

Before They Were Famous

Teddy Roosevelt



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Heading West

Teddy Roosevelt did not exactly look like a cowboy. True, he was wearing the right clothes. And he had a **lasso** and a rifle. Most importantly, he was riding a horse. But he didn't look comfortable. Not yet.





Teddy

Elliott

Fun Facts

Teddy Roosevelt first headed west to the Dakota Territory, now North Dakota and South Dakota, in 1883 to hunt with his brother, Elliott.



The Dakota Territory was still part of the **Wild West** in 1883. It wasn't an easy place to fit in. When Teddy first arrived, local people laughed at him behind his back.

Clearly, he was just a **city slicker** from New York City, someone who wanted to play for a little while in the big western sandbox.



Fun Facts

While over 100,000 people lived in the Dakota Territory in the 1880s, about 2 million lived in New York City at the same time.

Getting Stronger

But Teddy was tougher than he looked. As a young boy he had suffered from nightmares because he had so much trouble breathing. He was weak and skinny and got tired easily. One time, in fact, two older boys roughed him up a bit without even trying.

Teddy hated being picked on. But what could he do about it?



“Theodore,” said his father, Theodore Roosevelt Sr. “You have the mind but you have not the body. And without the help of the body the mind cannot go as far as it should.”



Fun Facts

When he was six years old, Teddy witnessed Abraham Lincoln's funeral procession as it moved through New York City.

President Theodore Roosevelt

Vice President Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt became the youngest ever president of the United States in 1901, when at age 42 he succeeded William McKinley, who had been assassinated. Before that, his positions had included being Governor of New York and New York City’s Police Commissioner.

As president, Roosevelt built on his experiences out west to establish five national parks and 150 national forests, among other preserves.

In October 1918, just three months before his death at age 60, he said in a speech in North Dakota, “I owe more to the times when I lived out here and worked with the men who have been my friends than to anything else.”

