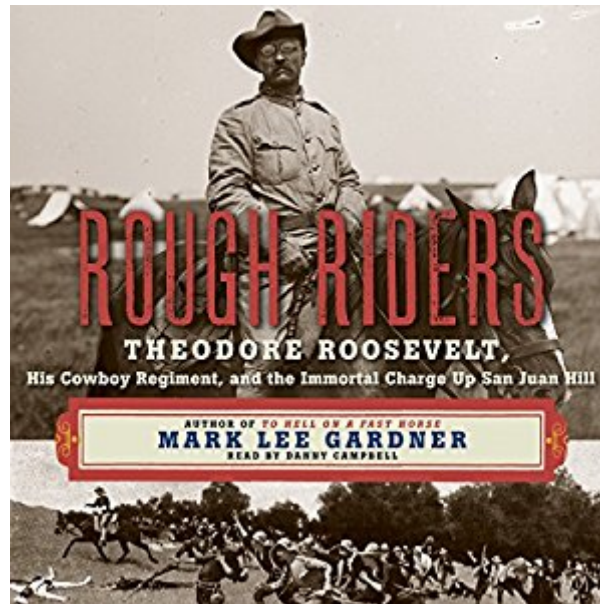


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Rough Riders: Theodore Roosevelt, His Cowboy Regiment, And The Immortal Charge Up San Juan Hill



Synopsis

The first definitive account of this legendary fighting force and its extraordinary leader, Theodore Roosevelt, Mark Lee Gardner's *Rough Riders* is narrative nonfiction at its most invigorating and compulsively listenable. Its dramatic unfolding of a familiar yet not fully known story will remind listeners of James Swanson's *Manhunt*. Two months after the sinking of the USS *Maine* in Havana Harbor in February 1898, Congress authorized President McKinley to recruit a volunteer army to drive the Spaniards from Cuba. From this army emerged the legendary "Rough Riders", a mounted regiment drawn from America's western territories and led by the indomitable Theodore Roosevelt. Its ranks included not only cowboys and other Westerners but several Ivy Leaguers and clubmen, many of them friends of "TR". Roosevelt and his men quickly came to symbolize American ruggedness, daring, and individualism. He led them to victory in the famed Battle at San Juan Hill, which made TR a national hero and cemented the Rough Riders' place in history. Now, Mark Lee Gardner synthesizes previously unknown primary accounts as well as period newspaper articles, letters, and diaries from public and private archives in Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Boston, and Washington, DC, to produce this authoritative chronicle. He breathes fresh life into the Rough Riders and pays tribute to their daring feats and indomitable leader. Gardner also explores lesser-known aspects of the story, including their relationship with the African American Buffalo Soldiers, with whom they fought side by side at San Juan Hill. Rich with action, violence, camaraderie, and courage, *Rough Riders* sheds new light on the Theodore Roosevelt saga - and on one of the most thrilling chapters in American history. The song "Uncle Cliff" was written and performed by Mark Gardner, copyright 1985.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Readers of "The War Lovers: Roosevelt, Lodge, Hearst, and the Rush to Empire, 1898" (May 16, 2011) by Evan Thomas will enjoy this read. While Thomas' rendition focuses on the media side of the Spanish-American war, Mark Lee Gardner's version focuses on the battles and American troops in Cuba under Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders. It's a highly readable work based on historical letters written by the soldiers themselves, commentary by the war reporters who came along, news reports and the diaries of Teddy Roosevelt (TR) and other officers with him that he weaves into a very entertaining and informative read. In this book, Gardner shows how enthusiastic TR was for a war, and how much he wanted to be a warrior in the front lines. TR pulled some strings from his stint as Assistant Secretary to the Navy and with his friendship with Brigadier General Leonard Wood. Both men wanted to make sure their regiment of volunteers, the Rough Riders, got the attention they deserved, even if that meant shoving regular troops out of the way. It was not easy getting these enthusiastic Northeastern Yankees, Cowboys and horsemen from Tampa to Santiago, Cuba. The first casualties even before the first guns were fired were two Buffalo Soldiers and a horse. A good third of this narrative describes the logistics and transport of the Rough Riders before they even get to Cuba. In the growing age of Yellow Journalism, the Rough Riders were a newspaper's dream. Gardner shows how much TR reveled in the limelight, how he loved shmusing with war reporter Richard Harding Davis, Edward Marshall, and others. But this war proved to be a bit harder to win than expected, even for TR, but he was well-mentored by Gen Wood.

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