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# Theodore Roosevelt Senior

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*There is a great deal of fun about the charging, though "fun" is not quite the right word; one is keyed up to the highest point, and thrills with savage and eager excitement.*

Quote taken from Teddy Roosevelt's letter to Patty Selmes

**The charge up San Juan Hill**, led by Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt on July 1, 1898, was the defining action of the Spanish-American War, and would earn Roosevelt a posthumous Medal of Honor over 100 years later. Just days after the battle, Roosevelt wrote to longtime family friend Patty Selmes to describe the experience. Selmes, the mother of future Arizona Congresswoman Isabella Greenway, met Roosevelt when he was a struggling cattle rancher in the Dakota Territory. Roosevelt and Selmes shared a lifelong love of the American prairie and frontier life.

*I have always felt that it was a shame for the cow-puncher to pass away without being given a chance to show what splendid stuff there was in him as a fighting man and now he has had his chance, and used it.*

Quote taken from Teddy Roosevelt's letter to Patty Selmes

*Theodore Roosevelt*

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Dictating this correspondence to a personal secretary in his tent, Lieutenant Colonel Roosevelt described the living conditions in Cuba, the adrenaline rush of battle, and the conduct of those who served alongside him. The United States Army's 1st Cavalry, known colloquially as Roosevelt's Rough Riders, was a motley collective of Arizona and New Mexico cowboys, miners, Native Americans, and other westerners, along with Ivy League educated athletes and socialites. Roosevelt complimented the diverse members for their contributions as troops under his command. In his praise, Roosevelt the soldier demonstrated a democratic perspective for which Roosevelt the politician and president would become known.

**Theodore Roosevelt is thus far the only president to have been awarded the Medal of Honor**, which was conferred posthumously by President Bill Clinton in 2000. Roosevelt's son and namesake, Brigadier General Theodore Roosevelt Jr., would also earn the Medal for his valor at Utah Beach on D-Day. As the only general to serve with the first wave of troops in the Normandy invasion, the younger Roosevelt would die only a month later, and like his father, would receive his honor posthumously, on September 28, 1944. The two Roosevelts are one of only two father and son pairs who have been awarded the Medal of Honor. First Lieutenant Arthur MacArthur (Civil War) and General Douglas MacArthur were the first father and son to have been awarded the Medal of Honor.



*Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. 1899.*

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# Theodore Roosevelt Junior: A Strenuous Life

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**Theodore Roosevelt Junior was about ten years old** when his father left for the Spanish-American War. This photograph of young Ted was taken around that time, and notably, he wears the military-style uniform of his school, Albany Academy. As Theodore Roosevelt's first-born son, Ted Junior became the focus of his father's high expectations. He bore a heavy burden as his father's namesake, developing migraines and anxiety in childhood, and nearly suffering a nervous breakdown at the age of 11. However, the younger Roosevelt would grow into a respected military leader, accomplished statesman, and successful businessman.

*"We will start the war from right here."*

Theodore Roosevelt Junior, along with his three brothers, served in World War I, and he went on to co-found what would become the American Legion. During World War II, at the age of 56, Brigadier General Roosevelt submitted multiple unheeded assignment requests to command Normandy invasion assault forces. Despite severe arthritis and other health issues, Roosevelt's request was finally granted, and he was assigned to lead troops at Utah Beach. Although the forces landed half a mile from their intended target, Roosevelt calmly declared that they'd "Start the war from right here," and led his troops from the beach and over the sea wall, impervious to the gunfire around him. Roosevelt died of a heart attack in July 1944, an heir to and embodiment of the "strenuous life" that his father had championed.

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# John Greenway: From Yale to San Juan Hill

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**Roosevelt's correspondence to Patty Selmes** has the intimacy and tone of a family letter. He describes three key figures in Selmes's life: her nephew, David M. Goodrich, and future sons-in-law, Robert Harry Munro Ferguson and John Campbell Greenway. Describing the men's conduct on the battlefield, and calling Goodrich and Greenway his "right and left bowers during the worst days of the fighting and the siege," Roosevelt provides an insight into each man's personality.

This photograph depicts Roosevelt and John Greenway during the Spanish-American War, and suggests the deep friendship and respect the two shared. Greenway was next to Roosevelt during the Battle of San Juan Hill, and continued to serve as a confidant and political advocate for the rest of Roosevelt's life.



*John Campbell Greenway (second from left), Theodore Roosevelt (far right), and two unidentified men.*

Arizona Historical Society, John and Isabella Greenway Papers 1860-1953, MS 0311 (b218 f3150 C)

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