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TEDDY'S TERRORS: THE NEW MEXICAN VOLUNTEERS OF 1898

By CLIFFORD P. WESTERMEIER*

ON THE morning of February 16, 1898, the news of the sinking of the United States Battleship Maine, at Havana, Cuba, reached the office of Governor Miguel Antonio Otero at the capital city, Santa Fe, New Mexico. This came as a shock to the Spanish-Americans of the city and the territory. They were aware that serious trouble had been brewing for months between the United States and Spain, but the remoteness of their lives removed them from the daily excitement of and contact with yellow journalism which made the Spanish American War a more active reality for the East.

Almost immediately rumors spread that some of the people of New Mexico were not loyal; other reports stated that New Mexico sympathized with Spain.¹ The Governor suppressed these rumors and the inquiries which grew out of them with a strong affirmation of loyalty of the territory, and, in response to an inquiry made by the *New York World*, he wrote in part, "In anticipation of War, the New Mexico National Guard, in many localities, are drilling night and day."²

In the first week of April, 1898, the Governor offered Secretary of War, R. A. Alger, in case of war with Spain, the "immediate service of a full regiment of cavalry, nearly all of whom are of Spanish descent, and that more will follow if needed."³ The secretary gratefully acknowledged the offer and promised to communicate later.⁴

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(Author's Note: Unless otherwise indicated, all research material was found in newspapers of the year 1898.

1. Otero, Miguel Antonio, *My Nine Years As Governor of the Territory of New Mexico, 1897-1906* (cited hereafter as Otero, *My Nine Years As Governor, etc.*), Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1940, p. 35.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 36. "Indignant New Mexico," *Rocky Mountain News* (Denver, Colorado), April 26; "Unjust To New Mexico," *Ibid.*, April 27.

3. "Cavalry from New Mexico," *Fort Collins Courier* (Fort Collins, Colorado), April 14.

4. *Ibid.* Otero, *My Nine Years as Governor, etc.*, p. 38.

About two weeks later all military companies of the National Guard received orders to recruit to full strength, and at the same time volunteers in considerable numbers offered their services for active duty.⁵ Some immediate problems were of prime consideration. The border to the south was unprotected since the regular troops were taken from New Mexico, and there existed also the danger of Indian and bandit raids. Governor Otero suggested in a telegram to the Secretary of War that Forts Bayard and Wingate be garrisoned with New Mexico volunteers and that the border be patrolled. He described his men as follows: "Our volunteers are excellent horsemen, first-class marksmen, and are all accustomed to hardships of camp life, and a large proportion speak both Spanish and English. They will be ready on short notice and are anxiously awaiting orders to go wherever sent."⁶ The Honorable H. B. Fergusson, delegate to Congress, was requested to bring this notice to the attention of the Secretary of War.⁷

That other movements to use cowboy volunteers were afoot is evidenced in an interesting item in the newspapers, several weeks before the statement made by Governor Otero. This came from the adjacent territory of Arizona and may have been an impetus to the later action of New Mexico. The item appeared under the heading of "Western News:"

A movement is underway for the formation of an independent cavalry regiment, composed mainly of frontiersmen well skilled in the management of horses and arms, and embracing a large number of cowboys. Companies are being organized at Prescott, Flagstaff, Phoenix, Globe, Solomonville, Tombstone and Tucson. The intention is to be no wise a part of the territorial militia, but an independent command ready to go to the front at once. The enrollment is expected to reach 1,000.⁸

5. "Regiment of Western Sharpshooters and Cowboy Rough Riders," *Denver Republican* (Denver, Colorado), April 24; "New Mexico Cowboys," *Ibid.*, April 26; "Recruiting in Albuquerque," *Ibid.*, April 27; "Cowboy Regiment Recruiting," *Ibid.*, April 27; "New Mexico Riflemen," *Rocky Mountain News*, April 27.

6. *Santa Fe New Mexican* (Santa Fe, New Mexico), April 22; See "Fear Indian Attacks," *Rocky Mountain News*, April 23; "New Mexico Asks Protection," *Denver Republican*, April 26.

7. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 22.

8. *Fort Collins Courier*, March 3. See "Arizona Cavalry Regiment," *Rocky Mountain News*, April 14; "Arizona Regiment of Cowboys," *Denver Republican*, April 19; "Denver the Rendezvous," *Rocky Mountain News*, April 24; "Mr. Brodie is Commissioned," *Ibid.*, April 26.

On April 24, the following headline points the direction of Otero's suggestion: "Volunteers Galore. Offers For Active Service Pouring In On Governor Otero From All Over New Mexico. Recruiting The Maximum. National Gunrds [sic] Ready On Call—Two Thousand Men Could Be Had On Short Notice. . . ."⁹

J. H. Tiffany of Silver City requested the authority to raise a troop of cowboy cavalry in Sierra and Grant counties and suggested the men be mustered in as United States volunteers for service in Cuba or wherever they might be needed.¹⁰

This enthusiastic appeal to create a cowboy cavalry from the New Mexico volunteers was answered the following day, April 25, 1898, with the official declaration of war between the United States and Spain. On the same morning the Governor received the following telegram from Secretary Alger:

Washington, April 25, 1898.—The president directs that Captain Leonard Wood, United States army, be authorized to raise a regiment of cavalry as mounted riflemen, and to be its colonel and has named Hon. Theodore Roosevelt as lieutenant colonel. All of the other officers will come from the vicinity where the troops are raised. What can you do for them? Answer immediately.

R. A. ALGER
Secretary of War.¹¹

The dispatch was answered:

R. A. Alger, Secretary of War.

Telegram arrived. Have full squadron of cavalry ready for service. Prefer to send them as cavalrymen but probably can transfer as mounted riflemen, if necessary. Can raise battalion of mounted riflemen in about a week. Can you take squadron of cavalry and battalion mounted riflemen in addition?

MIGUEL A. OTERO
Governor.¹²

9. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 24. See "A Cowboy Company," *Denver Republican*, April 26; Otero, *My Nine Years As Governor, etc.*, p. 39.

10. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 24.

11. *Ibid.*, April 25. The *New Mexican* commented, [Captain Leonard Wood] "is a captain and assistant surgeon in the regular army. . . . He is said to be a physician and also a man of superior military education and ability. It is understood, that he is the attending physician at the White House." See "Commander of the Cowboys," *Rocky Mountain News*, April 26.

12. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 25.

Later that day, the Governor received another message from Secretary Alger: "The squadron of cavalry will serve as mounted riflemen equipped and armed by the United States for this special service. Extra men may be wanted but at present only 340 men can be taken."¹³

Thus the Cowboy Cavalry, the New Mexico Volunteers of 1898, began to take shape. Governor Otero, according to a comment in the newspaper which reported the above dispatches, had already made preparations to organize the squadron—the enlistment and muster of the men to take place in the capital.¹⁴ This momentous day and occasion could not pass without a facetious comment, such as appeared under the heading of "Minor City Topics:" "There is talk around town of organizing a bock beer brigade for service in the war with Spain. They could certainly be the loudest fighters in the army."¹⁵

The following morning Governor Otero received another telegram from the Secretary of War in reference to the mounted riflemen. The three hundred and forty men would form four companies of the regiment under Colonel Wood, and all equipment, arms and mounts would be furnished by the United States. He ended the message tersely: "Want every man a picked man."¹⁶

An enthusiastic account in the *Santa Fe New Mexican* shows that the qualifications for the New Mexico volunteers were many and diversified:

The four troops of mounted riflemen being organized in New Mexico for service in Cuba, will in many respects be the most noted volunteer squadron ever enlisted. Every man is to be picked with reference to special qualifications. He must be a good shot, be able to ride anything in the line of horseflesh, a rough and ready fighter, and above all must absolutely have no understanding of the word fear. The primary object of the organization of such a body of soldiers is to teach the civilized world that America possesses a class of men who, when armed and brought face to face with an enemy, never quit fighting until victory or death comes. To belong to New Mexico's

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*, April 26. See letters of Governor Otero and Secretary R. A. Alger concerning the cowboy regiment, *Las Vegas Daily Optic* (Las Vegas, New Mexico), April 26; "For Roosevelt's Regiment," *Denver Republican*, April 28.

mounted riflemen as a private is an honor which will be looked upon as beyond that of a commissioned officer in many another organization of volunteers, and one which will place a premium upon the places on the enlistment roll.¹⁷

Colonel Wood left Washington immediately for New Mexico and Arizona to organize a regiment of cowboy cavalry.¹⁸ However, efforts had already been made in that direction. A message from George Curry of El Paso instructed the adjutant general's office that he would have fifty men at Las Cruces by the following Monday, and that fifteen cowboys under C. L. Ballard, deputy United States marshal, came from the Pecos valley.¹⁹ Mr. A. M. Bergere, a clerk of the First Judicial District Court in Santa Fe, was physically disqualified to serve in the volunteers but demonstrated his patriotism to the Governor in a magnanimous offer: "I have on my ranch about 800 good horses and I would be pleased to tender 100 of these through you to the United States government free of charge."²⁰

Newspapers divulged that the Governor had secured Santa Fe as the rendezvous for the volunteers, a fact which caused an unfortunate controversy between the *Santa Fe New Mexican* and the *Albuquerque Citizen*. A rumor in the *Citizen* that the volunteer rendezvous was to be moved from Albuquerque to the capital city was reprinted in the *New Mexican*. Readers of the *Citizen* asked, "What is the matter with Delegate Fergusson?" As his constituents, they questioned his actions, for presumably he ignored their telegrams concerning the location of the rendezvous.²¹

To call upon the delegate to Congress who had nothing to do with military affairs was foolhardiness; the Governor alone, as commander-in-chief of the territorial forces, had the authority to make these decisions. The *Santa Fe New*

17. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 28.

18. *Ibid.*, April 28.

19. *Ibid.*, April 28. George Curry was appointed Captain of Troop H, the only New Mexico company of Rough Riders who did not go to Cuba. Otero, *My Nine Years As Governor, etc.*, pp. 42, 52.

20. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, April 29.

21. *Ibid.* See "New Mexico Cowboy Volunteers," *Denver Republican*, April 29; "Greeting to Cowboys," *Rocky Mountain News*, April 30; Otero, *My Nine Years As Governor, etc.*, pp. 39-40.

Mexican, in an attempt to settle the matter, issued the following statement in the form of a warning:

It is reported that officers of the National Guard of New Mexico in Albuquerque and probably one or two other places are taking it upon themselves to criticise the acts of their supreme officers and of the commander in chief. Such acts are military offenses and liable to punishment by court martial. The law under which officers and enlisted men of the New Mexico National Guard are enlisted or commissioned is amply strong for this purpose and officers should remember that Governor Otero is commander in chief and as such, from a military standpoint, his acts are above criticism or cavil. No foolishness will be allowed or tolerated, and the law and regulations will be rigidly enforced in such cases as come before the notice of the officers.²²

The same newspaper "pulled no punches" in another account:

There is no rumor about this. It is an accomplished fact. The best interests of the service and of the territory demand that the rendezvous for the New Mexico volunteers be at the seat of the territorial government and Governor Otero having presented the matter to the proper authorities in Washington clearly and forcibly, Santa Fe was selected for the purpose named. It was not a question of towns, it was a question of what was the best for the country. The Citizen need not pour out the vials of its wrath on Delegate Fergusson's devoted head, the delegate's tow line is not nearly as long or as powerful as that of the governor's from Santa Fe to Washington. That's all.²³

But that was *not* all! The discontented faction in Albuquerque, smarting under the turn of events, proceeded to criticize the volunteers, called them "tenderfoot cowboys" and predicted "that very few of them would pass muster."²⁴ Captain Max Luna, who had commanded Troop F First Cavalry at Las Lunas, was in direct charge of the volunteers, and he and these volunteers were the target for some special criticism from the *Albuquerque Democrat*. This criticism did not escape the notice of the *New Mexican*, which answered in part:

As a matter of fact, Captain C. L. Cooper [U.S.A. mustering officer] today complimented Captain Luna on the splendid physique of his men and expressed great satisfaction at their deportment. Out

22. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 3.

23. *Ibid.*, April 29.

24. *Ibid.*, May 2.

of 15 men examined this forenoon 13 were accepted for service and even better results are anticipated from further examinations.

Citizens of Santa Fe are highly indignant over the cowardly course pursued by the Democrat, and the feeling that the perpetrator of such a dastardly outrage merits severe punishment, is general. A man whose patriotism runs so low that he can see nothing commendable in the action of a person who offers to sacrifice his life on the altar of his country's honor and glory, is a yellow cur of the most despicable variety and his contracted brain, if he has such an article, has never experienced a respectable honorable motive.²⁵

The criticism of the volunteers by the *Albuquerque Democrat* as "hobo volunteers" brought several strong, patriotic, sentimental and threatening protests from the citizenry of Santa Fe. There were also comments concerning the physical appearance of the volunteers as "fine specimens of physical manhood," "huskiest specimen of manhood," "great, big strapping young men," and "fine riders, excellent shots."²⁶

In his book, *The Rough Riders*, which first appeared as a serial in *Scribner's Magazine*, Theodore Roosevelt expresses his opinion: "They were a splendid set of men, these Southwesterners—tall and sinewy, with resolute, weather-beaten faces, and eyes that looked a man straight in the face without flinching. They included in their ranks men of every occupation; but the three types were of the cowboy, the hunter, and the mining prospector. . . ."²⁷

Several days later, a "loyal" New Mexican sent a telegram to the *New York World*, which in no way eased the tense situation:

Roosevelt's cowboy regiment is liable to be a fake. The members of the regiment, so far as New Mexico is concerned, are being recruited in railroad towns. Probably not 10 per cent of the men

25. *Ibid.* According to a letter from Governor Otero to Thomas Hughes of Albuquerque, the *Democrat* criticized the volunteers from that city; however the Governor assured Hughes of the fine quality of the men from Albuquerque. The group included Hughes' son, who had passed the physical examination that same afternoon.

26. *Ibid.*, May 3. The editor of the *Albuquerque Citizen* comments: "The war department is hereby notified that a rebel sheet in this city is ridiculing recruits in the volunteer service and calling them "drunken stiffs," a charge which is absolutely and maliciously false. The owner of the sheet is a foreigner and he should be given instructions to keep his hands off the conduct of this war, which is not his fight." "Glance At Our Neighbors," *Denver Evening Post* (Denver, Colorado), May 6.

27. Roosevelt, Theodore, "The Rough Riders," (cited hereafter as Roosevelt, "Rough Riders,") *Scribner's Magazine* 25, January, 1898, p. 11.

recruited ever were cowboys in their lives, and I doubt if one-fourth of them ever rode a horse. Lincoln county, New Mexico, of which I am a resident, is one of the chief cattle counties of the Territory, and not the slightest effort has been made to enlist a single cowboy. This statement I stand by, regardless of what may be said by those in authority. A large proportion of the applicants for enlistment are foreigners, while the cowboy element is purely native born.

EDWARD J. MURRAY.²⁸

During the first ten days of the month of May, patriotic songs, sentimental poetry and lusty cheers appeared in the capital city newspaper in considerable numbers. Appropriate words were written to the songs "Good-bye My Lover, Good-bye," and "Marching Thru Georgia,"—the latter popularly known as the "Cuba Libre Song."²⁹ The following piece of sentimental poetry typifies the stress and concern of the time:

"A blare of bugles through the land
 "To horse!" the call; 'tis full and clear.
 "A loosening of hand from hand;
 "A teardrop's fall; a kiss so dear!
 "A father's clasp, a mother's prayer,
 "A rose hid in the knapsack there."³⁰

A lusty cheer, more typical of the mood of the men, came from San Antonio, Texas, where the volunteers trained:

"'Rah! Rah! Rah!
 "'Ray! 'Ray! 'Ray!
 "We're the cowboy regiment
 "From Santa Fe,
 "Bound for Cuba."³¹

On May 6, the Arizona contingent of the volunteer cavalry, composed of seven officers and one hundred and seventy-nine men, passed through Isleta, New Mexico, on its

28. "Are The Cowboys A Myth?" *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, May 17. See "Ten Cowboys From Raton," *Denver Republican*, April 30; "Las Vegas' Quota Is Off," *Rocky Mountain News*, May 1; "Cowboys Sending In Names," *Ibid.*, May 2; "Volunteers In Santa Fe," *Ibid.*, May 3; "Union County Cowboys," *Denver Republican*, May 3; "New Mexico's Fighting Cowboys," *Ibid.*; "Cowboys Go South," *Denver Times*, (Denver Colorado), May 5; "Just Aching For A Scrap," *Rocky Mountain News*, May 12.

29. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 4, May 6.

30. *Ibid.*, May 5. See "When Teddy Quits The Sea," a poem by R.D.B. *Ibid.*, May 6.

31. *Ibid.*, May 10.

way to San Antonio, Texas, the rendezvous of the First U. S. Volunteer Cavalry.³² Upon arrival at the New Mexico station, they sent the following telegram:

Roosevelt's Troopers, Santa Fe.

Isleta, N. M., May 6,—Wat 'ell matter with New Mexico. Come running or will never get to Cuba.

BRODIES ARIZONIANS, 200 STRONG.³³

Another report from Albuquerque of this troop movement mentions seven officers and one hundred and ninety men. "The cars were decorated with banners and streamers bearing the mottoes, "Cowboy Regiment of Arizona," "Remember the Maine," and others."³⁴ A dispatch from Guthrie, Oklahoma, said, "Lieutenant A. P. Carpon and Sergeant S. T. Treacker of the 7th cavalry arrived here from Fort Sill to recruit Oklahoma's troop of cavalry."³⁵

To cover the seeming delay of the New Mexican volunteers, the *New Mexican* commented: "When one considers the great distances men have to travel in New Mexico and the time required to communicate with the many places, having no telegraphic connection with the outside world, the recruiting of the four troops of picked men in five days shows great work."³⁶ The New Mexico squadron was made up of territorial militia and volunteers who were mustered into military service as the First Volunteer Cavalry. The first four companies had, for their immediate officers, men of the areas from which they were recruited: Captains Frederick Muller, Maximiliano Luna, W. H. H. Llewellyn, and George Curry commanded the troops E, F, G, and H, respectively. The first camp was located at Santa Fe and was named Camp Otero by the unanimous vote of the men.³⁷

For several days before the departure of the volunteers,

32. *Ibid.*, May 6. See "Arizona's Cowboy Contingent," *Denver Republican*, April 30; "Arizona Leads in Mustering Troops," *Denver Times*, May 3.

33. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 6.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.* Permission also had been granted to recruit cowboy cavalry at Carson City, Nevada; Salt Lake City, Utah; Cheyenne, Wyoming, and Boise, Idaho, "Cowboy Regiment Recruiting," *Denver Republican*, April 27. See newspapers of the Rocky Mountain Empire, April 27 to May 9, 1898.

36. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 6. See Otero, *My Nine Years As Governor, etc.*, p. 40.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

the *New Mexican* sponsored a subscription to purchase a flag to present to the cavalry. On May 7, they had raised \$242.50;³⁸ however, before the presentation could be made, the volunteers had left Santa Fe for their destination.

The departure of the volunteers took place on Saturday afternoon, May 7. The first section of the train left at 5:30; the second followed ten minutes later. Some 5,000 people gathered to see the departure, and according to the accounts many sad scenes were witnessed.³⁹ The *New Mexican*, in a sympathetic mood, comments favorably on the men and their actions in the city during the previous week:

The greater number of the men were in Santa Fe a week, and in that time their behavior was such as to impress every one with their earnestness and quiet determination to do what ever duty points out. During the time they were in this city not a single disturbance occurred either on the streets or in quarters, and aside from the bustle and stir of preparation and organization, no one would have known anything unusual was going on. A more courteous company of men never gathered in one place from all parts of the territory and the citizens of Santa Fe were sincerely sorry to see them leave.⁴⁰

From Dodge City, Kansas, the day after the departure of the volunteers, came a dispatch from Harman Wynkoop: "All through Colorado and Kansas enthusiastic crowds meet the train at the stations. Some of the boys developed their warlike proclivities by sinking schooners here (beer)."⁴¹

During these weeks the press conferred interesting names upon the volunteers. The majority of the volunteers was "made up of men from the plains, from Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and the Indian Territory—cowboys and miners, bred to the use of the horse and rifle, and to roughing it in the open. Some of these served in the National Guard in their several states."⁴² With these facts in mind,

38. "New Mexican Cowboy Volunteers," *Denver Republican*, April 29; *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 7. The flag subscription closed with a total of \$253.50. The flag reached the volunteers probably the latter part of June as it is mentioned in a letter dated July 1. *Ibid.*, May 9, July 5.

39. *Ibid.*, May 7; "New Mexico Volunteers," *Denver Republican*, May 6.

40. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 9.

41. *Ibid.*, May 10. See "New Mexico Volunteers," *Denver Republican*, May 8; "Cowboys Get An Ovation," *Rocky Mountain News*, May 8.

42. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 11.

the ingenious press tagged the volunteers as Teddy's Terrors, Roosevelt's Rough Riders, Teddy's Holy Terrors, Roosevelt's Rough 'Uns, Teddy's Gilded Gang, Roosevelt's Wild West, Teddy's Texas Tarantulas, Teddy's Cowboy Contingent, Teddy's Riotous Rounders, Fighting Cowboys, Cowboy Regiment, The Fighting First, Cowboy Cavalry, Cowboy Volunteers, Roosevelt's Regiment, Teddy's Canvasbacks, and Uncle Sam's Brownies.⁴³ As the *New York Press* commented: "Colonel Wood is lost sight of entirely in the effulgence of Teethadore."⁴⁴ However, according to *Chicago Inter Ocean*, Lieutenant Colonel Roosevelt did not approve of these glamorous titles. "Don't call them rough riders," says Theodore Roosevelt, "and don't call them cowboys. Call them mounted riflemen. If any man believes this regiment will go on the hippodrome order he has make a bleeding mistake, particularly when we get in the midst of the fight."⁴⁵

Newspapers confirmed reports that some fifty college and club men from the East were to be in this regiment. Among these were Craig Wadsworth, an outstanding polo player; Basil Ricketts, Hamilton Fish Jr., Horace Devereaux, Princeton football stars; William Tiffany, New York social light; Reginald Ronald, Yale half-back; and Hollister, sprinter from Harvard.⁴⁶

"Keep an eye on Teddy's Terrors. They are the stuff from which came the knighted chivalry of old," said a writer for the *Denver Field and Farm*.⁴⁷ However, the odd

43. "Those Rough Riders," *Denver Times*, May 31. See "Regiment of Western Sharpshooters And Cowboy Riders," *Denver Republican*, April 25; "Rocky Mountain Regiment Will Be Known As Teddy's Terrors," *Denver Evening Post*, April 25; "Cowboy Regiment Recruiting," *Denver Republican*, April 27; "Those Cowboy Volunteers," *Denver Times*, April 28; "The 'Fighting First' Cavalry," *Denver Republican*, June 5.

44. "Those Rough Riders," *Denver Times*, May 31.

45. "Not 'Rough Riders,'" *Ibid.*, May 31. See Roosevelt, "Rough Riders," *Scribners*, p. 7; "Roosevelt Is Not a Dime Novel Cowboy," *Denver Times*, May 27.

46. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 11. See "College Men To Join Teddy," *Denver Evening Post*, May 4; "Harvard Students Go With Roosevelt," *Denver Times*, May 4; "Propose To Ride As Cowboys," *Denver Republican*, May 5; "Dudes Are All Right, Curled Darlings Of Society Join Teddy's Terrors," *Denver Evening Post*, May 11; Editorial, *Denver Republican*, May 12; "Teddy's Terrors At San Antonio," *Rocky Mountain News*, May 12; "Rough Riders," *Scribner's*, p. 8.

47. (Denver, Colorado), May 14.

combination of Easterner and Westerner concerned the paper of the capital city of New Mexico:

The New York swells, who enlisted in the 1st regiment of U. S. volunteer cavalry, had to leave their valets at home. They are probably nice fellows and all that, but it must be remembered that every man sent by New Mexico as a member of that regiment is just as good as the best New York swell. The chances are that all will fraternize and assimilate when it comes to duty and active service, and that this mixture will prove for the best and will make the regiment one of the finest in the service.⁴⁸

The last two weeks of May brought many reports on the activities of the volunteers in Camp Riverside at San Antonio. The strength of the regiment was about 1,000 men, including about seventy, mostly Texas cowmen, who had enlisted since the group came to that city.⁴⁹ The uniforms, issued shortly after the arrival of the men, consisted of "canvas brown tunic and trowsers, brown leggings, black shoes, navy blue shirts and gray field hats." "Teddy's Brownies," as they were called, were a "husky lot of troopers when drawn up in line on horseback."⁵⁰

Captain T. P. Ledwidge of Troop E, in a letter to the *Denver Republican*, gives an interesting account of the equipment carried by the volunteers:

Each man is supplied with a McClelland saddle, bridle, water bridle, halter, saddlebags, sircingle, picket pin and rope, nose bag, curry comb and brush, spurs, canteen, mess pan and tin cup, knife, fork and spoon, poncho, body blanket, horse blanket, one-half shelter tent, service belt, machete and scabbard, Krag-Jorgensen 30-30 carbine and scabbard, 44-caliber single action Colt's revolver and scabbard and cartridge belt. What else we will carry I cannot say, but it seems we have enough now. Each troop has its own color of horse. . . .⁵¹

All was not work, as is evidenced in the various reports which came back to Santa Fe. On one occasion the Mayor of San Antonio, accompanied by a band and a large number of

48. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 12. "There is some local fear expressed since forty of the New York 400 have gone to San Antonio, Texas, to enlist in the First Regiment of Cavalry, Cowboy Battalion, that the simple manners and customs of the New Mexico cow-boy may be contaminated and his morals deteriorated by contact with these New Yorkers." *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, May 16.

49. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 24.

50. *Ibid.*, May 17. See "The Fighting First Cavalry," *Denver Republican*, June 5.

51. *Ibid.*

citizens, visited the barracks and serenaded the "cow-punchers" with "familiar airs of home."⁵² Another dispatch says:

For the last few nights the guard house has been doing a rushing business. It has been filled to over-flowing with the heroic volunteers who have received "hole-in-the-fence" passes. Last night there were three young men in leggings who had "spotted the reptile variously" during the evening, and were returning singing, with great tenderness, "Take back what you promised me," and looking, with aching head and rheumy eyes, afar into the future. They had just reached the hole in the fence when dark forms heaved up in front of them, behind them, all around them and simultaneously commanded the young men to halt. Then they were marched with great tact down to the guard house where they lingered, shivering and repentent, until early in the morning. They are now older and wiser soldiers.⁵³

Another report, typical of the recruit, gives an over-all picture of life in the Texas camp:

Lieutenant Colonel Roosevelt drilled us for two hours yesterday. A lot of us boys took a swim in the river last night. Keeping clean is our greatest trouble, except, perhaps, the mosquitoes, which are very thick. Some of us look as though we had the small pox from the mosquito bites. One man slept with his feet outside of the blankets and they bit him so hard that he can scarcely walk. No one seems to know what we are going to do next and everyone seems to have a different idea as to where and when we will go. Two of the boys from Texas went out and shot up a saloon last night. There wasn't a piece of whole glass left in the place after they got through. They brought back the largest pieces of the mirror for use in camp. The police were afraid to arrest them. This is the only thing in the nature of a disturbance that has occurred since the regiment came here.

The dust blows as hard here as it does in Santa Fe in March.⁵⁴

Another letter noted that the Sabbath was observed in various ways, depending on the whims of the individual.⁵⁵

By this time the regiment had secured about nine hundred horses and two hundred pack mules. As a part of their daily duties, the volunteers had to practice putting packs on the mules, and there was "lots of kicking on the part of the mules and lots of fun and swearing on the part of the boys."⁵⁶ The sudden demand for horses caused a great in-

52. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 19.

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*, May 25.

55. *Ibid.*, May 19.

56. *Ibid.*, May 24. See Roosevelt, "Rough Riders," *Scribner's*, p. 19.

crease in price. "Horses that could not be sold two years ago for \$20 per head are now bringing \$80 and \$90 apiece."⁵⁷

During the middle of May, the *Santa Fe New Mexican* reprinted, under a title "Spanish Views of the United States," news that appeared in some of the enemy's newspapers. *El Heraldo de Madrid* printed in the April 20, 1898, issue:

News is brought to us that Buffalo Bill, a notorious outlaw and leader of a band of half-breeds, has risen against the American government, and is burning towns near his birthplace in New York.

Word has just been received here that the Indians are rising against the Yankees in Illinois, Ohio, and other places. The farmers are petitioning the government to protect them from the blood thirsty savages, who are burning houses and killing on every side. Troops are asked for at Colorado, in the state of Denver, and at St. Louis, in Missipa.

Diario tersely reported:

The Yankee president Magginly, committed suicide for fear the Spanish fleet would capture New York.

Pais, in an account on April 20, probably thought it could explain the above happenings:

The country is not fit to live in. The climate is execrable. When it is not sleeting and snowing, the heat is almost unbearable. Avalanches are frequent at all times, and these threaten the principal cities. As for the people, besides the few whites engaged in business along the eastern coast, the remainder of the country is one vast plain, covered with Indians, called cowboys, and great herds of roaming cattle.⁵⁸

The amusement created at home by letters from camp, which related the experiences of the volunteers and the reported stupidity of the enemy, was cut short on May 28, when the news reached the territory that the regiment had received marching orders. The following morning they reentrained for Tampa, Florida, "the jumping off place" for

57. *Ibid.*, May 19. See "Cowboys Hunt Tall Timber," *Denver Times*, June 17; "Reminded Cowboys Of Old Times," *Rocky Mountain News*, June 18. An interesting item comes from New York after the volunteers were mustered out in September. Three hundred and seventy-five horses, belonging to Roosevelt's Rough Riders, were sold at prices ranging from \$5 to \$77; the average was \$16. They originally cost the government about \$65 each. "Rough Riders' Horses Sold," *Denver Republican*, September 21.

58. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, May 16.

the expedition to Cuba. The message ended with a terse "All well,"⁵⁹ and a report on June 3 stated that the 1st volunteer cavalry had arrived at Tampa, 1087 strong.⁶⁰ Several days later the first foreboding note was evidenced in the dispatches of the previous month. Under the headline, "Condition of American Troops," some unfortunate facts were revealed:

Since the arrival of the United States troops at Tampa, both regular and volunteer, there has been much criticism of their effectiveness by the American and European military experts who have visited the camps. It is asserted that the men are wholly unprepared for a campaign in the tropics by reason of their equipments. The uniforms furnished are not adapted to tropical heat and dampness, transportation facilities for camp supplies are inadequate, and altogether the forces assembled to invade Cuba are in bad shape.⁶¹

Letters from Tampa indicated that the four-day trip from San Antonio to the Florida camp had been strenuous, chiefly because of poor railroad transportation.⁶² Harman Wynkoop wrote an interesting account concerning an incident in San Antonio and its far-reaching repercussions in Tampa. During a concert in the former city, given for the benefit of the volunteers, the men were requested to shoot their revolvers upon a given signal in order to promote the success of one particular rendition, "The Cavalry Charge." This they readily agreed to do, and although the lights went out because of an inferior plant, the musicians were able to complete the program. The following evening "a dirty little 'rat' sheet came out and under a 'blackface,

59. *Ibid.*, May 28; "Terrors Are Ordered Out," *Denver Evening Post*, May 28.

60. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 3; "Woods' Rough Riders," *Denver Republican*, June 4. During the month of June, Governor Otero received requests for additional volunteers to bring the New Mexican squadron to the maximum allowed by the law. Evidently Colonel Wood approved of the quality of the volunteers for he wanted more immediately. Altogether, over six hundred men from New Mexico became part of the First U. S. volunteer cavalry. See *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 1-30; Otero, *My Nine Years As Governor, etc.*, p. 44-45; "They All Want To Go," *Denver Republican*, June 9; "Cowboy Volunteers," *Ibid.*, June 15; "Recruits From New Mexico," *Ibid.*, June 18; "Albuquerque's 'Rough Riders,'" *Ibid.*, June 22; "More Rough Riders Wanted," *Ibid.*; "New Mexico Recruits," *Ibid.*, June 23; "Examination Of Recruits," *Ibid.*, June 24; "More Men From New Mexico," *Rocky Mountain News*, June 28; "Rough Riders Increased," *Denver Republican*, June 30; "New Mexico Sends More Terrors," *Ibid.*

61. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 7.

62. *Ibid.*, June 11. See Roosevelt, "Rough Riders," *Scribner's*, p. 136-138.

scare head told of how 800 'rough riders' had punctured a concert." Shooting 2,000 shots caused women and children to stampede and scream; "the 'ungentlemenly cowboys' " cut the electric wire and then robbed the tills of the neighboring saloons. Naturally, the press spread the story to the country at large. When the citizens of Tampa heard that the volunteers were to be paid while in the city, they implored the paymaster to defer the payment until the men had departed. Wynkoop wrote: "They were afraid of us. How absurd! They seem to think the boys are a set of hyenas, cut throats, murderers and horse thieves and that they have no regard for human lives or public property."⁶³

A dispatch from Tampa, dated July 1, reveals that the men had not been paid up to that time; however, Wynkoop intimated in another report on the same day that "the petition of the Tampa citizens was rejected by the paymaster and the boys will be paid tomorrow morning."⁶⁴

In the July 1 dispatch Wynkoop wrote:

We have not been paid our small respective mites since we entered the service, and it has put many of the boys, who absolutely need cash for necessarily [sic] articles, in a very embarrassing condition.

Many boys have been sick, caused by change of diet, climate, etc., and could not be properly cared for in the hospital (for the surgeon has only a limited supply of pills) and they need small amounts for proper food and medicine. The delay has been very aggravating, and it seems as though something could have been done, by the proper authorities, to have the boys paid. We are promised to be paid on the 2d or 2d of next month; we'll then get two month's pay at once. Although none of us entered the service for the paltry wages which are given we will, nevertheless, appreciate the government's "chink" when it is handed over to us.⁶⁵

A patriotic and self-sacrificing incident is the basis of probably one of the most amusing and yet pathetic work efforts of the entire war. Mary C. Prince [Mrs. L. Bradford Prince], the State Regent Daughter of the American Revolution for New Mexico, assisted, on a visit to Denver, in making flannel abdominal protectors for the Colorado volunteers.

63. "News From Front," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 13. See "Cowboys At Tampa," *Denver Times*, June 3; "Busy Days at Tampa, Florida," *Denver Republican*, June 12.

64. "News From Front," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 13.

65. *Ibid.*, July 5.

In a statement to the Daughters of the American Revolution and All Patriotic Women of New Mexico, she said, concerning these protectors:

They are made double, of soft all-wool flannel and are a half-yard long and about ten inches wide. One yard of flannel makes three protectors. They are stitched together once, and then turned over and stitched again; two and a quarter yards of tape is then sewed flatly across the top to fasten it around the body. White flannel is not used for obvious reasons, nor red, because that irritates the skin.⁶⁶

Such a protector was said to be especially advantageous in the prevention of certain diseases peculiar to the tropics, and Mrs. Prince offered to send a sample of the flannel, the pattern, and a finished protector to Mrs. Jacob Weltmer, secretary of the Sunshine Chapter of the organization at Santa Fe.⁶⁷

This detailed account and the earnest promotion of the abdominal protectors did not end at this point for, on July 1, Wynkoop reported the arrival of the same and also the surprised reaction of the men:

The abdominal bandages sent us by the ladies of New Mexico were issued out, one to each trooper. The surgeon overlooked the importance of imparting to Teddy's wild cowboys the use of this peculiarly patterned piece of wool. So, of course, many had different ideas as to the use of the belt. It was near supper time when the bandages were given out, and so many of the belts adorned the breasts of innocent soldiers, bib fashion, during the meal. Many others thought it was a new uniform, especially adapted to Cuban climate. This was very appropriate, for we need to be covered with something more than glory. But, ladies of New Mexico, we deeply and sincerely thank you for thinking of our welfare, and we all hope to live to return and thank you individually for our "abominable bandages."⁶⁸

In a reprint item from the *Republican*, Springfield, Massachusetts, the scope of information concerning the volunteers is revealed. Commenting on a statement from the *New Haven Register*, "People are getting ruffled at hearing so much about the "Rough Riders," the *Republican* says:

Not about the "Rough Riders," but about a few members of the regiment. There are, perhaps, 980 odd cowboys from the west in the

66. "To The Daughter Of The American Revolution And All Patriotic Women Of New Mexico," *Ibid.*, May 31.

67. *Ibid.*; "To Help the Volunteers," *Denver Republican*, June 1.

68. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, July 5.

organization, and from ten to 20 eastern college graduates and New York society men. One might think from reading the New York newspapers that these ten or 20 easterners, brave as they are, made up the entire force.⁶⁹

The night of June 7, the volunteers received orders to be at the Port of Tampa, the point of embarkation, the following morning. After much delay in leaving camp and difficulties in finding transportation to the port, the volunteers finally arrived and boarded the transports. The ships were crowded and uncomfortable, a situation which became more so, due to an order, received just before sailing time, that the ships be held. Consequently, they remained in harbor almost a week, and the tropical Florida heat caused intense discomfort and misery.⁷⁰ One Rough Rider, in writing his reminiscences, complained that they had a bad time from the very first: "The grub was horrible; we had no freshly cooked food for fourteen days. 'Salt horse,' hardtack, one-eighth can of tomatoes, and water coffee constituted a ration. The lack of variety at first made the food disagreeable, then nauseating."⁷¹ Finally, on the evening of June 13, they set sail for Cuba, and the tension and discomfort of the cramped men was somewhat relieved. On June 20, they neared the coast of Cuba, remained off Santiago for two days, and landed "after a heavy bombardment of the coast by several of our men-of-war."⁷²

However, sectional and petty differences, discomfort and woe were soon forgotten. On June 25 and 26, the newspapers of the Rocky Mountain Empire carried ominous headlines:

First Baptism Of Blood On Cuban Soil. New Mexico Volunteers In Battle—Enemy, Although In Strong Force, Compelled To Retire—American Loss 60 Officers And Men—List of Dead And Wounded.⁷³ Teddy's Terror's Decimated By Don's Fire.⁷⁴ Into Death's Jaws Marched The Terrors.⁷⁵

69. *Ibid.*, July 22. See "Virile Young Society Men," *Denver Republican*, June 26; "The Gallant Dudes," *Ibid.*, July 17.

70. Roosevelt, "Rough Riders," *Scribner's*, p. 144-149. See "Cowboy Cavalry Afloat," *Denver Republican*, June 10.

71. "The Fight of the Rough Riders," *Outlook* 60, September 3, p. 19.

72. *Ibid.*

73. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 25.

74. *Rocky Mountain News*, June 25.

75. *Denver Evening Post*, June 25.

The New Mexico Volunteers met the enemy in battle on June 24, and, according to the report received in Santa Fe, they bore the brunt of the fight. The dispatch said in part:

Col. Wood's men, with an advance guard well out in front, and two Cuban guides before them, but apparently with no flanks, went squarely into the trap set for them by the Spaniards and only the unfaltering courage of the men in the face of a fire that would even make a veteran quail, prevented what might easily have been a disaster. . . .

"There must have been nearly 1,500 of us," said Lieut. Col. Roosevelt today, when discussing the fight. "They held the ridges with rifle pits and machine guns and had a body of men in ambush in the thick of the jungle at the sides of the road over which we were advancing. Our advance forward struck the men in ambush and drove them out. . . ."

"The Spanish firing was accurate, so accurate, indeed, that it surprised me; and their firing was fearfully heavy.

"I want to say a word for our own men," continued Lieut. Col. Roosevelt. "Every officer and man did his duty up to the hilt. Not a man flinched."⁷⁶

The casualties were listed as follows: one officer and seven men killed; nine men missing; two officers and eighteen men wounded. A very interesting fact appears in these first reports of the battle, namely, the information that the cavalry men were afoot. This is mentioned in all first reports and repeated several times in dispatches which followed. A rather obscure news item early in June mentioned that it might be necessary to leave the horses at Tampa, but they would probably be sent for later.⁷⁷ However, the truth of the statement is not revealed until the news that the volunteers had engaged in battle with the enemy had reached home. Lack of transportation facilities seemed to be the

76. "Engagement At La Quasina," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, June 28. See "Rough Riders Win Their Spurs," *Denver Republican*, June 25; "Heroic Fighting By The Rough Riders," *Ibid.*, June 26; "Col. Roosevelt's Western Riders Show Their Mettle," *Ibid.*; Davis, Richard Harding, "The Rough Rider's Fought Bravely," *Ibid.*; "How Rough Riders Went To Death," *Rocky Mountain News*, June 26; "Praise For The Heroes," *Ibid.*; "The Battle of La Quasina," *Denver Republican*, June 27; "The Rough Riders," *Rocky Mountain News*, June 28; "American Bluff Won The Day," *Denver Evening Post*, June 28; "Teddy's Terrors Talk Of Their Baptism Of Fire," *Ibid.*, June 29; Roosevelt, "Rough Riders," *Scribner's*, p. 274.

77. "Rough Riders For Infantry," *Rocky Mountain News*, June 6. See Roosevelt, "Rough Riders," *Scribner's*, p. 143. "Dizzy From Heat And Famishing For Water," *Denver Evening Post*, June 27.

only reason for this situation.⁷⁸ The most recent comment on the rough riders afoot is made by Rough Rider William J. Love of Las Vegas, New Mexico, during the 50th anniversary of their reunion, held in that city the latter part of June, 1949. He said:

As for fighting afoot—well, I was born in a dugout in 1872 right here in Las Vegas, raised as a cowboy, and enlisted under Lt. Green in April, 1898, fully expecting to do my fighting on horseback. So did most of the rest of the boys. About all the training we got was “railroad training” from Santa Fe to San Antonio to Tampa. But during our brief stay in San Antonio we did have horses. We even got as far as Tampa with ‘em. What happened then, I reckon, must have been just a case of what the GI’s of World War II called “snafu.” Maybe there just wasn’t room on the boats for the horses. Anyhow we landed in Cuba afoot, marched afoot, sweated under the tropical sun afoot, and won whatever fame we got as Rough Riders by fighting afoot.⁷⁹

One participant recalls the battle vividly: “At one stage of the fight we were diligently firing directly in front of us, when an officer came running toward us shouting, “For God’s sake stop! you are killing your own men! You are supporting the firing line.” We were horror-struck, and a groan went up from the men.”⁸⁰

The *New York Evening Sun* paid a fine tribute to the Roosevelt Rough Riders. They were described as “the most representative body of American volunteers . . . in the service of the government.” Other regiments came from particular localities, but this mounted organization was made up of “men of fashion and leisure”; “men of note in athletic circles,” “cross-country riders,” all served with the “professional cowboys of the plains.” The *Sun* pointed out that the regiment had been criticized by American and foreign observers because it was built on picturesque rather than practical lines, but “the dandies and the bucks have shown once more that they can get down to the stern busi-

78. “La Quasina Battle,” *Santa Fe New Mexican*, July 8.

79. Barker, S. Omar, “Rough Riders Gather Here Again For Reunion Friday, Saturday,” *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, June 22, 1949. Note: Oliver McKinney, Troop G, who attended the reunion, said that some of the officers got to take their horses to Cuba, but found little use for them due to the heavy growth of vegetation. “Each Rider Has Story About Life With T. R.” *Ibid.*, June 24, 1949.

80. “The Fight of the Rough Riders,” *Outlook* 60, September 3, p. 20.

ness of fighting with the best of them when the occasion arises. These cavalymen are the true soldiers of fortune of the present war."⁸¹

In a glowing editorial on American youth in its July 6 issue, the *Santa Fe New Mexican* cracks the whip over the detractors of the volunteers:

As an instance of the adaptability of the average American citizen, take the "Rough Riders," as they are called. At the present time both hemispheres are ringing with praise of the bravery, coolness and utter disregard for the fire of unseen foes shown by the members of that organization; that are declared to be equal to veterans and even the trained men of the regular service have shown no more soldier-like qualities than have the raw recruits now serving in the 1st United States volunteer cavalry. They had a reputation for these qualities before they were enlisted, based on the childish reason that every man was supposed to be a "cowboy." The fact is that Colonel Wood's regiment is composed of the following classes of young men: clerks, stenographers, college boys, miners, printers, railroad men, mechanics, "tramps," a few "cowboys" and several New York "dudes."

Of course it seems a little hard to dispel the romance which has been built up around the regiment of which New Mexico is so proud, but it is simply justice to the average young man of America to state the truth. It makes no difference if he was formerly a dry goods salesman or a digger of ore or a puncher of the festive western steer, when he believes its his duty to enlist in the service of his country he shirks no duty which he is called upon to perform. It takes but a short time to transform him from a "dude" or a "hobo" into a soldier who commands the admiration of the world. In that respect the American is without an equal in the world. From childhood accustomed to the use of firearms, ready to go anywhere he is sent and anxious to resent an insult to his country and flag, it is nowise strange that the conduct of the volunteers in the war with Spain has astonished the warlike nations of Europe with his intrepidity under fire.⁸²

News continued to filter back to the Territory about its pride and joy, the volunteers. Mention is made of the privations and hardships suffered by the men, and also several sly innuendos are projected. The *New Mexican*, on several occasions, intimates the possible political advantages accrued to Theodore Roosevelt because of his leadership. Statements such as the following appear: "they [volunteers] make a record for themselves at La Quasina and

81. "Rough Riders Under Fire," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, July 5.

82. *Ibid.*, July 6.

San Juan is true, and they did make the record, and the result is Wood is a Brigadier and Roosevelt is a Colonel."⁸³ On July 12, it commented: "Colonel Roosevelt and the 'Rough Riders' are making a good deal of history these days. The 'Rough Riders' may make their colonel governor of New York. Who knows? Strange things happen these days."⁸⁴ A few days later a prophetic editor wrote: "The 'Rough Riders' are evidently riding Colonel Roosevelt into the office of governor of New York and may ride him into the presidential chair yet. He is a young man. Who knows?"⁸⁵

A letter dated July 7 stated that the wounded were doing well and that there was no other sickness in camp at that time.⁸⁶ Captain W. H. H. Llewellyn, in a letter to Governor Otero, made several requests from the people of New Mexico in regard to articles to be sent to the boys—smoking tobacco, small packages with stout string, large needles, shaving soap and scissors.⁸⁷

The news that the wounded volunteers had been moved to the hospital on Governors' Island, New York, reached Santa Fe, July 28.⁸⁸ The people of New Mexico learned that "their boys" were visited by Major Brodie, who gave each man a five dollar bank note, and was instructed by Colonel Roosevelt to give them more money if need be. The money was "to pay for minor expenses and such other luxuries as they may wish to buy."⁸⁹ The *New Mexican* commented on this generosity thus: "Colonel Roosevelt is not what is known as a practical politician, but his thoughtful remembrance of the wounded 'Rough Riders' in the hospital at Governors' Island will in no wise injure his chances for election."

The families of the wounded men were much relieved to hear that they were to leave Santiago, for "health condi-

83. *Ibid.*, July 28.

84. *Ibid.*, July 12.

85. *Ibid.*, July 21.

86. *Ibid.*, July 23, August 24.

87. *Ibid.*, July 22.

88. *Ibid.*, July 28; "Roosevelt's Generous Gift," *Denver Times*, July 28; "Teddy's Terrors in Clover," *Rocky Mountain News*, July 29.

89. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, July 29. See *Ibid.*, July 22; "Rough Riders Are Coming North," *Denver Republican*, August 4; "Rough Riders Sail For Home," *Ibid.*, August 8.

tions in Cuba are such that disease has been more feared than Spanish bullets."⁹⁰ The volunteers left Santiago August 7 and, upon landing at Montauk Point, New York, August 15, some were so weak that they could hardly walk. Most of them were sick from dysentery, a few in a critical condition, and all were to be held in a detention camp for at least three days for observation.⁹¹

From Washington, August 25, came the information that the Rough Riders were to be mustered out before the end of the month. Governor Otero requested that this be accomplished as soon as possible, and Colonel Roosevelt, in an urgent telegram, heartily supported the move.⁹² At the same time he dispatched to Governor Otero a letter filled with praise for the New Mexican volunteers. In part he wrote:

I write you a line just to tell you how admirably the New Mexican troopers in the battalion of the "Rough Riders" which I have commanded before Santiago have behaved. Three of the eight troops with me were from New Mexico, being commanded by Captains Muller, Luna and Lewellyn. [sic] All three captains, and all three troops, distinguished themselves. As for the troopers themselves, I cannot say too much for their daring and resolution in battle, their patient endurance of every kind of hardship and labor, and their discipline, ready obedience and order in camp—these last qualities being as indispensable to soldiers as courage itself. I am more than proud to be in the same regiment with them; I can imagine no greater honor than to have commanded such men.⁹³

While the Rough Riders were at Camp Wikoff, news of their activities appeared almost daily in the papers. During the latter part of August, Governor Otero paid them a visit which was most heartening for it brought to them a touch of home and at the same time cheered their families.⁹⁴ One of the most interesting items concerned the formation of

90. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, August 15; "The Health of the Army," *Rocky Mountain News*, August 4.

91. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, August 15, August 16. See "Roosevelt, 'Rough Riders,'" *Scribner's*, pp. 686, 688; "Cavalry First To Leave Cuba," *Rocky Mountain News*, August 8; "Rough Riders On The Sea," *Denver Evening Post*, August 8; "Rough Riders At Montauk," *Denver Republican*, August 15; "Rough Riders Are All Well," *Ibid.*, August 19.

92. *Santa Fe New Mexican*, August 25.

93. *Ibid.*, September 3.

94. "Gov. Otero Visits The Rough Riders," *Denver Republican*, August 22; "Invalided Rough Riders," *Ibid.*, August 26; See Otero, *My Nine Years As Governor, etc.*, pp. 56-58.

an organization known as Roosevelt's Rough Riders. According to its constitution, the oldest son of each member, upon the death of his father, would be admitted so as "to perpetuate the name and fame of this remarkable cavalry regiment."⁹⁵

During the weeks before the volunteers were mustered out, there were numerous rumors. According to one, a grand parade was to be staged in New York City for the victorious volunteers; however this was cancelled, and a cowboy tournament was planned.⁹⁶ Three women representatives of the National Relief League scheduled the entertainment and twenty of the Rough Riders were selected to perform. This, too, did not materialize; however, a bronc riding contest did take place at Camp Wikoff. Troop H won the contest.⁹⁷

Probably the most exciting news of the month concerned the mustering out program. This occurred on September 15, the event for which all had been waiting, although it did cause some confusion in regard to those men who had been given a sixty-day furlough earlier.⁹⁸

There are many colorful accounts, some humorous, others tragic, of visits to New York City by volunteers on furlough and after being mustered out. According to an editorial in the *Denver Republican*, "some of Teddy's Terrors fired a few volleys from their revolvers on Brooklyn Bridge, but, the dispatches say, the policemen allowed them a good deal of latitude. That is just the most proper thing to do when [a] . . . cowboy gits to slashing around with his gun." The Rough Riders, mustered out, went to the city in great numbers to see the sights and, according to the

95. "To Perpetuate The Name And Fame Of The Rough Riders," *Denver Evening Post*, September 1; "Rough Riders Held First Reunion In Vegas Fifty Years Ago This Month," *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, June 21, 1949.

96. "Rough Riders Not To Parade," *Denver Times*, September 2.

97. "Rough Riders Will Hold A Tournament," *Rocky Mountain News*, September 20; "Rough Riders Sport In Camp," *Ibid.*, September 18.

98. "Rough Riders To Be Mustered Out," *Denver Republican*, September 1; "Rough Riders Granted Sixty Days Furlough," *Rocky Mountain News*, September 1; "Mustering Out Of Rough Riders," *Denver Evening Post*, September 2; "Cold Wave At Camp Wikoff," *Denver Republican*, September 12; "Getting Soldiers Away From Camp Wikoff," *Ibid.*, September 15; "Volunteers Wonder As To Standing," *Rocky Mountain News*, September 19.

headlines, "owned New York City."⁹⁹ Earlier in the month, however, when the able and well volunteers had been granted furloughs, the accounts had a different note. The *New York World* reports that twelve rough riders went to the East 35th Street Police Station and asked for sleeping accommodations, for, although they had home-bound railroad tickets, they had no money. Their sad tale to the police was that "they went to the Army Building to draw \$4.50 each to which they were entitled. There they were told that they had been docked \$1.50 for something or other and only received \$3 apiece."¹⁰⁰

The *World* also printed another story:

Six of Colonel Teddy Roosevelt's rough riders and tough fighters; sick, very weak and stranded, penniless in this city over night, were glad to accept the hospitality of Harry Jackson, night manager of an undertaker's concern, and when it was found that three of them filled all the regular sleeping accommodations of the place the other three promptly filled three partly made coffins with excelsior and then cuddled down in the beds thus formed and in a thrice were fast asleep. And Jackson, who had surrendered his bed besides providing a feast of coffee, potted ham, pies and cakes, is very proud of his hospitality to his fighting guests.¹⁰¹

By the third week in September, the territorial newspapers reported that volunteers were arriving at home daily. Some, however, had remained in the East to visit and to continue their sight-seeing; one group paid a visit to Washington, D. C., and several were presented by Delegate Fergusson to President McKinley. The newspapers record this visit and the president's greeting in part: "Your record is one which the entire nation is proud. . . . You have not only done well . . . but I have no doubt you would be willing to again serve your country in an emergency."¹⁰²

Theodore Roosevelt had much to say about his mounted

99. "Rough Riders Own New York City," *Ibid.*, September 15; "The Rough Riders Having A Good Time," *Denver Evening Post*, September 25.

100. "Rough Riders Fed By Police," *Rocky Mountain News*, September 4.

101. "Rough Riders Sleep In Coffins," *Ibid.*

102. "Teddy's Men At Capital," *Denver Evening Post*, September 20; "Rough Riders Call On McKinley At White House," *Ibid.*, September 21; "Greeted The Rough Riders," *Denver Times*, September 21; "New Mexico Rough Riders Visit President McKinley," *Denver Republican*, September 22; "Rough Riders At The White House," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, September 26.

cavalry and he has been quoted innumerable times, most often, probably, in regard to his farewell address, on which he himself comments in his book *The Rough Riders*:

One Sunday before the regiment disbanded I supplemented Chaplain Brown's address to the men by a short sermon of a rather hortatory character. I told them how proud I was of them, but warned them not to think that they could go back and rest on their laurels, bidding them remember that though for ten days or so the world would be willing to treat them as heroes, yet after that time they would find they had to get down to hard work just like everyone else, unless they were willing to be regarded as worthless do-nothings. They took the sermon in good part, and I hope that some of them profited by it.¹⁰³

An interesting letter, which appeared in the *Denver Republican*, June 19, of this same year, provokes considerable thought. In it, an old cavalryman, J. D. Dillenback, expresses his opinion about the cowboy v. the cavalryman:

... seriously, I am inclined to doubt that cowboys, as a class, are likely to make superior cavalrymen. At the outset they have two apparently important points in their favor: they are accustomed to the hardships of an outdoor life in all kinds of weather, and they know how to ride. My experience has been that these qualifications are not such important factors in the make-up of a cavalryman as many suppose. Both can be acquired in a few weeks by any set of healthy and intelligent young men.

... The average cowboy, as I have known him, is given to drink and hard to discipline. Doubtless Teddy Roosevelt can make a valuable scout, if not a thorough soldier out of him. But I cannot help believing that Teddy's cowboys and rough riders will prove the least valuable part of his regiment. It will be difficult to make the cowboy police his camp, set his tent properly, keep himself clean and take care of his health.

... Riding a bucking bronco and throwing a lariat are not the highest soldierly accomplishments. The habit of keeping clean and obeying orders is decidedly preferable.¹⁰⁴

In opposition to this, an item entitled "Cowboys Make Best Cavalrymen," quotes the words of a high military authority: "To be a perfect cavalryman the man must have

103. Roosevelt, "Rough Riders," *Scribner's*, pp. 677, 690. See Armstrong, H. E., "Roosevelt As A Volunteer Soldier," *Independent* 53, September 26, 1901, p. 2281; Cunningham, Paul E., "Rough Riders' Reunion," *New Mexico Magazine* 27, June, 1949, p. 42.

104. "Cowboy Cavalry And Rough Riding," *Denver Republican*, June 19.

learned to ride before he learned to walk."¹⁰⁵ Richard Harding Davis wrote: "The grit of the cowpuncher has never been doubted."¹⁰⁶ And, on innumerable occasions, Theodore Roosevelt voiced the highest praise for the cowboys of his regiment. At one time he said: "Ninety-five per cent of my men had at one time or another herded cattle on horseback or had hunted big game with the rifle. They were, therefore, natural riders and good shots, used to out-of-door life, a dead game lot and intelligent—so we could discipline. . . . The groundwork of the regiment is the cowpuncher. . . ."¹⁰⁷

An editorial in the *Denver Republican* gives credit to this great volunteer leader: "Col. Roosevelt never tires of lauding his regiment of Rough Riders, the bases of which, he says, is the cow puncher. There are ex-policemen, Harvard men, country doctors, dudes and heirs to millions in his regiment, but the framework of the organization that won fame in Cuba is the cowboy, bronzed, daredevil, loud and unveneered."¹⁰⁸ On another occasion Roosevelt said: "The grand work of the regiment is due largely to the cowpuncher—the man who has herded cattle on the plains for a living—and next to him comes the Rocky Mountain miner, who has also usually been a small ranchman."¹⁰⁹ Several months later Roosevelt was more conservative and inclusive in his estimation of the mounted cavalry:

Our men behaved very well indeed—white regulars, colored regulars, and Rough Riders alike. The newspaper press failed to do full justice to the white regulars, in my opinion, from the simple reason that everybody knew that they would fight, whereas there had been a good deal of question as to how the Rough Riders, who were volunteer troops, and the Tenth Cavalry, who were colored, would behave; so there was a tendency to exalt our deeds at the expense of those of the First Regulars, whose courage and good conduct were taken for granted.¹¹⁰

Appraisals of past events, made by Rough Riders at their 50th annual reunion, held at Las Vegas, New Mexico,

105. *Rocky Mountain News*, August 14.

106. "Dashing Bravery Of Rough Riders," *Denver Republican*, July 18.

107. "Col. Roosevelt Lauds His Men," *Ibid.*, August 20.

108. "Teddy's Terrors," *Ibid.*, August 21.

109. "Teddy Roosevelt Praises His Men," *Rocky Mountain News*, August 16.

110. Roosevelt, "Rough Riders," *Scribner's*, p. 275.

in June, 1949, are of historic interest and significance. About fifty members of the original organization were able to attend this reunion, and their reminiscences are filled with nostalgia.

Rough Rider William J. Love, who was in charge of local arrangements for the half-century celebration, recalled the past thus:

Teddy first started out to enlist the whole regiment from New Mexico, . . . but a lot of Arizona and Oklahoma boys raised such a holler to get in, that the regiment was finally made up of three squadrons, one each for New Mexico, Arizona and Oklahoma, though as near as I can remember there was about 550 of us enlisted from New Mexico. So some of us got assignments to other squadrons to fill them out. Around 1,200 men altogether, a big lot of us cowboys, but we also got among us young lawyers, preachers, doctors, railroaders, miners and I don't know what all. Maybe even a few outlaws, but all a-r'arin' to fight.¹¹¹

Frank C. Brito, of Silver City, related in very frank words the filial respect which brought about his enlistment: "My father sent for us and said 'did you know the United States is at war with Spain?' When we answered no, he said, 'I want you boys to go to Silver City and enlist and fight for your country.' Them days you did what your father told you to do."¹¹²

Frank S. Roberts, who had contracted typhoid fever and dysentery, said that the "goats milk which he drank in Cuba probably saved his life."¹¹³

"The worst mis-handled war there ever was," said George F. Murray, who recalled with vivid memory the rations of hard tack and canned "goat" meat and said "they were given green coffee beans, which they roasted in their canteens and then took the butts of their pistols to grind the beans before coffee could be made." Fighting for one's country in those days was not especially glamorous at \$13.60 per month!¹¹⁴ Ben H. Colbert commented that he had gone

111. Barker, S. Omar, "Rough Riders Gather Here Again For Reunion Friday, Saturday," *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, June 22, 1949.

112. "Each Rider Has Story About Life With T. R.," *Ibid.*, June 24.

113. Rough Riders To End Sessions With Mabry As Guest Tonight." *Ibid.*, June 25.

114. *Ibid.*

through the war as a "buck private and [was] never reduced"; however, later he was honored by Roosevelt with an appointment as U. S. Marshall of the territory of Oklahoma.¹¹⁵

Such were Teddy's Terrors, the Rough Riders—the New Mexican Volunteers! In a summary of their contributions and accomplishments, as revealed by the press, significant conclusions may be reached.

The New Mexican Volunteers of 1898, a spontaneous expression of Southwestern enthusiasm and patriotism, were organized to meet the emergency of war. The mounted cavalry grew out of the need of a particular individual, adept in horsemanship and marksmanship, at the same time endowed with the physical endurance associated with out-of-door life. These qualifications were best found among the young men of the last and rapidly disappearing frontier of the territories of the United States.

Even before Governor Otero's offer to organize a mounted cavalry was accepted by the war department, a willingness on the part of the New Mexican to serve his country was evidenced. The officials and the citizens were anxious to prove their loyalty to the federal government, and at the same time the glamour of a mounted cavalry had its appeal. Still greater enthusiasm was aroused when it became known that Theodore Roosevelt, a man who had lived among and knew Western men, was to be the leader.

The volunteers came from all walks of life, although enlistments revealed a preponderance of individuals engaged in the cattle industry. The vast and rugged areas of the territory necessitated travel on horse back, regardless of the individual's occupation. Because of the dangers of frontier life—the bandit, outlaw and desperado, and the pilfering which occurred on the frontier border, any man—miner, herder, cattleman, railroader, cowboy, government scout, mechanic, clerk, or stenographer—needed skill with fire-arms to protect life and property. This was an era when,

115. *Ibid.*

and a place where, men were engaged at one time or another in several pursuits in order to make a livelihood. Therefore, it was not uncommon to find the former cowboy working for the railroad or in the mines, or the one-time clerk or stenographer engaged in governmental scouting activities—their common ground, because of environment, was horsemanship and marksmanship.

As all volunteers, they lived to learn that a nation is never fully enough prepared to meet the needs of its soldiers in order to avoid the adjustment from civilian to military life. Difficulties and hardships which consequently arose were taken in their stride with good humor and the normal amount of complaining.

Its colorful background and personalities gave the 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry many descriptive names of which Rough Riders and Teddy's Terrors were the most popular. As warriors, Teddy's Terrors received probably far greater notoriety than they deserved. They were not self-seeking, but their leadership was in the hands of a young, prominent, aggressive, dashing, up-and-coming man—Theodore Roosevelt. The aura of publicity, which at this time was beginning to surround him and continued throughout his life, was bound to include the men under his command. Yet, despite their publicity and that of their leaders, when they came to test under fire, the volunteers proved to be sturdy, capable and brave—stalwarts of their Southwestern heritage.