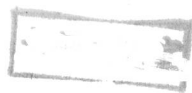


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THE LETTERS OF
Theodore Roosevelt

SELECTED AND EDITED BY
ELTING E. MORISON

JOHN M. BLUM
Associate Editor

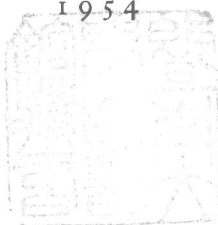
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THE LETTERS OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT

VOLUME VII

The Days of Armageddon

1909—1914

Preface

In the introduction to the first volume it was said that the intent behind this venture was "to make easily accessible all the available letters of Theodore Roosevelt that seem necessary to reveal, insofar as letters can, his thought and action in all the major and many of the minor undertakings of his public and private life." That intent has remained unchanged. The introduction also contained a description of the editorial procedures used in this work. Since these procedures have remained, in general, unmodified it is unnecessary to describe them in detail again. One or two changes in method, however, have been made and one or two relevant points were not stated or were not precisely stated in the original introduction. These things may be mentioned here.

The significant changes in method are three. First, fewer letters in proportion to the available total have been selected for the later volumes. In part this has been the case because the same thing was said in an increasing number of letters in the period from 1909 to 1919; in far greater part this has been the case because of the increasing realization that three or four letters out of twenty or thirty will often give as fair a representation of a subject as eight or ten out of twenty or thirty. Second, comment in the footnotes has become both more frequent and more extended, though efforts have been made to restrict the use of the data. This added comment has been given primarily because when Roosevelt was out of office his letters by themselves do not reveal as completely the nature of many of the subjects with which he was dealing. Third, an increasing attempt has been made to explain, wherever appropriate, the nature of the letter to which Roosevelt was replying. The work as a whole would no doubt have profited had this attempt been begun earlier.

In the introduction to the first volume nothing was said about the letters Roosevelt wrote to his wife, Edith Carow Roosevelt. One such letter, written on January 1, 1870, is printed in Volume I, and in the appendix to Volume VIII a telegram sent to Mrs. Roosevelt on October 26, 1912, appears. There are no other communications to Mrs. Roosevelt in this work because after her husband's death she destroyed the correspondence that had passed between them. Insofar as this loss of material bearing on the private and

personal life of the President can be retrieved by other members of the family, the Roosevelt children have done so. To their generosity, patience, and openness in dealing with the record of their father, as revealed in his letters to them or as retained in their memories, this work owes much.

In the introduction to the first volume it was stated that because the Lodge Collection was closed many letters in the first two volumes written by Roosevelt to Lodge were taken from the published correspondence between the two men. The opinion was given that "though modifications in the original were made in the published text, these modifications for the years covered by these first two volumes are relatively unimportant; the letters from 1884 to 1901 represented here can be taken as a substantially complete record of the existing correspondence in the Lodge Collection."

A reconsideration of this opinion, which has been questioned, leads me to conclude that the claim of "a substantially complete record" was unjustified. This is especially true because the letters chosen represent a selection from those available. The original intent, also, would without doubt have been clearer if it had been said that the modifications in the Lodge letters, though very frequent, were judged "relatively unimportant" in part because of the fact that some of the modified material was, in one form or another, present in letters, printed in these volumes, to other men. This opinion thus restated — applying to Roosevelt's letters to Lodge throughout these volumes — continues. Until the Lodge Collection is opened generally to others it will not be possible for each interested student to test this opinion, and until that time it is necessary to point out that this is not a judgment that has gone unchallenged.

In Appendix I will be found nine letters from Roosevelt to Lodge written in the years from 1884 to 1906. They were selected from the unpublished correspondence between the two men that is now in the Lodge Collection. Access to this material was generously given by Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. It was not possible to include letters, hitherto unpublished, written to Lodge by Roosevelt after 1909.

* * * * *

These eight volumes have been put together over a six-year period, during which most of the work was done by a group that varied in size from five to seven members. The following people — at different times and for varying periods — have taken part in the work: Sydney Adam, Gordon Bassett, John M. Blum, John J. Buckley, Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., Constance G. Cone, Nora E. Cordingley, Joanna W. Crawford, Nancy Evarts, Mary F. Handlin, Arthur W. John, Margaret D. Kleindienst, Nelly M. Krusemeyer, Thomas Little, Evelyn G. McCabe, Eleanor G. Pearre, Marianne N. Purdy, Sylvia Rice, Margaret H. Slawson, Ann R. Wierum, and Hope W. Wigglesworth.

Of the many thoughts that naturally come to mind at a time like this

only a few need be stated. There is first the thanks and respect due to the officers of the Theodore Roosevelt Association for the very great generosity and absolutely unqualified freedom they extended throughout the venture to the editors. There is also the thanks and respect due to the members of the Harvard University Press for their continuing efficiency and understanding. And, while obviously it is impossible to isolate and define the exact contribution of each of the twenty-one people named above as members of the editorial group, it may be said that to each are owed debts unpayable of thanks and gratitude.

The work of two of these twenty-one does, however, deserve special mention. The real value of these books depends primarily upon the accuracy with which the original copy has been reproduced. Critics in a position to know have remarked, at one time or another, that "proof-reading so letter perfect is rare" or more generally upon the accurate printing of Roosevelt letters. This achievement is the product in very large part of the organizing skill and sustained energy of Sylvia Rice, for three years copy editor.

The appendices in these volumes written by John M. Blum have also been repeatedly singled out by reviewers for special praise. The learning and intellectual strength revealed in his essays has been expended also on almost every page of this work. It must be remembered by those who read that the books, as edited, are in no small part his.

There is also, as the prefaces say, the one without whom these volumes would never have been written at all. Earlier volumes in this series contain introductions which attempt to say something about the kind of man and the kind of political leader Theodore Roosevelt seems to have been. It is time now to leave him, and to do so without further embellishment. He has written in these eight volumes, so that anyone can read it, why he must always remain one of the most fascinating personalities, constructive intelligences, and, to him far more important, useful energies in the history of his country.

E. E. M.

* * * * *

Permission obtained from the following publishers to quote from the indicated books is most gratefully acknowledged: University of California Press, Berkeley, California, for George E. Mowry, *The California Progressives*, 1946; Christopher Publishing House, Boston, for Elisha E. Garrison, *Roosevelt, Wilson and the Federal Reserve Law*, 1931; Dodd, Mead and Co., New York, for Frederick Palmer, *Newton D. Baker*, 1931, and Philip C. Jessup, *Elihu Root*, 1938; B. W. Dodge and Co., New York, for Thomas C. Platt, *Autobiography*, 1910; Doubleday and Co., New York, for Lawrence C. Abbott, *Impressions of Theodore Roosevelt*, 1910, Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters*, 1927-1939, Archie Butt, *Taft and Roosevelt*, 1930, Burton J. Hendrick, *The Life of Andrew Carnegie*, 1932,

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“Or Walk with Kings”

March 1909–June 1910

SYMBOLS

- () Single angle brackets indicate material crossed out but decipherable.
- « » French quotation marks indicate editorial interpretations of illegible words.
- [] Square brackets indicate editorial interpolations.
- ... Three dots indicate a missing word.
- Four dots indicate two or more missing words.
- 0 A superior zero placed after the manuscript source indicates that the entire letter is in Roosevelt's handwriting.
- A, B, C, . . . A small capital, A, B, C, etc., placed after a letter number indicates that that letter was acquired and inserted after the original manuscript had gone to press.

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Oyster Bay, March 8, 1909

Dear Cabot: Your welcome letter has just come. I am really concerned at what you tell me about White;² Taft not only told you, but told me, that he was to stay in Paris — just as he told me that the Cabinet was to stay; but of course it was on his part an expression of “present intention,” and he was always at liberty to change his mind. But in such cases it is never pleasant for the individual as to whom the mind is changed!

Yes, I leave Tuesday the 23d at 11 A.M., Hamburg Line, Hoboken. But really, Cabot, I earnestly hope you won't try to see me off; it's an out of the way place, and I would catch a mere glimpse of you, for I suppose there will be various people there.³ If you do come, show this letter to anyone who objects to your seeing me!

I too feel that we “finished in style” at the Senate; it would have been a small calamity had we not done so. I have never had, and never again shall have, friends like you and dearest Nannie; it was very hard to part from you; but when the inevitable comes, it must be faced with a high head and a steady heart. On Sunday Edith and I thought of our rides with you.

¹ Lodge, II, 329-330.

² Lodge had written that Henry White, the United States Ambassador at Paris, was to be relieved of his post by Taft. Roosevelt was reluctant at first to believe this report since he had received what he thought were assurances from the President that White was to be retained. White and he were therefore equally surprised when the ambassador was requested in April to give his resignation. Roosevelt was also indignant, in part because he believed White to be the ablest man in the diplomatic service and in part because he felt, though he tried to disguise the feeling, that it was a reflection on his own judgment of men. Taft intended no such reflection, though why he removed White is not altogether clear. There are several suggestive stories. One is that in the 'eighties, when Taft was on his wedding trip in England and White was attached to the embassy in London, the diplomat needlessly offended the bridegroom. When asked to procure seats for the travelers at a parliamentary debate he supplied them instead with tickets to inspect the royal stables. Another story is that while Taft was Secretary of War, White did little to make another visit to London a successful one. Whatever the precise cause, it seems clear that Taft in dismissing White acted for “personal reasons.”

However compelling these reasons, the summary removal of this able diplomat was a serious blunder that caused much unfavorable comment in the press and diplomatic service. It was unfortunate that White's departure also caused the first rift, small but discernible, in the Taft-Roosevelt relationship. For Taft at least, this was a shock and a surprise. He had assumed that the appointment of Robert Bacon to succeed White would delight Roosevelt. For full discussion of the episode, see Nevins, *White*, pp. 297-306, and Pringle, *Taft*, I, 547-548.

³ The “various people” at the pier on March 23, Archie Butt reported, “were more frenzied in their anxiety to get a glimpse” of Roosevelt “than ever before.” As they pressed toward the steamer's side, the ex-President sought out his most cherished companions. “Is Dave Goodrich in this crowd,” Butt heard Roosevelt call. “President and accounted for, Colonel,” came the reply. “Let all Rough Riders hold up their hands so I can find them,” Roosevelt ordered, “and he began fighting his way to each one.” — Butt, *Taft and Roosevelt*, I, 28-29.

But we miss those we loved; not the material surroundings — not even the beautiful White House of which we were so fond; and it is very, very pleasant to be in our own house, our own home. Edith and I are enjoying every hour; the walks through the woods in the snow, the red sunsets across the Sound, the brilliant moon, the great log fires indoors; in a fortnight I shall have left her and be on my way to Africa.

Much, very much, love to all. *Ever yours*

5204 · TO CECIL ARTHUR SPRING RICE

Spring Rice Mss.

New York, March 10, 1909

Dear Springy: We all think it was just dear of you to cable us a welcome home. Give my love to your wife and my godchild. Am I not to see all three of you in May 1910 when I reach England — that is, lions, mosquitoes and the tsetse fly permitting? I have had a great time as President, and have accomplished a reasonable proportion of what I set out to accomplish, and I have fought up to the very end.

By the way, I hope that you happened to see and to like what I got the chance to say about "The British Rule in India."

Of course I would like to have stayed on as President — any strong man would have liked to continue to be President — but I am more than content to be back at Sagamore Hill, and I am almost ashamed that I do not miss the White House. With hearty thanks, *Ever yours*

5205 · TO ARTHUR HAMILTON LEE

Roosevelt Mss.

Oyster Bay, March 16, 1909

Dear Arthur: You are to address me as I address you!

My dear fellow, all I can do is to thank you again for your manifold kindnesses. (At this moment I am sitting in the North room where of all things that I care for — and I care for many — the one I care for most is the picture you gave me.) Indeed we shall come straight to your house when we reach London, and shall enjoy ourselves there with entirely conscienceless pleasure. We should love to go down to your beautiful new country home for a week end. But I shall not be long enough in England to warrant my hoping to visit the shooting lodge, much though I should like to. As for entertainments, I shall as you know desire to avoid so far as possible all big functions. If Munro-Ferguson could once or twice have me to dinner or lunch, each time to meet three or four prominent Liberals such as Grey, Asquith, Morley and John Burns, and if you could once or twice have similar small parties of your people to meet me, that is just what I would most like. If a dinner is large, one really gets no chance to talk to

the people one wants to see, and of all horrid functions, without one redeeming feature, commend me to huge banquets and such.¹

I shan't try to write you from Africa, where I shall devote myself pretty steadily to the career of a hunter-naturalist, but if you do want to write me, then up to November my address will be c/o Newland, Tarlton & Co., Nairobi, British East Africa, and after that c/o The Sirdar, Khartoum.

With love to Mrs. Lee, *Ever yours*

5206 · TO CHARLES FREMONT AMIDON

Roosevelt Mss.

Oyster Bay, March 18, 1909

My dear Judge Amidon: I think your articles in the *Outlook*,¹ and a book by Mr. Alger,² were among the chief causes which turned my attention to study some of the defects that mar our generally admirable judicial system. I had been conscious of these defects before, but I had not been able to formulate them.

With hearty regard and good wishes, *Faithfully yours*

5207 · TO WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

Taft Mss.

Telegram

On Board S.S. *Hamburg*, March 23, 1909

Am deeply touched by your gift and even more by your letter.¹ Greatly

¹ Huge banquets, not small dinners, were what Roosevelt ordinarily had to eat on his visit to England.

¹ "The Quest for Error and the Doing of Justice," *Outlook*, 83:601-605 (July 14, 1906). "The Constitution and the Corporations," *Outlook*, 87:19-26 (September 7, 1907).

² *Moral Overstrain*.

¹ Archie Butt had delivered to Roosevelt a long letter and "a gold ruler which could be drawn out to a foot," containing in one end a pencil and inscribed "Theodore Roosevelt from William Howard Taft, Good-bye - Good luck - and a Safe Return." Butt, at whose suggestion this offering had been made, selected the gift and drafted the inscription. Taft added an autographed picture and wrote the following farewell message: "My dear Theodore," the President began, "If I followed my impulse, I should still say 'My dear Mr. President.' I cannot overcome the habit. When I am addressed as 'Mr. President,' I turn to see whether you are not at my elbow. When I read in the newspaper of a conference between the speaker and the President, or between Senator Aldrich and the President, I wonder what the subject of the conference was. . . . Many questions have arisen since the inauguration with respect to which I should like to have consulted you, but I have forborne to interrupt your well-earned quiet. . . . I have no doubt that when you return you will find me very much under suspicion by our friends in the West. . . . I knew. . . . I should make a capital error in the beginning of my administration in alienating the good will of those without whom I can do nothing to carry through the legislation to which the party and I are pledged. Cannon and Aldrich have promised to stand by the party platform and to follow my lead. They did so, I believe, for you in the first Congress of your administration. . . . I do nothing in