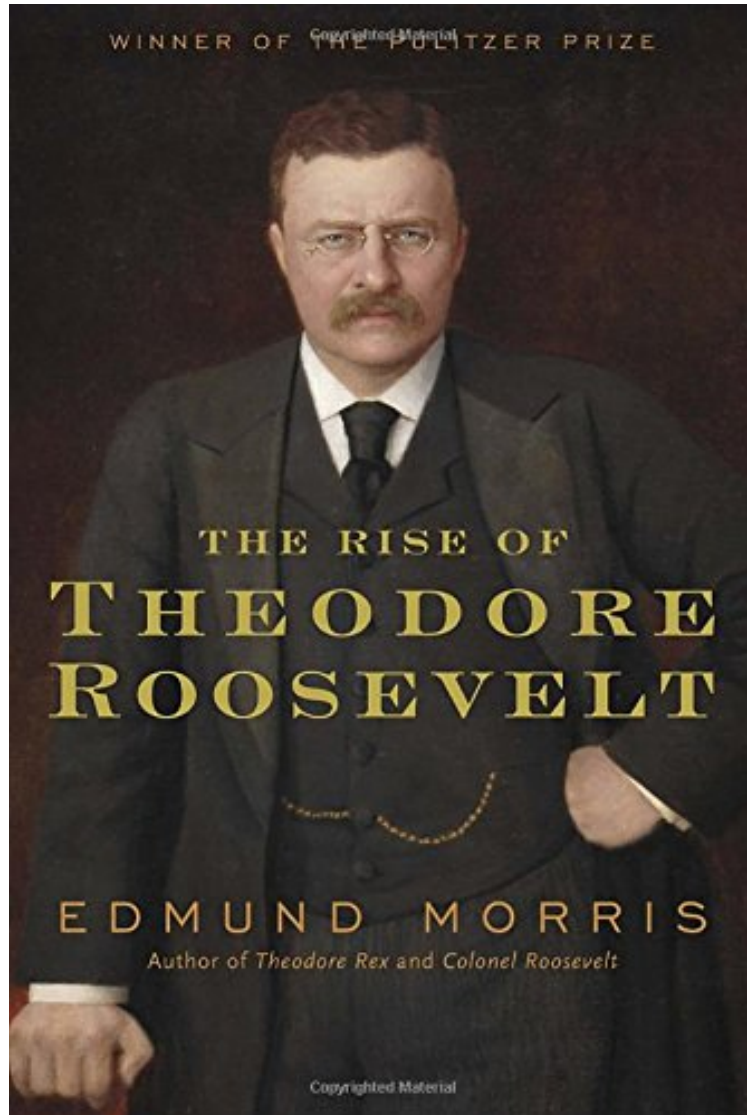


The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt

Edmund Morris

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Edmund Morris : The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. My admiration for TR transfigured into passion. By Chauncey Gardner The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt Edmund Morris I am on a chronological journey through the lives of the American Presidents, each one deepens my appreciation for this land we are abundantly blessed to be citizens of. This

work has been a delight, so wonderfully told, it's rich intimacy brings the Man palpably alive in my imagination. The story reveals the person he was as well as those who swirled around him as he exploded through life. Thank you Edmund, for helping me suffer his profound sense of loss, his thrill of the chase, his indignation for the corrupted, his appreciation of the plight of others, his desire to be a force of change, his deep gratification experienced from those he lead. I have always liked the Caricature of Teddy that I grew up with. The stick figure of the man presented from the flimsy narrative presented in public school. Now I love the man he was. I am starting the next episode right after lunch, Theodore Rex. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very detailed history of TR's rise. By Kindle Customer This book took me several months to complete as I had to put it down for periods of time and return to it later. This does not mean that it was too boring or tedious but that I knew I had part two and three of this biography to read and didn't want to spend 6 months to a year reading about TR alone. This book provides a lot of detail on his early life and early political career. TR was a man who tried his hand at many things over the course of his first 40 plus years. He seems to have had a lot of energy to always be trying something new. I am looking forward to the sequel biography that describes his presidency. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating! By Amanda C. Spurlock I was fascinated by the level of detail, the way it was written between fact and interpretation and how it kept me wanting to read continuously. I felt I was part of that era following someone on the cusp of greatness. I recommend this book to anyone wanting to learn about the history of one of the many great men that changed America. I also elevated my vocabulary; there are words I had never even heard. (Thank you kindle dictionary and wikipedia!) There was only one very tiny part that made me question his research or cultural abilities and it was related to the passage regarding the war in Cuba against the Spanish. He mention the Spanish taking a siesta and eating tortillas. This is highly unlikely as tortillas were and are not part of the Spaniard cuisine. it is Mexican and Not even close to Cuban cuisine. Not a big deal for others maybe but I was so fascinated with the story that it bugged me for not having that right. I would read it again and know that I would learn something new a second time. Can't wait to read the following one.

Selected by the Modern Library as one of the 100 best nonfiction books of all time Thirty years ago, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* won both the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. A collector's item in its original edition, it has never been out of print as a paperback. This classic book is now reissued in hardcover, along with *Theodore Rex*, to coincide with the publication of *Colonel Roosevelt*, the third and concluding volume of Edmund Morris's definitive trilogy on the life of the twenty-sixth President. Although *Theodore Rex* fully recounts TR's years in the White House (1901–1909), *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* begins with a brilliant Prologue describing the President at the apex of his international prestige. That was on New Year's Day, 1907, when TR, who had just won the Nobel Peace Prize, threw open the doors of the White House to the American people and shook 8,150 hands, more than any man before him. Morris re-creates the reception with such authentic detail that the reader gets almost as vivid an impression of TR as those who attended. One visitor remarked afterward, "You go to the White House, you shake hands with Roosevelt and hear him talk—and then you go home to wring the personality out of your clothes." The rest of this book tells the story of TR's irresistible rise to power. (He himself compared his trajectory to that of a rocket.) It is, in effect, the biography of seven men—a naturalist, a writer, a lover, a hunter, a ranchman, a soldier, and a politician—who merged at age forty-two to become the youngest President in our history. Rarely has any public figure exercised such a charismatic hold on the popular imagination. Edith Wharton likened TR's vitality to radium. H. G. Wells said that he was "a very symbol of the creative will in man." Walter Lippmann characterized him simply as our only "lovable" chief executive. During the years 1858–1901, Theodore Roosevelt, the son of a wealthy Yankee father and a plantation-bred southern belle, transformed himself from a frail, asthmatic boy into a full-blooded man. Fresh out of Harvard, he simultaneously published a distinguished work of naval history and became the fist-swinging leader of a Republican insurgency in the New York State Assembly. He had a youthful romance as lyrical—and tragic—as any in Victorian fiction. He chased thieves across the Badlands of North Dakota with a copy of *Anna Karenina* in one hand and a Winchester rifle in the other. Married to his childhood sweetheart in 1886, he became the country squire of Sagamore Hill on Long Island, a flamboyant civil service reformer in Washington, D.C., and a night-stalking police commissioner in New York City. As assistant secretary of the navy under President McKinley, he almost single-handedly brought about the Spanish-American War. After leading "Roosevelt's Rough Riders" in the famous charge up San Juan Hill, Cuba, he returned home a military hero, and was rewarded with the governorship of New York. In what he called his "spare hours" he fathered six children and wrote fourteen books. By 1901, the man Senator Mark Hanna called "that damned cowboy" was vice president of the United States. Seven months later, an assassin's bullet gave TR the national leadership he had always craved. His is a story so prodigal in its variety, so surprising in its turns of fate, that previous biographers have treated it as a series of haphazard episodes. This book, the only full study of TR's pre-presidential years, shows that he was an inevitable chief executive, and recognized as such in his early teens. His apparently random adventures were precipitated and linked by various aspects of his character, not least an overwhelming will. "It was as if he were subconsciously aware that he was a man of many selves," the author writes, "and set about developing each one in turn, knowing that one day he would be President of all the people."

Praise for *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* “Magnificent . . . one of those rare works that is both definitive for the period it covers and fascinating to read for sheer entertainment.”—*The New York Times Book* “A towering biography . . . a brilliant chronicle.”—*Time* “Theodore Roosevelt, in this meticulously researched and beautifully written biography, has a claim on being the most interesting man ever to be President of this country.”—*Los Angeles Times Book* “Spectacles glittering, teeth and temper flashing, high-pitched voice rasping and crackling, Roosevelt surges out of these pages with the force of a physical presence.”—*The Atlantic Monthly* “[Morris’s] prose is elegant and at the same time hard and lucid, and his sense of narrative flow is nearly flawless. . . . The author re-creates a sense of the scene and an immediacy of the situation that any skilled writer should envy and the most jaded reader should find a joy.”—*The Miami Herald* “A monumental work in every sense of the word . . . a book of pulsating and well-written narrative.”—*The Christian Science Monitor*

About the Author Edmund Morris was born in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1940. He was schooled there, and studied music, history, and literature at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa. After leaving Africa at the age of twenty-four, he worked for six years as an advertising copywriter in London and New York. He became a full-time writer in 1972. His first book, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, began life as a screenplay. It was published in 1979 and won the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award. In 1985, Morris was appointed the official biographer of President Ronald Reagan. The resultant work, *Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan* (1999), was and remains controversial because of its revolutionary narrative technique. *Theodore Rex* (2001), the second volume of Morris’s Roosevelt trilogy, won the *Los Angeles Times Book Award* for biography. Before completing his trilogy with *Colonel Roosevelt*, Morris published a short life of Beethoven. He lives in New York and Kent, Connecticut, with his wife and fellow biographer, Sylvia Jukes Morris.

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Chapter 1 **The Very Small Person** Then King Olaf entered, Beautiful as morning, Like the sun at Easter Shone his happy face. On the late afternoon of 27 October 1858, a flurry of activity disturbed the genteel quietness of East Twentieth Street, New York City. Liveried servants flew out of the basement of No. 28, the Roosevelt brownstone, and hurried off in search of doctors, midwives, and stray members of the family—a difficult task, for it was now the fashionable visiting hour. Meanwhile Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt lay tossing in her satinwood bed, awaiting the arrival of her second child and first son. Gaslight was flaring on the cobbles by the time a doctor arrived. The child was born at a quarter to eight, emerging so easily that neither chloroform nor instruments were needed. “Consequently,” reported his grandmother, “the dear little thing has no cuts nor bruises about it.” Theodore Roosevelt, Junior, was “as sweet and pretty a young baby as I have ever seen.” Mittie Roosevelt, inspecting her son the following morning, disagreed. She said, with Southern frankness, that he looked like a terrapin. Apart from these two contradictory images, there are no further visual descriptions of the newborn baby. He weighed eight and a half pounds, and was more than usually noisy. When he reappears in the family chronicles ten months later, he has acquired a milk-crust and a nickname, “Teedie.” At eighteen months the milk-crust has gone, but the nickname has not. He is now “almost a little beauty.” Scattered references in other letters indicate a bright, hyperactive infant. Yet already the first of a succession of congenital ailments was beginning to weaken him. Asthma crowded his lungs, depriving him of sleep. “One of my memories,” the ex-President wrote in his *Autobiography*, “is of my father walking up and down the room with me in his arms at night when I was a very small person, and of sitting up in bed gasping, with my father and mother trying to help me.” Even more nightmarish was the recollection of those same strong arms holding him, as the Roosevelt rig sped through darkened city streets, forcing a rush of air into the tiny lungs. Theodore Roosevelt, Senior, was no stranger to childhood suffering. Gifted himself with magnificent health and strength—“I never seem to get tired”—he overflowed with sympathy for the small, the weak, the lame, and the poor. Even in that age when a certain amount of charitable work was expected of well-born citizens, he was remarkable for his passionate efforts on behalf of the waifs of New York. He had what he called “a troublesome conscience.” Every seventh day of his life was dedicated to teaching in mission schools, distributing tracts, and interviewing wayward children. Long after dark he would come home after dinner at some such institution as the Newsboys’ Lodging-House, or Mrs. Sattery’s Night School for Little Italians. One of his prime concerns, as a founder of the Children’s Aid Society, was to send street urchins to work on farms in the West. His charity extended as far as sick kittens, which could be seen peeking from his pockets as he drove down Broadway. At the time of Teedie’s birth, Theodore Senior was twenty-seven years old, a partner in the old importing firm of Roosevelt and Son, and already one of the most influential men in New York. Handsome, wealthy, and gregarious, he was at ease with millionaires and paupers, never showing a trace of snobbery, real or inverse, in his relations with either class. “I can see him now,” remembered a society matron years later, “in full evening dress, serving a most generous supper to his newsboys in the Lodging-House, and later dashing off to an evening party on Fifth Avenue.” A photograph taken in 1862 shows deep eyes, leonine features, a glossy beard, and big, sloping shoulders. “He was a large, broad, bright, cheerful man,” said his nephew Emlen Roosevelt, “. . . deep through, with a sense of abundant strength and power.” The word “power” runs like a leitmotif through other descriptions of Theodore Senior: he was a person of inexorable drive. “A certain expression” on his face, as he strode breezily into the offices of business acquaintances, was enough to flip pocketbooks open. “How much this time, Theodore?” For all his compulsive philanthropy, he was neither sanctimonious nor ascetic. He took an exuberant, masculine joy in life, riding his horse through Central Park “as though born in the saddle,” exercising with the energy

of a teenager, waltzing all night long at society balls. Driving his four-in-hand back home in the small hours of the morning, he rattled through the streets at such a rate that his grooms allegedly “fell out at the corners.” Such a combination of physical vitality and genuine love of humanity was rare indeed. His son called Theodore Senior “the best man I ever knew,” adding, “. . . but he was the only man of whom I was ever really afraid.” In all respects except their intense love for each other, Theodore and Martha Roosevelt were striking opposites. Where he was big and disciplined and manly, “Mittie” was small, vague, and feminine to the point of caricature. He was the archetypal Northern burgher, she the Southern belle eternal, a lady about whom there always clung a hint of white columns and wisteria bowers. Born and raised in the luxury of a Georgia plantation, she remained, according to her son, “entirely unreconstructed until the day of her death.” Of her beauty, especially in her youth (she was twenty-three when Teedie was born), contemporary accounts are unanimous in their praise. Her hair was fine and silky black, with a luster her French hairdresser called *noir doré*. Her skin was “more moonlight-white than cream-white,” and in her cheeks there glowed a suggestion of coral.¹⁴ Every day she took two successive baths, “one for cleaning, one for rinsing,” and she dressed habitually in white muslin, summer and winter. “No dirt,” an admirer marveled, “ever stopped near her.” On Mittie’s afternoons “at home” she would sit in her pale blue parlor, surrounded always by bunches of violets, while “neat little maids in lilac print gowns” escorted guests into her presence. Invariably they were enchanted. “Such loveliness of line and tinting . . . such sweet courtesy of manner!” gushed Mrs. Burton Harrison, a memoirist of the period. Of five or six gentlewomen whose “birth, breeding, and tact” established them as the flowers of New York society, “Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt seemed to me easily the most beautiful.” From the Trade Paperback edition.