Mornings on Horseback Study Guide

Mornings on Horseback by David McCullough

BOOKRAGS

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Plot Summary

Mornings on Horseback by David McCullough traces the early life of Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. McCullough examines Theodore's love of the outdoors, his health problems, and his family relations. He also discusses Theodore's time at Harvard University, his first marriage, and his entrance into politics. These experiences helped shape and influence Roosevelt's later years, as President of the United States and other political positions.

Theodore Roosevelt's childhood was characterized by a loving and involved family and health problems. He grew up in a privileged household, the son of Theodore, Sr. and Mittie Roosevelt. He had one older sister, Bamie, a younger brother, Elliott, and a younger sister, Corinne. The family was drawn together, in part, because of Teedie's asthma attacks.

The young Teedie loved the outdoors, and the freedom and interest it provided. The family spent a year abroad on a Grand Tour of Europe. They also spent some time later traveling on the Nile River. Summers were spent in the country and at Oyster Bay. As a young adult, Teedie collected bird and animal specimens, doing his own taxidermy.

Teedie attended Harvard University in the late 1800s. He resided off campus in quarters that Bamie choose and furnished for him. His years at Harvard were happy ones for the most part, although marred by the death of his father. During his junior and senior years, he bloomed socially, and enjoyed attending parties and other gatherings.

While at Harvard, Theodore, Jr. met Alice Lee, whom he proposed to. They were married Oct. 27, 1880, several months after Theodore graduated from Harvard. The couple moved into the family's home in New York with Mittie. This happy arrangement was to be short-lived, however. On Feb. 12, 1884, Alice gave birth to a baby girl, but on Feb. 14, Mittie and Alice both died suddenly. Mittie succumbed to typhoid fever, and Alice died from Bright's disease. Theodore would remarry several years later.

Theodore's early political career was eventful and helped pave the way for his later positions. He was elected to the New York State Assembly in the early 1880s. There, he quickly established himself as a force to be reckoned with. Similarly, he received quite a bit of attention at his first Republican National Convention, when he supported another nominee instead of the frontrunner, Blaine.

Roosevelt's life also brought him to the West, a place that would inspire him and be a focus of his later writing. He first went west in 1883 and, over the next several years, he would spend extended periods of time there, particularly after Alice's death. He bought several thousand head of cattle and built a house on a river in the Bad Lands.

Part 1, Chapter 1 Greatheart's Circle

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Mornings on Horseback by David McCullough traces the early life of Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. McCullough examines Theodore's love of the outdoors, his health problems, and his family relations. He also discusses Theodore's time at Harvard University, his first marriage, and his entrance into politics. These experiences helped shape and influence Roosevelt's later years, as President of the United States and other political positions.

In 1869, six people, excluding servants, lived at 28 East 20th Street in New York City. Theodore Roosevelt, Sr. was the head of the household and a thirty-seven-year-old importer and philanthropist. Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, or Mittie, was thirty-three. The four children, all born in the house, ranged in age from fourteen to seven. Anna, more commonly known as Bamie, was the oldest. Theodore, Jr., called Teedie (which was pronounced to rhyme with T. D.), was ten. Elliott, or Ellie, the second son, was nine. Corinne, or Conie, was the youngest. There is little known about the servants in the household at this time, although there were probably at least four or five.

The house stood between Broadway and Fourth Avenue, and it looked like all the other New York brownstones. It was narrow-fronted, with a high stoop. A formal parlor opened into a narrow hall, with the dining room at the rear. The master bedroom and nursery were one floor up, with three more bedrooms one level higher. In contrast to the other houses, however, it had a deep porch, or piazza, at the rear of the third floor level. It had been a bedroom before the Roosevelts tore out the wall and made it an open-air playroom. The house had been a wedding present from Cornelius Van Schaack Roosevelt, or CVS, to his son and daughter-in-law.

Theodore was upright, conservative, and a model of self-control. He didn't care for public acclaim. He was a junior partner at Roosevelt and Son, a faithful parishioner of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church, and belonged to the Union League Club and the Century Association. He served on charitable boards, raised money for charity, and was the model husband and father. Roosevelt was physically imposing, athletic, and handsome. He was concerned about the clothes he wore and made sure that his suits were of good quality and tailored. He was intelligent, enjoyed books, and had a great interest and feeling for his children. His formal education had been erratic, although he had had a private tutor through boyhood.

At age nineteen, Theodore had been sent on a Grand Tour through Europe. Afterward, he entered the family firm. CVS announced his retirement soon after, although it seems that the business essentially ran itself. The family's real estate holdings were grouped into the Broadway Improvement Association, which James Alfred, the eldest brother, headed. Yet, Theodore seemed to find no satisfaction in the work. James Alfred held most of the power, leaving Theodore free to do Europe whenever he wanted.

As time passed, his true vocation became a charitable one, including hospital and museum projects. He helped establish the Children's Aid Society to help the city's homeless children. He also gave regularly, with time and money, to other causes. He was well thought of in the city.

For the children, Theodore was both the voice of authority and an exuberant companion. He was always interested in them. He taught them to ride horses and climb trees. As they got older, he included them in his own activities. He rewarded courage in the children and didn't tolerate deceit or cowardice. Teedie thought his father both the most magnificent creature on earth and a frightening one.

Of the children, Bamie most closely resembled their father. Bamie had Pott's disease, a form of tuberculosis, which softens and destroys the bones and can cause a hunchback if it is localized in the spine. Bamie's case was a severe curvature of the spine, from which she suffered enormously. Her father's devotion to her became the most important part of her life. At the age of four, Theodore found another doctor for her, Charles Fayette Taylor, who treated the disease with "movement cure," a form of physical therapy. She was fitted with a different kind of back brace that was light in weight and designed so that she could be up and about. To the other children, she seemed like one of the grownups.

Of the younger three children, Ellie was the best looking and convivial. He became in no time larger and more coordinated than Teedie. He had an even temper and was kind.

Teedie, at ten, was extremely frail and undersized. He was often nervous, timid, and solitary. He liked stories of high adventure and almost anything to do with nature. Teedie was an asthmatic, his attacks starting at the age of three. This had a profound influence on the family. He also suffered from chronic stomach troubles, headaches, and recurring nightmares.

The Roosevelts kept their children out of public and private schools to protect their health. They were tutored at home by their Aunt Anna. Since they didn't attend school, the children were cut off from their contemporaries, with their only playmates being cousins and a few children of family friends. Bamie seemed to have no childhood friends and the others only had one or two who figured significantly in their lives.

McCullough describes the family as a paradox. "It was, plainly, a family of paradoxes: privileged and cushioned beyond most people's imagining, yet little like the stereotype of the vapid, insular rich; uneducated in any usual, formal fashion but also uninhibited by education - ardent readers, insatiable askers of questions; chronically troubled, cursed it would seem, by one illness or mysterious disorder after another, yet refusing to subject others to their troubles or to give in to despair" (pg. 37).

Part 1, Chapter 1 Greatheart's Circle Analysis

This first chapter introduces the reader to the Roosevelt family in general and to Theodore Roosevelt, Sr. in particular. Family was very important to the Roosevelts, and

they maintained close bonds across the generations and family structure. This support and familial bonds would carry the family through sickness, the Civil War, and the other ups and downs of life in the 1800s. McCullough focuses on this familial support throughout the work, making it an important theme.

Theodore Roosevelt, Sr. was, in many ways, a unique individual. While privileged, he cared a great deal about the less fortunate in society. He volunteered his time and money to numerous organizations and charities. He built a lavish home for his family, but spent most Sunday evenings at the newsboy's dinners with underprivileged children. He was uninspired by work, but spent countless hours with his children. He would be Teedie's hero and the ideal that his son sought to be like.

Part 1, Chapter 2 Lady from the South

Part 1, Chapter 2 Lady from the South Summary

The Bullochs of Georgia were very different from the Roosevelts of New York, who rarely ventured from Manhattan Island except on business. The Roosevelts had few signs of daring, spontaneity, or senses of humor. They were restrained, particularly to do with business. The only break that Theodore made from the established pattern of his family was to join the Presbyterian Church, leaving the Dutch Reformed Church.

Theodore also brought Mittie Bulloch into the family. The Bullochs were southern both in background and outlook. They were antebellum slaveholding Georgia patricians. Mittie spent her first few years in Savannah, before the family moved to a settlement 250 miles inland called Roswell. It was about twenty miles north of Atlanta. The Roosevelt children found the stories of life at Roswell fascinating.

When Theodore met Mittie, she was barely over five feet tall, slender, and beautiful. She had fine features and soft blue eyes. She was full of life and sweet. Theodore went to Georgia first, when he was nineteen in 1850. Mittie's sister's husband had a sister who was the wife of Theodore's brother. Due to this, Theodore stopped in Roswell to see the Bullochs. The two apparently fell in love at first sight even though they did not see each other again until three years later, when Mittie briefly visited New York.

The wedding took place on Thursday, December 22, 1853 at Bulloch Hall. The bride and groom stayed through Christmas and then left for New York.

Mittie returned to Roswell a year and a half later in the spring of 1855, bringing their new daughter. Mittie had not been feeling well since the baby's birth in January. Theodore stayed to see Mittie settled and then he left again for New York. Later that spring he returned to bring her home.

Mittie missed her mother and sister. She and her sister, Anna, had been inseparable for most of her life. In 1856, Mrs. Bulloch and Anna came north, moving into the house with the Roosevelts. The Bulloch family finances seem to be the reason for this move. The family was hard-pressed financially after paying for the wedding.

Teedie arrived on October 27, 1858. Two more pregnancies quickly followed. Elliott was born in February 1860 and Corinne in September 1861. In less than three years, Mittie had three children.

By the time Corinne was born, the Civil War had started. The War put strain on the household, on the Roosevelt's marriage, and Mittie's strength. The three Bulloch women remained Southern sympathizers. Mittie, Mrs. Bulloch, and Anna made packages of shirts, socks, and other items to be sent secretly to the South. A number of family members from the Bulloch family fought in the war. The smallest amount of news from someone on the other side was a big event.

For Theodore, the approach of the war was seen as a tragedy. He and a group of New York business people appealed to Congress to do everything possible to prevent it. He promoted a large anti-war rally. Although he was only twenty-nine, Theodore chose not to fight. He would say that this decision was made because of his marriage and out of deference to Mittie. Few men of comparable social or financial status fought and none of his brothers or family members fought. He hired a substitute to avoid fighting, paying another man to go in his place. This provided him with a permanent exemption. Bamie would later write that her father regretted his decision to his dying day.

Although he did not bear arms, Theodore did not sit idly by as the War progressed. He and several other wealthy New Yorkers conceived a plan whereby soldiers could send home part of their pay on a regular basis and at no additional cost. Mrs. Lincoln found Theodore charming and included him in her circle. He stayed at Willard's Hotel while he was in Washington waiting for Congress to act.

Early in 1862, Mrs. Bulloch decided that she had to go back to Georgia to be with her son, Daniel, who was dying of tuberculosis. Theodore pulled some strings politically, an act that he normally wouldn't do, to help her. Mrs. Bulloch backed off her decision, however, by the effect it was having on Mittie. Word soon came that Daniel was dead. Mrs. Bulloch herself died in October 1864. Of Mittie's original thirteen siblings, four were still alive. Captain James Bulloch and brother Irvine took up residence in England, as their particular involvement with the war excluded them from pardon. The house at Roswell had survived the war, but the old way of life had ended.

In the years after the war, Mittie became a figure of consequence and influence. New York women turned to her for example and leadership. She didn't join Theodore, however, in his philanthropic pursuits. Later, much would be written about her eccentricities, like her preference for wearing white and her obsession with cleanliness. She was troubled with sick spells and mysterious upset, but there is no evidence that her health kept her from doing the things she wanted to do.

Part 1, Chapter 2 Lady from the South Analysis

Mittie, like Theodore, played an important role in Teedie's life. Although she was not the hero to Teedie that Theodore was, it is clear that Mittie provided the children with a warm, supportive environment. Later in her life, she would welcome her children's spouses with warmth, including them in a family that was tight knit and somewhat exclusionary.

Mittie's southern upbringing presented certain concerns during the Civil War. With her mother and sister, Mittie was living in the North while her brothers and other family members fought for the South. McCullough points out that the tale of the women displaying a Southern flag at the Roosevelt house has no factual basis. Yet, the women's sympathies were certainly torn. Theodore's decision not to fight must have eased some of the tensions, although it was a decision that he regretted.

Part 1, Chapter 3 Grand Tour

Part 1, Chapter 3 Grand Tour Summary

In May, 1869, the Roosevelt family left New York for a grand tour of Europe. They were going to be gone a year. They first went to Liverpool, England, where the family was greeted by Captain James Bulloch and Irvine. James and Irvine had established a cotton business in Liverpool. The two men were mythical to the Roosevelt children, who idolized them from Mittie's stories.

The Roosevelts left Liverpool on June 2 and headed to Scotland. They were busy and active, doing "hard sightseeing." Bamie's feet blistered in Scotland and Teedie's asthma was ever present. Yet, the pace quickened. They spent busy days in London, visiting the zoo and the British Museum, among other sites. Teedie's asthma returned in London, and he and his father went to the seashore to recover.

In the months that followed, they would travel several thousand miles by various means as they crossed the continent. They stayed at sixty-six different hotels. They gathered up guidebooks and keepsakes of their travels. Teedie kept a diary of the trip, never missing a day the whole year that they were gone. A theme runs through the diary of the pleasure and pride in being the first to see or do something.

When they arrived in Paris the second time in early March 1870, it was decided that Bamie would stay on in Paris. She began attending a private school for girls just outside Paris.

Part 1, Chapter 3 Grand Tour Analysis

The Grand Tour of Europe was typical of the Roosevelt family in many regards. First, the family was busy on their trip, mirroring their lives in New York, which were always filled with parties and other obligations. The family crossed Europe, spending long, strenuous days seeing the sights.

Second, Theodore Sr.'s belief in the powers of activity and the outdoors for improving health and character led to exercise and movement throughout the Grand Tour. He would turn to this idea for the health issues that all four children had. Bamie's condition improved, although she was not cured, after her doctor suggested movement and activity. This became the recipe for the other children as well. Elliott was sent to central Texas after his seizures started. Theodore also had Teedie using physical activity to help his asthma. The gym that was built at their home was to increase the children's health.

Part 1, Chapter 4 A Disease of the Direst Suffering

Part 1, Chapter 4 A Disease of the Direst Suffering Summary

Among the most serious of childhood illnesses is bronchial asthma. The disease is not only a severe one but it also affects the entire family as they deal with the child's attacks and the uncertainty of when they will happen.

The common methods used at the time of Teedie's childhood were varied. Emetics and purges were common. To avert an attack, the patient might be made violently ill or dosed with ipecac. Children were given enemas, plunged into cold baths, given whiskey, gin, and Indian hemp, made to inhale chloroform, and so on. The Roosevelts also used black coffee and had Teedie swallow ipecac and smoke cigars. Black coffee was a sound choice as the caffeine, a stimulant, is akin to drugs used in the present day to treat the disease.

The experience of an acute asthmatic attack is of being strangled or suffocated, but more complex. The whole body suffers from the attack, including the lungs, central nervous system, endocrine system, both sides of the brain, and probably the brain stem as well. For reasons that are not completely clear, the attacks frequently come at night. The first stage is a tightening of the chest and a dry cough. Breathing becomes more difficult and shallow. A wheeze begins. Soon, the child is unable to speak or move, battling for breath.

The cause of the breathing difficulty is a swelling of the bronchial tubes, which lead to the lungs. The involuntary muscular actions of these airways don't function normally during an attack. Although the sensation is of not being able to get in enough air, the reverse is actually true. The air inside cannot be expired as normal, and it is this air, trapped within the swollen lungs, that keeps the child from breathing. During the Roosevelt's day, no oxygen tents or nebulizers were available. Once an attack ended, the child often experiences good feelings or exuberance. For the parents, however, little relief is felt as the next attack is anticipated. Even after nearly a century of study, the role of emotions in asthma is unclear. Asthma is now explained as a form of behavior as the child unconsciously "uses" his or her affliction for purposes of his or her own. Asthma has been described as a cry for the mother, trying to capture or recapture her attention.

In Teedie's case, his attacks were often preceded by a day or so of dark melancholy or homesickness. His attacks came mainly on weekends, usually early Sunday mornings. For Teedie, the answer may lie in the nature of Sunday, which in the Victorian era was a day or rest and the one day of the week, when the household head was home from work and available. There was rigidly prescribed dress and behavior on this day of the

week and little or no play. As a small child, Teedie had also experienced a fear of the Madison Square Church.

On the Sundays that he was sick in Europe, Teedie was seldom made to go to church. Those days also gave him an opportunity to be with his father and to have his undivided attention. In addition, Mittie soothed and petted him, when he was sick. Yet, no one in the family seems aware of the timing of the attacks.

The asthmatic child knows that he or she is an oddity or different than others. Yet, this abnormality also lends a degree of power to the child, as his or her attacks command the attention of everyone around. As a way of coping, the child also acquires sensitized feelings about his or her surroundings. The lesson learned from asthma is that life is literally a battle. The child can either see himself as a helpless victim or decide to fight back against the disease.

Part 1, Chapter 4 A Disease of the Direst Suffering Analysis

McCullough turns to a general description of asthma in this chapter. He focuses not only on its effects for the suffering child, but also how the illness affects the family unit as a whole. The theme of illness runs through the book, and it is the central topic of this chapter. Understanding Teedie's illness and its effects on the family illuminates the family dynamics. When Teedie's asthma attacks struck, the family often took him out of the city, and he was able to spend time alone with his father or mother. As McCullough points out, his attacks were very real and dangerous and Teedie had little control over them. Yet, at the same time, his attacks or the threat of an attack brought him the attention and focus that he desired, particularly from his father.

McCullough also points out how Teedie's battle with asthma may have influenced his outlook on life. He says that an asthmatic child learns that life is a battle and that the child can either see himself as a victim or fight back. Teedie's approach to life, developing in these early years, was clearly to fight the battles in life. He attacked his positions in politics with vigor, never staying on the sidelines or waiting for others to notice him. He was not afraid of making a spectacle or fighting for what he believed in.

Part 1, Chapter 5 Metamorphosis

Part 1, Chapter 5 Metamorphosis Summary

In May 1870, the Roosevelts returned to the United States. That summer news came from France that there was war with Prussia. Although Bamie was safe, the family was troubled. Teedie also experienced a decline in his health. By the time fighting broke out in France, Bamie was safe in England with Uncle James Bulloch.

During this time Theodore decided that Teedie must help himself by building up his body. Teedie and Elliott began attending Wood's Gymnasium for daily workouts. Three months later, the family equipped their own back piazza with the required apparatus and weights. Teedie appears to have embraced it positively. Yet, his progress was slow, and he remained undersized and underweight. His overall health seemed to improve.

During the summers of 1871 and 1872, Theodore rented country houses in the hills along the Hudson River. The time was almost paradise for Teedie. Instead of lifting weights, he rode, swam, and ran barefoot around the countryside. He loved the open fields and living things that he found. In August 1871, Theodore initiated an expedition to the Adirondacks and the whole family went. The men would separate later to camp and rough it. From there, they went to the White Mountains and the boys climbed Mount Lafayette. That fall, the American Museum of Natural History lists several animals presented by Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. in its official acquisition list.

In the summer of 1872, Teedie received a gun and a large pair of spectacles. The glasses transformed everything for him. Before this, it appears that his sight was blurry beyond thirty feet. Yet, no one, including himself, had realized how bad his eyesight was. His new glasses allowed him to see the world of birds.

In October 1872, the family set off abroad again, this time beginning with a winter on the Nile. Teedie spent his time collecting bird specimens. His asthma again vanished. At night, he used his taxidermy skills to prepare the birds he killed. When he wasn't off with Teedie, Theodore liked to sit on the deck. He organized picnics and outings to the great monuments. On Sundays, he served as pastor to the family.

In two months' time, they traveled almost twelve hundred miles on the Nile, from Cairo to the First Cataract and back again. They enjoyed a social time, as they traveled with two other parties, who were in other dahabeahs.

The time was also one of transition. Cornelius Van Schaack Roosevelt had died in 1871. The family's grief had been large. When the estate was settled, Theodore was a very rich man, as his share could not have been less than $1 million. He had also decided to give up the house on East 20th Street and build a new house uptown. Theodore and his brother James found lots on the south side of 57th Street, two blocks from Central Park. Everything near their old house was turning commercial. The new

house would not be ready until the summer and so Theodore had planned the extended stay abroad. After Egypt, they toured the Holy Land and then stopped in Vienna. In May, they were in Dresden, where the three youngest children were placed in the care of a German family while Mittie and Bamie went to Paris, and Theodore returned to New York.

Part 1, Chapter 5 Metamorphosis Analysis

The title of this chapter, "Metamorphosis," indicates that Teedie's life changed dramatically during this time and the events that happened. Two events seem particularly important. First, Teedie received a gun. Combined with the time that the family was spending in the country or on the Nile, this gift gave Teedie a new focus. He took a greater interest in being outdoors and of learning about the natural world. He began collecting bird and animal specimens. This interest and pleasure in the outdoors would be a life long one. As President, he established national parks and forests and worked to protect pieces of the outdoors.

Teedie also received a pair of glasses during this time. Apparently Teedie and the rest of the family did not realize until after he had received them how bad his eyesight really was. The eyeglasses allowed him to see the world better, and this directly coincided with his growing interest in the natural world. With his glasses, he was able to see more detail and to spot the animals that he would study.

Part 2, Chapter 6 Uptown

Part 2, Chapter 6 Uptown Summary

During the summer of 1873, Theodore kept on the move in New York while his family was away. He stayed at the Union League Club, saw friends in the evenings, and went to the country on the weekends. When he saw his new house for the first time, he was astonished by its size and beauty. He thought that there wasn't a better built house in New York. On the west side of Central Park, the American Museum of Natural History was under construction. He was contributing over two thousand dollars a year to the project.

Teedie was still the family's main concern. His asthma returned once they left the Nile. In Dresden, there were more attacks and violent headaches. Mittie left Carlsbad and took Teedie to the Swiss Alps.

The new house fell behind schedule with the Panic of 1873, forcing the family to move into an unfinished house. Yet, the only inconvenience to the family was the postponement of Bamie's debut until after Christmas. The finished house was grant and luxurious. The top floor contained a gymnasium and space was provided for Teedie's collection of animal specimens.

Theodore worked more and more at his charitable efforts as the depression deepened. He gave money, wrote letters, and lobbied for better conditions in insane asylums. He also spent lavishly on his family. The depression affected the Roosevelts' glass import business, and they soon turned to other ventures. City real estate was still a large part of the family fortune. The glass import business was eventually sold and Roosevelt and Son switched over to private banking and investment.

The best times for the family were at Oyster Bay. The family summers extended nearly four months. Theodore took the same house year after year and the children assumed that they owned the house. He led the family on morning horseback rides. There were boats and other family members staying nearby. The area had miles of shoreline to explore along with woods and fields.

Ellie developed a serious problem during this time. He began to have fainting spells and even fits of delirium. The family would later speculate that he suffered some form of epilepsy, but there are few descriptions of what happed during his seizures. Ellie may have been suffering, instead, from intense inner turmoil. He was sent on several trips, attempting to alleviate the attacks. Eventually, Ellie was sent to central Texas.

Part 2, Chapter 6 Uptown Analysis

The family's new house signified a change for them. Although they were still connected to their extended family and living close to them, the new house was a departure from

the old one. In many ways, the houses illustrate pieces of Theodore Sr.'s personality and character. Like the old house, he was solid and unpretentious. He gave time and money to various charities and always seemed to be involved in bettering the lives of others. Like the new house, he enjoyed the things that his money could provide. He liked fine clothes and having a grand house with expensive furnishings.

This chapter also discusses the family's summers at Oyster Bay. The theme of the outdoors plays large within *Mornings on Horseback* and this is another example. At Oyster Bay, life became simpler and freer for everyone. This suited Teedie most of all, as it tended to alleviate his asthma. He and the other children had their parents to themselves and were able to gain most of their attention. They were also able to explore and enjoy various outside activities, like riding horses, hiking, and sailing.

Part 2, Chapter 7 The Moral Effect

Part 2, Chapter 7 The Moral Effect Summary

Even before 1876, political reform and the Roosevelt name had been linked in the public mind. Theodore joined the newly organized Republican Reform Club and was soon looked to for leadership. One person who the reformers wanted to stop was Senator Roscoe Conkling of New York, who had made his aspirations for President known. Theodore found almost everything about Conkling repugnant.

Conkling never attended national conventions, and he sent Chester Arthur to work on his behalf at the convention in Cincinnati. Theodore and the New York Reform Club were also there to support their candidate, Benjamin H. Bristow of Kentucky. The leading contender for the nomination was James G. Blaine, but he collapsed in Cincinnati.

On Monday, June 12, Theodore gave a speech from a balcony at the Gibson House, delivering a vivid attack on Conkling. The actual convention began on June 14. In the end, Rutherford B. Hayes won the nomination. Theodore was satisfied that Conkling had been stopped.

Part 2, Chapter 7 The Moral Effect Analysis

As his son would do later, Theodore Sr. became involved in politics and attended a Republican National Convention. Although he would remain somewhat on the sidelines, never holding public office, Theodore worked tirelessly behind the candidate that he supported. This mirrors the way that he worked for charities and other organizations during his life. In this, he was a model for his son to follow. Theodore fought for what he believed was right and was not afraid to take a stand. He gave a speech at the convention, attacking Conkling, whom he believed would not be a good President or Presidential nominee.

Theodore and other like minded individuals formed the New York Reform Club. Like his actions at the national convention, this, too, illustrates his concern and commitment to making changes in society. He showed commitment to the Republican Party by sticking with the party, but sought to change the aspects of it that he felt were detrimental. As a reformer, he wanted to make a difference and to make the lives of the less fortunate better.

Part 2, Chapter 8 Father and Son

Part 2, Chapter 8 Father and Son Summary

Teedie left for Cambridge on September 27, 1876 to attend Harvard University. At seventeen, he was five feet eight inches tall and 125 pounds. His voice was thin and almost comical. In conversations, he spewed words out of his mouth with force, often startling people who were not used to him. Many thought that he had a speech impediment, and it may have been associated with his asthma. His large teeth and thick glasses were his outstanding features. His health and physique were impressive only in comparison to what it had been, when he was younger.

Harvard was Teedie's first venture alone into the world. His preparation for Harvard had been rigorous. Socially, he was ill at ease, either becoming theatrically superior or shy and self-deprecating. Bamie arranged a room for him at Number 16 Winthrop Street. The family wrote back and forth, and Teedie began signing his letters Thee, Jr., Theodore, Ted, Teddy or Tedo.

Teedie's health was better than ever. The picture that emerges of him at Harvard is one of transformation. He would never quite be rid of asthma, but he became healthier. After Christmas, he seemed to come to life socially and was asked to friends' houses for dinner. He wrote home about parties and a collecting trip to the Adirondacks that he was planning with Henry Minor, a classmate.

President Hayes announced an investigation into the New York Customhouse. John Jay, a friend of Theodore's, was on the investigating committee. Theodore's name began to be passed around for appointment to the Customhouse. The Collectorship of the Port of New York was an unusual government post. It was the ultimate post politically, with great power and responsibility, and the pay could be more than that of the President. The Collector had authority over the majority of employees. The moiety system in place at the Courthouse meant that employees shared in all fines and forfeitures. The temptation, then, was for inspectors to find discrepancies when there were none, in order to collect their share of the fine.

In the weeks that followed, there were rumors about Chester Arthur's dismissal, but Hayes refused to comment on anything, until the commission had finished. For Theodore, life went on much the same as it had been. He stayed busy at the office and with his charitable works.

In October, a formal announcement was made that Theodore was to replace Arthur at the Customhouse. The committee through which the nominations would go through was chaired by Senator Conkling. Theodore could take no personal part in the fight over his confirmation. His frustration and worry mounted as weeks went by and nothing happened besides talk and rumor. He later told Teedie that he hoped he would be turned down and the job would be very difficult, and he didn't relish it.

On December 4, it was reported that a compromise was happening. Theodore would not be named for the Collectorship in order to appease Conkling and Conkling would accept another nominee. Hayes, however, stated that he would make no changes. On Dec. 11, the committee on commerce rejected the nomination of Theodore Roosevelt. He would write about his relief to Teedie.

In the final weeks of the confirmation battle, however, Theodore had severe intestinal pain. He died less than two months later. During those months, he had good days and bad ones. He had been diagnosed with acute peritonitis. When the time came, the family, including Teddy, gathered around him.

Part 2, Chapter 8 Father and Son Analysis

Theodore Sr.'s death would rock the Roosevelt family to its core. The leader and authority of the family was no longer with them. Much of the leadership within the family would fall on Bamie, who had always been one of the "big three." Although the fight over the Customhouse appointment did not cause his ailment, it did add stress to Theodore's life, as he waited to see if he would be appointed or not.

During this time, Teedie had begun his studies at Harvard. This would be an important phase in Teedie's life for it was the first time that he stepped out alone into the world. He would experience a similar transition, when he began serving on the New York State Assembly in a few years.

Part 3, Chapter 9 Harvard

Part 3, Chapter 9 Harvard Summary

Both the campus and enrollment at Harvard was comparatively small. When Teedie attended, there were around fifteen buildings. There were just over eight hundred students attending. Those at Harvard were a privileged lot, but not all the sons of rich men. Yet, they were far from representative of the population. "Judged by the color of their skin, the churches they attended, the number of syllables in their names, by almost any such criteria, they were as homogeneous an assembly of young men - and as unrepresentative of turbulent, polygot, post-Civil War America - as one could imagine" (pg. 198-199). Most of the students came from prestigious schools and there were no blacks or foreign students.

Theodore's own quarters for the four years that he was there were those that Bamie had picked for him his freshman year. He had a living room or study and a small bedroom.

The sharpest division in the student body was between those who were the sons of Boston's elite and those who were not. The students who took their studies seriously and made no effort to conceal their academic ambitions were social outcasts.

Theodore's last two years at Harvard were very different from his first two. During his junior year, he found himself a social success, and he embraced the lifestyle that came with it. He also kept his own horse at Harvard that year, something few could afford to do. He spent his money lavishly, something he would not have done if his father were alive. His annual income from his inheritance would be around $8,000 a year, a large sum in those days.

Theodore's grades were excellent and in his junior year, he took nine courses. Others had trouble imagining how he found time for his school work in addition to his busy social schedule. He joined a number of clubs, but he didn't seem to belong to them as others did. To most people, he was likable but peculiar. He never became a champion boxer at Harvard or excelled at any of the sports. He had little interest in organized athletics. Yet, he was competitive in anything he did.

Theodore tried to live his life, as he thought his father would want him to. He didn't smoke, abhorred bad language, and was generally moderate in his drinking. He attended Sunday school regularly.

Later, Theodore would blame Harvard for killing his dream of a career in science. Yet, his diary shows that he enjoyed the science classes he took. It seems, rather, that his vision of a life in natural history faded away because of other interests. He never really found intellectual excitement at Harvard and didn't seem to reach or push himself academically. Harvard also did not provide him with any lasting male friendships.

Part 3, Chapter 9 Harvard Analysis

Theodore Jr. would experience a transformation at Harvard that would be continued during his time in the West. His childhood had been one of isolation in some sense, as most of his interactions were with members of his family. He didn't attend school and his playmates were most often his siblings. Harvard would be a change from this. Suddenly, he was outside his family structure, seeing them only occasionally and having most of his interactions with them through letters. Although his first two years were socially difficult, Theodore Jr. bloomed during his last two years, attending parties and being included in other social gatherings. Yet, he remained different than his classmates.

Theodore's death would have a profound influence on his son. The younger Theodore would vow to model himself after his father. The sickness and death that had now touched his life would return again to haunt him in several short years. Without his father, Teedie would draw strength from Bamie, who would remain his confident throughout their lives and through his Presidency.

Part 3, Chapter 10 Especially Pretty Alice

Part 3, Chapter 10 Especially Pretty Alice Summary

Theodore and Alice first met on October 18, 1878 in Theodore's junior year at Harvard. Theodore went with Dick Saltonstall to his family's house in the country. The Saltonstall's lived next door to the Lees and the two families were close. The houses were within calling distance to each other and a path ran from one house to the other.

Alice was seventeen, and Theodore was nineteen. Alice was by all accounts very attractive, slender and graceful in her movements. She was almost as tall as Theodore.

From Theodore's letters, he was social with a number of Boston girls in addition to Alice. Her name doesn't appear in his diary at Oyster Bay. Yet, Theodore would later say that it was all a deception and that he had proposed to Alice already by June, but she had either turned him down or put him off. He did, however, decide to win her and began a campaign to get her to marry him. He enlisted help from the family, with Mittie hosting the Lee family, and then Bamie and Corinne going to Chestnut Hill.

The formal announcement of their engagement came on February 14. A date for the wedding had yet to be set. Theodore anticipated a conflict with her father, who felt that she was too young and should wait a while. Mittie proposed that Theodore and Alice come to live with her after the marriage and this quelled her father's fears.

Mittie became very active, throwing parties and teas for the young couple and introducing Alice to New York society. She also witnessed other romances. Cousin West was in love with Fanny Smith, who turned him down, when he proposed. Corinne was being courted by Douglas Robinson. Elliott was working for Uncle James Gracie at a bank

Elliott and Theodore made another trip west that summer. The trip was not well-planned, and they kept running into trouble. Theodore had also had disturbing news from a doctor, who told him that he had heart trouble. Theodore was advised to live a quiet life and to choose a sedentary occupation. Theodore didn't tell anyone about this and determined to live as he wished. He had several asthma attacks on the trip.

Theodore and Alice were married on Wednesday, October 27, 1880, which was also Theodore's twenty-second birthday. The reception was grand. They stayed in Springfield on their wedding night and then spent two weeks at Oyster Bay for their honeymoon. On Nov. 13, Mittie welcomed them home.

That winter was busy for the family. Theodore took up the part of his father, presiding over the family table and going to the newsboys' dinners on Sunday evening. He began attending Columbia Law School, which was three miles from the house. The family attended various parties and hosted Corinne's debut. Alice joined the tennis club and the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church.

Corinne's engagement was announced later that winter. It was eagerly supported by Theodore and Bamie, but Corinne viewed it as a mistake. She didn't wish to be married. Alice and Corinne became close friends, spending time with one another. Alice and Mittie were also close, although Alice had a certain restraint around Bamie.

Part 3, Chapter 10 Especially Pretty Alice Analysis

Although sickness and death were an ever present threat within the Roosevelt family, the children all found happiness, at least to a degree, in marriage. Corinne may be the exception to this, as she is said to have never loved Douglas Robinson, but they did appear to at least have a fondness for one another. Mittie encouraged the romances and took her children's spouses under her wing. In particular, she and Alice were very close, an event that could have been very different in a family that could be exclusionary. With his marriage, Theodore took over many of his father's tasks, although he would later turn from the charitable duties that his father had cared greatly for. In the midst of the business of everyday life, the family found support in one another, a theme that runs throughout the book.

Part 3, Chapter 11 Home is the Hunter

Part 3, Chapter 11 Home is the Hunter Summary

Elliott was kept appraised of the happenings in the family through a multitude of letters. He learned of Corinne's romance and engagement, Theodore's climb of the Matterhorn, Theodore's election to the state assembly, Uncle Jim's new house at Oyster Bay, and so on. Their letters took between two to three months to reach Elliott once he got to India.

In India, Elliott went on a tiger hunt south of Hyderabad and the tiger he shot was one of the largest ever seen by the locals. The tiger was 9 feet 1 ? inches in long and 3 feet 7 inches high, weighing in at over 280 pounds. He wrote to Bamie that the sheer pleasure of living in India was more than he had ever known. He also killed two elephants while there.

On March 11, 1882, Elliott returned home after an absence of a year and four months. He was asked by the James Roosevelts to be a godfather for their infant son, Franklin Delano. He was also present at Corinne's wedding to Douglas Robinson. Corinne, it was said, spent the day weeping.

Elliott joined with Theodore, Douglas, and others to form the New York Reform Club. He also joined Douglas and Archibald Russell in a real-estate business downtown. He lived at home and had a room near Mittie's. One of the reasons that Elliott liked Douglas was his fondness for Mittie, who had been showing "unevenness." Yet, many seemed to find Mittie anything but odd, and Theodore seemed proud to bring his political friends to the house to meet her.

While Theodore commuted back and forth from Albany, Elliott was becoming a man-about-town. He was drinking heavily, but many in his set did. Elliott was about two inches taller than Theodore and somewhat handsomer. He had an effortless charm that made him popular. He had little of Theodore's self-righteousness or his combativeness. He took occasional turns at the Newsboys' Lodging House and other charitable organizations.

Elliott began spending time with Anna Hall, and they were often seen at parties together. He proposed over Memorial Day in 1883. They would marry on December 1, 1883. Theodore was delighted for them and his own family was expanding as well as Alice had announced that she was pregnant. At the end of the summer, Theodore went west again, but Elliott stayed in New York.

Theodore and Alice moved into a house of their own, on West 45th Street. They lived next to Corinne and Douglas, who had become the parents of Theodore Douglas Robinson that spring. Theodore purchased more than a hundred acres at Oyster Bay and sold parcels to Bamie and Aunt Annie. He had many irons in the fire, including investing in a ranch in Wyoming and in G.P. Putnam's Sons, a publishing company.

Part 3, Chapter 11 Home is the Hunter Analysis

Elliott's life is in many ways very different from Theodore's. While they grew up in the same family and had similar experiences as children, their adult lives diverged greatly. Elliott's story is one of a downward spiral that begins as Theodore's life begins its climb upward. McCullough suggests that Elliott's seizures as a young man may have been due to intense internal pressure to live up to his father's expectations and his brother's example. His downward spiral may have also been due to these factors.

Although at this point, Elliott's life appears relatively normal. He goes on a hunt in India and seems to enjoy himself greatly. He married and became a parent. Yet, he was also drinking heavily, contributing to the alcoholism that would wreck havoc on his life. The family would try, at least for a time, to help him, trying to offer the family support that they showed over and over again. In the end, Elliott was lost to them.

Part 3, Chapter 12 Politics

Part 3, Chapter 12 Politics Summary

Theodore later would say that it was a combination of curiosity and duty that led him into politics. His family supported his decision to try for a seat in the Assembly, and he received strong backing from his father's friends. His own social set saw him as a hero. Only three people disapproved: Uncle James Alfred, cousins Alfred and Emlen.

When Theodore reached Albany, he realized what an extraordinary world he had entered into. There were 127 other members of the Assembly. They were farmers, mechanics, liquor dealers, newspapermen, and so on. He judged roughly a third of them to be crooked.

Theodore was not intimidated by his new position. Although he was only twenty-three and the youngest member of the Assembly, he deferred to no one and made his presence felt. The other members thought that Theodore had a speech impediment because of the way that he talked. His voice would often shift from tenor to falsetto, when he was trying to gain attention on the floor. His gold rimmed spectacles with their black ribbon, gold watch fob, and the narrow cut of his clothes set him apart.

Yet, despite anyone's thoughts about his voice or appearance, Theodore left little doubt that he was in the Assembly to accomplish something. The Assembly was elected every year and his first two terms lasted five months and four months, so he was in Albany only nine months during those two years. He won his seat handily and many of the stands he took on the issues his first term were expected.

During Theodore's first year, he became involved with the Cigar Bill. The Cigarmakers' Union had proposed a bill to outlaw at home manufacture of cigars in New York. This system had been the sole livelihood for thousands of the city's poorest families. Theodore was on a subcommittee, which was to look into the matter. At first, Theodore thought that he would be against the legislation, but after visiting the tenements, he changed his mind.

His work on the Cigar Bill was overshadowed by his call for the investigation and impeachment of a State Supreme Court Judge, who appeared to be in league with Jay Gould. Theodore was warned to thread lightly and, when he made his call for impeachment, it was stalled by the leadership on both sides, who wanted no part of it. He would try again, calling for a debate on the floor. Another member intervened and stalled again, making sure a vote didn't happen. The issue received press, however, and couldn't be ignored. Theodore would try several more times to bring the issue up in the Assembly. The press coverage led to public indignation and many in the Assembly had a change of heart and voted for an investigation. In the end, the committee, which was thought to be bribed, said that the judge had done nothing wrong. The Assembly disbanded two days later and the scandal faded into the background.

The prospects were great for Theodore. No one in Albany could dismiss him as a lightweight. He carried his district again in the fall of 1882 and was made the Republican nominee for Speaker, although the Democratic majority meant that he wouldn't receive the seat. In his first months back, he went after Jay Gould again and lashed out at the New York City Board of Aldermen. He never doubted the moral virtue of any of his positions and saw the need to punish the wicked.

Theodore was elected for a third term in 1883 and was determined to be named Speaker. He lost out and the defeat was bitter for him. He was named chairman of the City Affairs Committee and within days, he had issued three major bills. Theodore loved the publicity and the battles. Perhaps the chief reason that he loved politics was his love for the fight.

Part 3, Chapter 12 Politics Analysis

If Theodore saw his life as a battle after his struggle with asthma, he carried this mentality over into his political career. He was not intimidated by his young age or his inexperience. In the Assembly, he made his mark quickly and made his presence felt. He was not afraid to tackle tough issues and persevered on them, even when he was told not to. The same determinism and strong character that his father had had also ran through Theodore's veins.

Yet, Theodore had a great deal of maturing to do. McCullough describes several instances where Theodore reacts more like a child in the Assembly than an adult. Alice's death and his time in the West would give him greater strength and poise. He would also gain more experience participating in the national convention in Chicago. All these things would prepare him, as he moved into his life in politics.

Part 3, Chapter 13 Strange and Terrible Fate

Part 3, Chapter 13 Strange and Terrible Fate Summary

During Theodore's second term in office, Alice remained behind because of her advancing pregnancy. Theodore would bring home friends to see her, and he was sure that she was a great asset to his political career.

Theodore's life was going well. He had started boxing again, had shaved off his side-whiskers, and quit keeping a diary. He had also gradually given up the Newsboys' Lodging House and other charitable works of his father. He abandoned his law study, saying that he had become disillusioned with it. Yet, he was still unable or unwilling to accept politics as his lifework.

Theodore and Alice had decided to build on the land he had bought at Oyster Bay. The house was to be very large, with the plans calling for ten bedrooms, excluding the maids' rooms. The final cost was to be just under $17,000. Theodore wanted the house called Leeholm. From the front, they would be able to see Long Island Sound

Theodore returned to the 57th Street house in early February to find Mittie quite sick with what appeared to be a cold. Corinne and Douglas had gone to Baltimore for the weekend, leaving their son with Bamie. The weather was bad and on Tuesday morning, Theodore left again for Albany.

Later, on Tuesday, the twelfth, Alice went into labor and gave birth to a baby girl that night. Telegrams were sent off announcing the birth and that mother and child were doing well. Several hours after receiving the first telegram, another arrived. That one sent Theodore rushing for the train.

Corinne and Douglas reached the house first, finding Elliott, who told them that Mittie and Alice were both dying. Mittie was dying of typhoid fever, and Alice of Bright's disease. By the time Theodore reached Alice, she barely knew who he was. Bright's disease in adults was almost always fatal, and it had probably gone undiagnosed in Alice all winter.

Mittie died at three a.m. on the morning of February 14, with her four children at her bedside. Alice lingered for eleven more hours, before dying at two p.m. A double funeral was held on Saturday in New York.

Three days later, Theodore was back in Albany, and he took up were he left off in the Assembly. He did little but work, going back and forth from Albany to New York. Within days of the funeral, the family decided to sell 6 West 57th Street. Theodore left the details to Bamie, along with selling his own house at West 45th Street. Theodore decided to go ahead with the plans for the Oyster Bay house, but he asked Bamie to

supervise the job and handle everything. The baby, Alice, was christened the next Sunday and entrusted to Bamie, who bought her own house on Madison Avenue.

Part 3, Chapter 13 Strange and Terrible Fate Analysis

Illness permeates the Roosevelt family as the children grow up. The theme appears over and over throughout the book as the family struggles to help Bamie and prevent Teedie's asthma. Yet, the worst tragedy was still ahead of them. On the same day, both Mittie and Alice died. Although their illnesses where different, both illnesses were undiagnosed, and they passed away within hours of each other.

The chapter also illustrates the theme of family again. In the aftermath of Mittie and Alice's death, the family rallied around each other in support. Theodore turned to Bamie, as he did after his father died. As she did throughout his life, Bamie cared for Theodore and took care of the details that needed to be cared for. She took charge of baby Alice and the selling of the two houses.

Part 3, Chapter 14 Chicago

Part 3, Chapter 14 Chicago Summary

In May 1884, the Republican National Convention was held in Chicago. Blaine was the frontrunner for the nomination for president. Theodore was against this nomination, but he also didn't want the nomination to go to Chester Arthur, although he had been a respectable President after Garfield's murder. Arthur had made little effort to get the nomination and said that he didn't want it. Besides these two nominees, there were a few different dark horses that might upset Blaine. Theodore was banking on Senator George Franklin Edmunds of Vermont.

Theodore departed for Chicago on May 30, with his father's friends, Schurz and Curtis. They were going to work for Edmunds, and Theodore proclaimed that he would not cast a vote for either Blaine or Arthur in the convention. Theodore was almost the only delegate who believed that Blaine could be beaten.

The opening gavel fell at just after noon. Theodore gave a speech that afternoon in front of a crowd of ten thousand. Blaine lost the first ballot. The next two days were taken up with routine business and various petitions.

That night brought an unforgettable nominating speech for Blaine by a blind man, Judge William H. West. Theodore worked through the night in a last-ditch effort to turn the tide. Blaine did not win in the next few votes. The final vote gave Blaine the nomination. John A. Logan was named Blaine's running mate.

By midmorning the next day, Theodore had packed and checked out of his hotel, heading west. Various newspapers tried to get information on whether Theodore would vote for Blaine in the election. The Democrats made Grover Cleveland their candidate in June.

The Chicago convention was a crucial event in Theodore's life. He was only twenty-five years old, and it had been his first national convention. Yet, he had proved himself to be a force worth reckoning with. The bond he formed with Lodge would be important. He also chose to become a party man, a professional politician. In standing with the Republican Party, he was breaking with his father's politics, his father's friends, and so on.

Part 3, Chapter 14 Chicago Analysis

McCullough argues that the Chicago convention was an important event in Theodore's life. It is at this point that Theodore begins to accept that his life's work would be in politics. Although he had already spent three years in the Assembly, he was still unsure what he would do with the rest of his life. This indecision may have come in part from his young age and from Alice's death.

Yet, at the convention, Theodore again proved that he is a natural politician. He gave a speech in front of ten thousand people and worked tirelessly to upend Blaine. While Blaine was elected as the nominee, Theodore had done all he could to stop him. The newspaper coverage and attention paid to Theodore illustrates his reputation as someone who was a force to be reckoned with.

Part 3, Chapter 15 Glory Days

Part 3, Chapter 15 Glory Days Summary

The mythical figure of the cowboy was still emerging, when Theodore went west in the 1880s. Theodore stressed the differences between cowboys and ranchmen (or cattlemen or stockmen). A ranchman was distinguished by his attire, which was made of a finer material than a cowboy's, and his equipment was all first quality. A ranchman spoke of his men, his herds, and the quantity of his horses. He also had ample time to hunt and read good books. The great appeal of becoming a ranchman was the freedom and open-air existence. To be off to one's ranch in the west or just back from it was fashionable at this time and seen as a romantic, adventuresome undertaking.

Hundreds of ranches were scattered throughout the West. Theodore spent a small fortune outfitting himself with buckskins, a silver belt buckle, bowie knife, and so on. The Bad Lands cattle boom began in 1883, the year that Theodore made his first visit and made his initial investment. He would spend $14,000 to buy 450 head of cattle. He never did buy any land. Instead, he, like everyone else, squatted on the land.

The dominant figure in the Bad Lands was the Marquis de Mores, who founded the town of Medora. The Marquis wanted to revolutionize the beef industry by butchering cattle on the range rather than shipping live cattle to Chicago to be butchered. He brought in hundreds of workers to build his town and packing plant. Yet, he stepped on Western sensibilities by buying land, when no one else believed in owning the land and by fencing the land. By 1884, a packing plant was in operation and beef was being shipped east in refrigerator cars.

Theodore maintained a cordial relationship with the Marquis. They attended some of the same meetings of the local stockmen's association, and Theodore was invited for dinner several times. With the packing plant working well, Theodore bought another one thousand head of cattle for $26,000. Yet, his operation was still small in comparison to other ranches.

With Wilmot Dow and Bill Sewall, Theodore established a second ranch, known as the Elkhorn. The nearest neighbors were ten to fifteen miles away. The house was built in some cottonwoods by a bend in the river. Theodore was only an average horse rider, and he never learned to handle the rope very well. The words loneliness and solitude appear often in the things he wrote, and these were also themes in the literature of the West. His letters also made frequent references to birds and animals that he saw or killed. He made a journey into the Bighorn Mountains where he killed a grizzly bear.

Theodore's Bad Lands years lasted from 1883 to 1886, and he journeyed back and forth from the West to New York. The time in the West restored him in body and spirit and gave him a subject to write about. He would buy more cattle, and he took part in a

spring roundup, experiencing a stampede at one point. He both looked and sounded different than he had before his time in the West.

The Marquis's business began to fail in 1885. The packing plant was shut down in 1886. That winter was the worst on record and the losses were beyond the worst estimates. The average loss for a rancher was seventy-five percent of his herd.

Theodore would continue to come to the West every other year or so after that, but only to hunt, and he seldom stayed longer than a week or two. He had invested over $50,000 in cattle and another $30,000 for the house. Eventually, he sold off what little was left and his losses were about $20,000, not including interest on the investment.

Part 3, Chapter 15 Glory Days Analysis

Theodore Roosevelt Jr. would often be pictured in later years in his ranchman outfit. It encompassed his outlook on life. If his asthma gave him the idea that life is a battle, his time in the West strengthened this in him. Over the years that he spent time in the West, Theodore would be transformed into a strong, healthy man. Instead of the man-child that existed in the Assembly, Theodore came out of his time in the West refreshed and triumphant.

Theodore's attachment to the West would come out in his writing. He wrote about the things that he experienced and saw, creating a larger than life figure. The picture that emerges of him in his later years is of a healthy, strong man who conquered what life threw at him. In some ways, this image was possible because of the elements that were left out, including his first marriage and Alice's death. Yet, his transformation from an undersized, asthmatic child to the man he would become inspired, just as his father had served as an inspiration to him.

Part 3, Chapter 16 Return

Part 3, Chapter 16 Return Summary

Bamie was now the sole survivor of the "big people," and she was now thirty-one, established as a spinster. She made it her undertaking to know what was going on in the family and to keep the others appraised. The family turned to her for support and advice. When Elliott's wife gave birth to Anna Eleanor, Bamie was the one they called for. She continued to take care of little Alice, except for the summers, when she stayed with her grandparents at Chestnut Hill. She was the only person who ever talked to Alice about her mother. Bamie still wore a piece of ram's wool as a cushion for her back, but it appears that she was in pain most of the time, regardless.

Theodore mattered most to Bamie. He was her focus and consuming interest. She wanted him to return to politics, where she was certain that he belonged. She followed each step of his career with interest.

In August 1886, *The New York Times* carried an announcement about the engagement of Theodore Roosevelt to Miss Edith Carow. Bamie issued a retraction but Theodore confirmed later that he and Edith had been secretly engaged for almost a year. He told Bamie that she could keep Baby Lee. The family was taken unaware by the news of his engagement, and they were not altogether pleased.

Theodore was asked to run for mayor of New York, and he accepted the nomination, even though he thought he had little chance of winning. Bamie agreed to go with him to London to attend his wedding to Edith. She insisted that Baby Lee be given back to her father, afraid that Alice would never see him if Bamie kept her. Theodore lost the mayoral race, and they sailed to London.

Part 3, Chapter 16 Return Analysis

Once again, this chapter turns to the theme of family in the lives of the Roosevelts. Behind Theodore, Bamie would always stand. After their father died, Bamie became increasingly important to Theodore. He relied on her for support and guidance, as well as her ability to handle the details of his life. Bamie's life revolved around Theodore. She also kept the family together in many ways. She kept in touch with everyone and kept everyone apprised of each other. She was the foundation for the Roosevelt family after Theodore's death.

Afterword

Afterword Summary

Bamie married Navy Commander William Sheffield Cowles, when she was forty years old. At forty-three, she gave birth to William Sheffield Cowles, Jr. Over the years, she became almost completely deaf, although most people never realized this, because she learned to read lips. She died in August of 1931 at the age of seventy-six.

Theodore became President of the United States in 1901 after the assassination of William McKinley. He had served a number of posts before that, including: Police Commissioner of New York City, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, colonel in the Rough Riders, Governor of New York, and Vice President. As President, he was colorful, and he delighted the country. He built a new Navy, increased the area of the national forests, and created five national parks, sixteen national monuments, four national game refuges, and fifty-one bird sanctuaries.

Theodore was devoted to his father's memory, saying that his father was the best man he ever knew. He named several of his father's friends to government posts. In contrast, he would say nothing again of Alice Lee. His *Autobiography* in 1913 doesn't include her or their marriage. It is unclear whether this was Theodore or Edith's doing. His second marriage produced five more children, and he was devoted to them. He died on January 6, 1919.

Elliott's life spiraled downward throughout his life. His marriage became a shambles, he had been involved in a paternity suit, he threatened suicide numerous times, and he was an alcoholic. Anna, his wife, died in 1892 and. in 1893, his son Elliott died. Little Eleanor was looked after by her Grandmother Hall. In the last year of his life, Elliott was living under an assumed name with a mistress. He died in August of 1894.

Corinne lived long enough to see another Roosevelt in the White House. While her marriage to Douglas was satisfactory, she never loved him. Her strongest affection was for Theodore. She died in February of 1933.

Afterword Analysis

The afterword gives a brief summary of what happened to the four Roosevelt children after Theodore's failed bid for the position of Mayor of New York. For Theodore, his brightest moments were yet to come, and yet, the events of his childhood shaped the man that he was to become. By focusing on these early years, the reader is better able to understand why Theodore became who he was. The early events also show the importance of family to the Roosevelt children and how this would dominate their lives, particularly for Bamie and Corinne.

Characters

Theodore (Teedie) Roosevelt, Jr.

Theodore, or Teedie, was Theodore and Mittie Roosevelt's second child. He was born on October 27, 1858. As a child, he was frail and undersized. He suffered from asthmatic attacks, along with chronic stomach troubles, headaches, and fevers. Due to his health, Theodore was tutored at home, along with his brother and sisters. Many thought that he might have a speech impediment when he was a child and young adult because of the way that he spat out words with great force. His mother described his laugh as an "ungreased squeak." He would grow to five feet eight inches. His teeth and glasses were his outstanding features.

Theodore attended Harvard University and transformed himself socially there. He married Alice Lee just after graduation. They had one daughter, Alice, together. On Feb. 14, 1884, both Theodore's mother and wife, Alice, died. Theodore would later marry Edith Carow.

Throughout his life, Teedie would love the outdoors. He loved stories of high adventure and later wrote about his own adventures in the West. He collected animal specimens, particularly birds, which he prepared himself. As an adult, he would travel west several times. He bought over a thousand head of cattle in the Bad Lands and established a ranch, called Elkhorn. His love of the west echoed his earlier love of the outdoors, exploring, and adventure.

Politically, Theodore began to get involved during his early adult life. He formed the New York Reform Club with Elliott and Douglas Robinson, among others. He was elected and served several terms at the state Assembly, where he made a name for himself. He served as the Police Commissioner of New York, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, a colonel in the Rough Riders, Governor of New York, and Vice President. He became President in 1901 after the assassination of William McKinley. He had five other children, in addition to baby Alice. He died on January 6, 1919.

Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore was the husband of Mittie and the father to Bamie, Teedie, Elliott, and Corinne. He was a good husband and father, who also gave generously to charitable organizations. Although the family was well off, he cared little for public attention or acclaim. He was a faithful member of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church and belonged to the Union League Club and the Century Association. Physically, Theodore was handsome. He was athletic and liked fine clothing. He had china-blue eyes, chestnut hair and beard, and a square jaw.

Theodore had a great interest in children. Although he found little satisfaction in work, he enjoyed greatly spending time with his own four children and donating time and

money to charities dealing with children. He helped establish the Children's Aid Society. To his own children, he was both the voice of authority and their best companion. They spent long summers traveling, horseback riding, and exploring. For the younger Theodore, his father was person that he aspired to be like.

Theodore became interested in politics, helping to lead the Republican Reform Club. He gave a speech at the Cincinnati National Convention and worked to insure that Conkling did not get the nomination for President. Later, President Hayes nominated Theodore for the Collectorship of the Port of New York. His nomination was rejected in 1877 because of Conkling's political maneuvers, but Theodore had wished not to receive the nomination anyway. Soon after, he began suffering from intestinal pain, and he died less than two months later, on February 9, 1878.

Martha (Mittie) Bulloch Roosevelt

Mittie was Theodore's wife and the mother of Bamie, Teedie, Elliott, and Corinne. She was a very attractive woman, with soft blue eyes and a slender figure. She was just over five feet tall, and she had delicate features. Her hair was a lustrous black. She was full of life and liked to talk.

In later years, she wore white most of the time and became obsessed with cleanliness. She also suffered from sick spells and mysterious upsets, but these did not seem to keep her from doing the things that she wanted to. Mittie died on February 14, 1884 from typhoid fever.

Anna (Bamie) Roosevelt

Bamie was the oldest child of Theodore and Mittie Roosevelt, and she was born in 1855. She suffered from Pott's disease, a form of Tuberculosis, which softens and destroys the bones. She had severe curvature of the spine, which caused suffering throughout her life. She was also a homely girl, with deep-set blue eyes and heavy lids that made her look years older than she was.

To the younger children in the family, Bamie was almost always thought of as one of the adults. Theodore doted on her, and she was "Papa's pet." She was bright and picked things up quickly. After Theodore died, Bamie, in many ways, became the leader of the family. The others depended on her in many ways, from support to advice. She was diplomatic, intelligent, and knowledgeable. She liked responsibility and taking care of others. The family seemed to revolve around her, and she loved good, stimulating talk.

Bamie married Navy Commander William Sheffield Cowles in1895, when she was forty years old. They had one son, William Sheffield Cowles, Jr. She became almost completely deaf, but read lips. She died in August of 1931, at the age of seventy-six.

Alice Lee

Alice Lee was Theodore's first wife and the mother of his first child, Alice. They met when Alice was seventeen. She was very attractive, slender, graceful, and tall at five feet seven inches. She had honey-blond hair and blue eyes. Alice was described as being full of life and exuberant. She played the piano and had a very sunny spirit.

The formal engagement was announced on February 14, 1880. They married on October 27, 1880. After their honeymoon, they returned to New York to live with Mittie. She gave birth to a baby girl, later christened Alice, on February 12, 1884. Two days later, Alice died from an undiagnosed case of Bright's disease.

Elliott Roosevelt

Elliott or Ellie was the third child of Theodore and Mittie Roosevelt. He was arguably the best looking of the children and the most endearing, although his later life would be plagued with self-destruction and pain. When he was fourteen, Ellie began suffering from strange seizures. Several trips were arranged for him, including one to central Texas.

Elliott was several inches taller than Teedie and the handsomer version of the two boys. He parted his hair in the middle and also wore metal-rimmed spectacles. Seen from a distance, he was easily mistaken for his older brother. He had an effortless charm, along with a generous spirit. He had little of Teedie's self-righteousness or combativeness. He and Teedie traveled west several times together on hunting trips. He also traveled to India, where he shot and killed a tiger and several elephants. When he returned home, he became the godfather to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the son of James Roosevelt.

Elliott married Anna Hall on December 1, 1883 and had a daughter, Anna Eleanor. By the time he died in 1894, he had been placed in various institutions in Europe for his alcoholism.

Corinne Roosevelt

Corinne was the youngest child of Theodore and Mittie Roosevelt. With her family, she went abroad several times, including the winter spent on the Nile River. She was pretty, if not as attractive as Mittie, and everyone seems to have thought well of her.

She married Douglas Robinson in April of 1882, even though she felt that she didn't want to get married. She died in February of 1933.

Douglas Robinson

Robinson was a Scot who was heir to a real estate fortune. He married Corinne Roosevelt in April of 1882. He was fond of the family, particularly Mittie. He helped form several businesses and clubs with the Roosevelt brothers.

Martha Stewart Elliott Bulloch

Martha was Mittie's mother, and the children called her Grandmamma. Her first husband, Senator John Elliott, died, leaving Martha with three children. Later, she married James Stephens Bulloch, who was her step-son-in-law. They had three children: Anna, Mittie and Irvine. After Mittie's marriage to Theodore, Grandmamma came north with Anna to live with them. She died in October of 1864 at the age of sixty-five.

Captain James Bulloch

A member of the Bulloch family, Captain James was a blockade-runner during the Civil War. Both Captain James and Irvine went to England after the war since they were excluded temporarily from pardon because of their involvement with the *Alabama*. The Roosevelts visited them in England several times.

Irvine Bulloch

Irvine was Mittie's brother. At nineteen, he signed on as a midshipman in the Confederate Navy. Both Captain James and Irvine went to England after the war since they were excluded temporarily from pardon because of their involvement with the *Alabama*. The Roosevelts visited him in England several times.

Anna Bulloch

Anna was Mittie's sister, and she also grew up in Roswell, Georgia. After Mittie's wedding, Anna and her mother moved north to live with Theodore and Mittie. She married James K. Gracie, a New York banker, in 1866.

Roscoe Conkling

Conkling was a Senator from New York. Theodore and the Republican Reform Club fought against his nomination for president in 1876 at the Cincinnati national convention. He opposed Theodore's nomination for the Customhouse.

James G. Blaine

Blaine was a Republican politician from Maine. He ran for the 1884 Republican presidential nomination and received it, although Teedie worked at the convention against him. He was defeated for President, however.

Marquis de Mores

The Marquis founded the town of Medora in the Bad Lands. He was tall, spare and fit, a superb horseman, and a crack shot. He opened the first meat packing plant in the Bad Lands and butchered cattle on the range before transporting the meat east.

Edith Carow

Edith was Teedie's second wife, and they had five children together. She was lovely and had wide-ranging interests. She was said to have brought a balance to Teedie's life.

Objects/Places

28 East 20th Street

The house at this address was owned by Theodore and Mittie Roosevelt. The children grew up in the house. It looked like any other brownstone, with the exception of a deep porch at the rear of the third-floor level.

Roswell

Roswell was the Bulloch home in Georgia. It was about twenty miles north of Atlanta. Mittie grew up here.

Liverpool, England

Captain James and Irvine Bulloch lived in Liverpool after leaving the United States after the Civil War. The Roosevelts visited with them on their Grand Tour.

Bronchial Asthma

Teedie suffered from this disease throughout his life. Although he would become healthier after his days at Harvard, the disease did not totally leave him.

Wood's Gymnasium

Teedie and Elliott attended this gym for three months before their back piazza was outfitted with equipment.

Nile River

The Roosevelt family left New York in October of 1872 for the Nile. They traveled on the river from Cairo to the First Cataract at Aswan and back. Teedie spent the time collecting bird specimens.

Number 6 West 57th Street

Theodore built this house for his family in New York. It was a lavish showplace, with large rooms, fireplaces, and mirrors. There were inlaid woods, sliding doors, Persian rugs, and tasseled chandeliers.

Oyster Bay

The family spent many summers here riding horses and spending long hours on the water. Teedie would later build a house here for himself and his family.

Republican Reform Club

Theodore joined this club, when it was organized. He began one of its leaders. The group fought against the possible presidential nomination of Senator Roscoe Conkling in 1876.

Harvard University

Teedie attended Harvard University beginning in 1876. He blossomed socially during his junior year.

Number 16 Winthrop Street

Teedie lived at this address during his four years at Harvard. Bamie found the quarters for him and furnished them.

Columbia Law School

Teedie attended classes at Columbia Law School after he and Alice were married. He abandoned his law studies after he was elected to the Assembly.

Newsboy's Lodging House

Theodore volunteered his time and money to this organization. He often dined with the boys on Sunday evenings. Both Elliott and Teedie followed in this tradition, although Teedie would give it up after his election to the Assembly.

New York State Assembly

Teedie won a seat at the Assembly beginning in 1882. He was outspoken and made his presence felt almost immediately.

Republican National Convention in Chicago

Teedie attended this conference where he gave an impassioned speech against the frontrunner Blaine.

The Bad Lands

Teedie traveled here several times, investing in over one thousand head of cattle. He enjoyed the time there and wrote about his adventures in numerous accounts. The cattle boom started there in 1883.

The Elkhorn

This ranch was established by Teedie and several others in the Bad Lands. He loved the freedom and setting of living on a ranch.

Themes

Family

Family was very important to the Roosevelts and the bonds between them remained strong throughout their lives. McCullough chooses to focus on Theodore Roosevelt's early life, believing that it illuminates much about the man that he would become. Part of this explanation rests on the family that Teedie grew up in. His family served as inspiration for him and gave him an enormous amount of support throughout his life.

Theodore Sr. was a critical individual in Teedie's life and in his development. Teedie mentioned multiple times in his writing how he looked up to his father and how he wanted to be a man like his father. Theodore Sr. was not only the voice of authority for the children growing up, but he also modeled for them a strong and benevolent character. The children sought not only to win his approval, but also to model themselves after their father. While Theodore Jr. would step away from some of his father's pursuits, namely his charitable works, he always looked to his father's memory for inspiration and guidance.

Other family members played large roles in Theodore's life as well. Bamie was in many ways the leader of the family after their father's death. She kept everyone informed about events within the family, and Theodore Jr. looked to her for advice and guidance, particularly as he began his political career. She and Corinne provided Theodore Jr. with a firm family structure, one that he could always count on to provide for his needs.

The Outdoors

The natural world played a large role in the Roosevelt's lives. Theodore Sr. believed that physical activity and the outdoors were good remedies, at least in part, for the children's various illnesses. The children spent a great deal of their summers and holidays abroad out of doors, engaged in some form of physical activity like horseback riding and hiking. The family also used the natural world to try to combat Teedie's asthma, taking him to the shore or the country, when his illness threatened.

Theodore Jr. loved the natural world. He spent a great many hours during the summer months as a child outside. When the family went to the country or to Oyster Bay, Teedie spent countless hours exploring and hiking through the area. He collected animal and bird specimens, some of which he donated to the American Museum of Natural History in New York. In later years, Theodore Jr. spent many months in the West in the Bad Lands. He enjoyed the life of a ranchman, which included riding horses and taking care of the animals. He participated in a spring roundup as well. The time in the West transformed Theodore Jr. in a way that his countless hours in the gym did not. After his time in the West, he looked stronger and was more fit. His voice changed as well, making his voice more pleasant.

Other family members also enjoyed the outdoors. Elliott, in particular, followed in his older brother's footsteps as far as the outdoors was concerned. The family sent Elliott to central Texas for his health and later he traveled to India, where he killed a tiger and several elephants. The natural world excited both brothers, and it provided a bond between them. They went west together several times to hunt, enjoying each other's company and the environment they were in.

Sickness

Illnesses of various sorts were present in the Roosevelt family throughout the time period that McCullough examines. Made more dangerous by the time period, some of the illnesses were deadly, while others affected the ways that the family lived their daily lives.

Two physical problems affected the Roosevelt's daily lives, when the children were growing up. Bamie suffered from Pott's disease, which left her spine curved and the girl in almost constant pain. The family tried various means to try to help her, finding that physical activity was best for her. Teedie and Corinne also suffered from asthma, although Teedie appears to have had the worst case of it. This disease, which can strike an individual at any time, left the family in a constant vigil. They were never sure when Teedie's asthma would flare up, and they would need to take him out of the city. This placed a great deal of stress on the family and influenced the way that they lived their lives. It also created in Theodore Jr. the idea that life was a battle that needed to be fought. He would take this attitude with him into his career in politics.

Later in Theodore's life, illness would take three important people from his life. Theodore Sr. died while Teedie was attending Harvard. His death created a void in the family that no one could fill. Theodore Jr. strived to live his life as his father would have wanted him to do, always using his father as his role model. Tragically, Theodore Jr. would lose both is mother and his wife on the same day. Although each had a different disease, they died within hours of each other. This again causes a huge hole in the family structure and the remaining family members had to find a way to carry on.

Style

Points of View

David McCullough uses an omniscient third person point of view in *Mornings on Horseback*. This allows McCullough to trace what multiple individuals are thinking about the same events and people. While the focus of the work is Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. by bringing in the thoughts and feelings of other family members, friends, and acquaintances, the reader is able to gain a better understanding of Teddy Roosevelt and the family in which he grew up in.

McCullough uses diaries, letters, and other archival sources to give voice to the Roosevelt family. His interpretation of these events and choice of events to narrate are, because of the third person point of view, presented as absolute and authoritative. This is a familiar academic writing style, particularly for the time period in which it was written.

Setting

The main setting for *Mornings on Horseback* is the mid to late 1800s in New York City, where the Roosevelt family lived, and where Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. grew up. The family lived in two different homes during this time and both are described in detail. Social events and other sites are also described for the New York City area. McCullough points out that the Roosevelt family lived in New York City during a pivotal time in its growth and development.

The work also describes a number of other settings that family members traveled to. McCullough includes a chapter on the family's Grand Tour through Europe, one on a Republican National Convention in Chicago, and another on Teddy Roosevelt's journeys in the West. Other minor settings include the families' summer travels in the Adirondacks and at Oyster Bay and Teddy's work at the New York State Assembly in Albany, NY.

Language and Meaning

McCullough writes in a clear, accessible language. He appears to be targeting a popular audience, in addition to an academic audience, and uses a fast-paced and simple language and organization to accomplish this. Overall, the book contains little technical jargon and does not use strong, violent or vulgar language.

McCullough makes use of Roosevelt family diaries, letters, and other materials within his book. He quotes from them frequently, giving the reader a better sense of each family member. In addition, he draws on newspaper accounts and comments from other individuals about the family and their activities.

Structure

Mornings on Horseback consists of sixteen chapters, an afterword, notes, bibliography, and an index. McCullough also includes a number of photographs that were taken of the family members at various points in time. There is also a brief author's note about the book. Finally, the front and back inside cover contain a family tree that helps the reader place various family members within the overall structure.

McCullough follows a general linear pattern throughout the first half of the book. Starting when Theodore, Jr. is around ten years old, McCullough traces his development to his studies at Harvard. After this point, the book is a bit more thematically organized, although it still moves in a more or less linear fashion. In some of the later chapters, the timelines for events overlap with the thematic organization that McCullough uses.

Quotes

"To his own children he was at once the ultimate voice of authority and, when time allowed, their most exuberant companion. He never fired their imaginations or made them laugh as their mother could, but he was unfailingly interested in them, sympathetic, confiding, entering into their lives in ways few fathers ever do. It was a though he was in league with them." Chapter 1, pg. 30

"It was plainly, a family of paradoxes: privileged and cushioned beyond most people's imagining, yet little like the stereotype of the vapid, insular rich; uneducated in any usual, formal fashion but also uninhibited by education - ardent readers, insatiable askers of questions; chronically troubled, cursed it would often seem, by one illness or mysterious disorder after another, yet refusing to subject others to their troubles or to give in to despair." Chapter 1, pg. 37

"One searches the Roosevelt family history nearly in vain for a sign of daring or spontaneity or a sense of humor. The family reputation for probity in business and personal conduct demanded certain restraints, of course, and so such uniform absence of color may have been partly disguise, another bow to appearances." Chapter 2, pg. 39

"They reached Antwerp July 14, 1869, and were scheduled to sail for home exactly ten months later on the *Russia*, departing Liverpool, May 14, 1870. Between times they would travel several thousand miles by countless different trains, by river steamer, lake steamer, and rowboat (across Lake Como), by carriage and stagecoach, on horseback, by mule, by donkey, and on foot (through much of Switzerland). They would stay at sixty-six different hotels in eight countries (including Monaco) and the numbers of porters required at each stop, the numbers of room clerks, ticket agents, and headwaiters who had to be dealt with - with or without the benefit of English - may be imagined." Chapter 3, pg. 82

"His asthma strikes on weekends, usually Saturday night or what was actually early Sunday morning...But the number of times in which Sunday figures as his bad day is astonishing. The worst attacks, moreover, virtually all occur on Sunday." Chapter 4, pg. 101

"Then, at a stroke, the summer of 1872, he was given a gun and a large pair of spectacles and nothing had prepared him for the shock, for the infinite difference in his entire perception of the world about him or his place in it." Chapter 5, pg. 118

"The best of times for him - for all of them - were at Oyster Bay." Chapter 6, pg. 141

"In conversation he spewed words with a force that often startled people not accustomed to him, and this, with his upper-class New York accent, would be enough to set him off as something out of the ordinary at Harvard - even at Harvard - from the time he arrived." Chapter 8, pg. 160

"Father was the shining example of the life he must aspire to; Father was the perfect example of all he himself was not. Grief turned to shame and a sense of futility. He felt diminished by the memory of the man." Chapter 8, pg. 188

"They were married on a perfect New England fall day, the height of Indian summer, Wednesday, October 27, 1880, Theodore's twenty-second birthday, at noon in the Unitarian Church at Brookline." Chapter 10, pg. 230

"Nothing seemed to intimidate him. Though all of twenty-three, though unmistakably the youngest member of the Assembly, he plunged ahead, deferring to no one, making his presence felt. It was a spectacle not to be forgotten." Chapter 12, pg. 255

"The time was approximately 10:30. Mittie, the doctor said, was dying of typhoid fever; Alice, of Bright's disease." Chapter13, pg. 283

"Without question, the Chicago convention was one of the crucial events of Theodore's life, a dividing line with numerous consequences...He was still all of twenty-five years old; it had been his first national convention. Yet from the first day he had proved himself a force to be reckoned with, by friend or foe, and the attraction he had for newspaper attention was the kind every politician dreams of. He was a natural politician." Chapter 14, pg. 310

"The most immediate and important benefit of his time in the Bad Lands was what it did to restore him in body and spirit. But he had also found a subject and, with it, found he could write as he had not before - not certainly in his naval history - with life and feeling." Chapter 15, pg. 337

"With the assassination of William McKinley in 1901, Theodore became at forty-two the youngest President in history and possibly the best prepared." Afterword, pg. 363

Topics for Discussion

Compare and contrast Theodore Sr. and Theodore Jr. What traits do you think Theodore Jr. learned from his father? How were they different?

Describe Theodore's life at Harvard University. What important events happened to him while he was there? How did he change?

Discuss Bamie's role within the Roosevelt family. Why do you think she filled this particular role?

Compare and contrast Theodore and Elliott. Why do you think the two brothers ended up with such different lives?

How did Teedie's asthma affect his life? What impact did it have on the family?

Discuss how and why Theodore Jr. became involved in politics. What made him a good politician?

Discuss Theodore's development from a child into becoming President. What events and aspects of his childhood influenced and shaped him?