A worker at the Gatun Locks construction site. The Gatun Locks are a series of three locks of the Panama Canal that raise the water level 85 feet, connecting to the man-made Gatun Lake. Below: A tugboat, the very first to pass through the completed Panama Canal.



Roosevelt visited the canal while it was being dug, in 1906. The canal cost \$275 million and was a great engineering achievement, but the political dealings around its construction left bad feeling toward the United States among many Latin Americans.

tween Japan and Russia he was given the Nobel Peace Prize. He gave the prize money to the nation; he said it belonged to the American people (even though it came at a time when he could have used it himself).

Today we think that Roosevelt's most important contributions as president were in the field of conservation. We can thank him for saving many of the public lands that we enjoy today.

TR leaves his baby, "My Policies," with Taft, his successor in the White House.

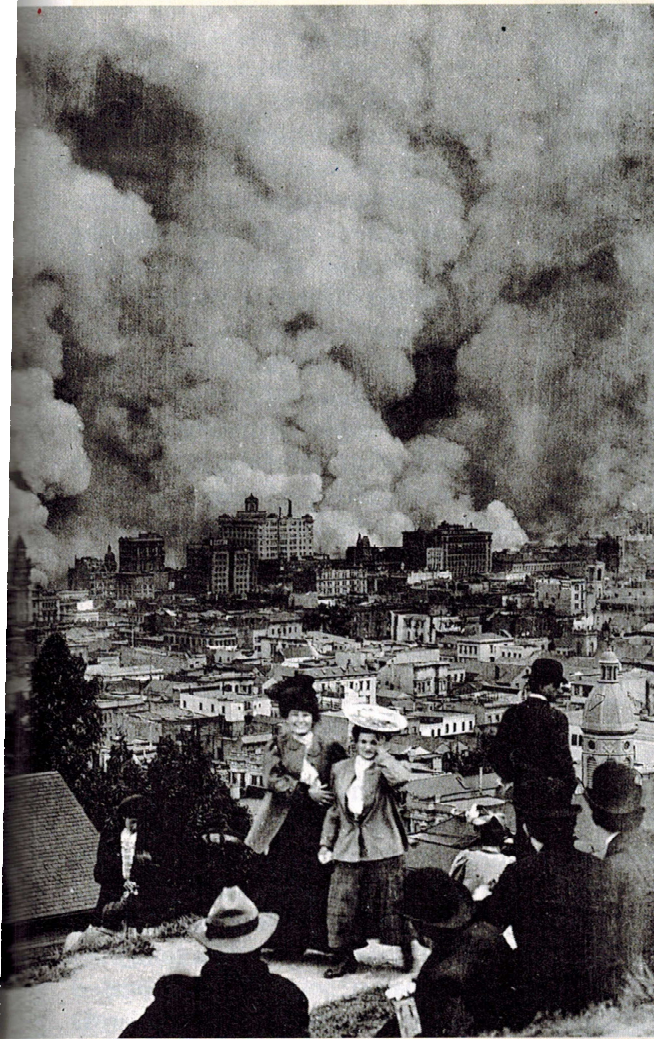


He did one thing he later regretted. When he was elected president on his own in 1904 (remember, he first got the job because McKinley was killed), he said he would not run for a third term. When his second term was up he was only 50, and he loved being president. The American people loved having him as president. But he had given his word. So he didn't run for reelection. Instead, TR went off to Africa to hunt big game.

I have never known another person so vital nor another man so dear.

—WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE ON
THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Shake and Bake



A news report from Jack London in Collier's Weekly, May 5, 1906:

The earthquake shook down in San Francisco hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of walls and chimneys. But the conflagration [con-fluh-GRAY-shun—the fire] that followed burned up hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of property....Not in history has a modern imperial city been so completely destroyed. San Francisco is gone!

The earthquake started the damage, but the fires that resulted were much more devastating—and there was no water available to put them out. Here is a report by Will Irwin from the New York Sun, April 21, 1906:

The old San Francisco is dead. The gayest, lightest-hearted, most pleasure-loving city of this continent, and in many ways the most interesting and romantic, is a horde of huddled refugees living among ruins. It may rebuild; it probably will; but those who have known that peculiar city by the Golden Gate and caught its flavor of the Arabian Nights feel it can never be the same. It is as though a pretty, frivolous woman had passed through a great tragedy. She survives, but she is sobered and different....The city lay on a series of hills and lowlands between. These hills are really the end of the Coast Range of mountains which lie between the interior valleys and the ocean to the south....The greater water always tinged with gold from the great washings of the mountain, overhung with a haze, and of magnificent color changes....[The mountain across the bay] brought the real forest closer to San Francisco than any other American city....Men have killed deer on the slopes of [Mount] Tamalpais and looked down to see the cable cars crawling up the hills of San Francisco to the north.