

**Chapter 1 : Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children - Theodore Roosevelt - Google Books**

*Theodore Roosevelt The letters included in this volume were written by Theodore Roosevelt to his children during a period of more than twenty years. Deep and abiding love of children, of family and home—this was the dominating passion of his life.*

A selection of letters from TR and family, To Miss Emily T. Carow August 16, Archie and Nick continue inseparable. I wish you could have seen them the other day, after one of the picnics, walking solemnly up, jointly carrying a basket, and each with a captured turtle in his disengaged hand. Archie is a most warm-hearted, loving, cunning little goose. Quentin, a merry soul, has now become entirely one of the children, and joins heartily in all their plays, including the romps in the old barn, to which all the Roosevelt children, Ensign Hamner of the Sylph, Bob Ferguson and Aleck Russell were to come. Of course I had not the heart to refuse; but really it seems, to put it mildly, rather odd for a stout, elderly President to be bouncing over hay-ricks in a wild effort to get to goal before an active midget of a competitor, aged nine years. However, it was really great fun. One of our recent picnics was an innovation, due to Edith. The view was lovely, and there was a delightful old farmhouse half a mile away, where we left our horses. His papers as Ambassador had finally come and so he had turned up at Oyster Bay, together with the Acting Secretary of State, to present them. He appeared in what was really a very striking costume, that of a hussar. As soon as the ceremony was over, I told him to put on civilized raiment, which he did, and he spent a couple of days with me. We chopped, and shot, and rode together. He was delighted with Wyoming, and, as always, was extremely nice to the children. The other day all the children have amusing amateur theatricals, gotten up by Lorraine and Ted. All the children were most cunning, especially Quentin as Cupid, in the scantiest of pink muslin tights and bodice. Ted and Lorraine, who were respectively George Washington and Cleopatra, really carried off the play. At the end all the cast joined hands in a songs and dance, the final verse being devoted especially to me. I love all these children and have great fun with them, and I am touched by the way in which they feel I am their special friend, champion, and companion. It was an impressive sight, one which I think the children will not soon forget. Most of the boys afterward went to lunch with the wretched Secretary Moody on the Dolphin. Ted had the younger ones very much on his mind, and when he got back said they had been altogether too much like a March Hare tea-party, as Archie, Nicholas, and Oliver were not alive to the dignity of the occasion. I loved your letter. I have been among the orange groves, where the trees have oranges growing thick upon them, and there are more flowers than you have ever seen. I have a gold top which I shall give you if mother thinks you can take care of it. Perhaps I shall give you a silver bell instead. Whenever I see a little boy being brought up by his father or mother to look at the procession I think of you and Archie and feel very homesick. Sometimes little boys ride in the procession with their ponies, just like Archie on Algonquin. To-night while I was preparing to dictate a message to Congress concerning the boiling cauldron on the Isthmus of Panama, which has now begun to bubble over, up came one of the ushers with a telegram from you and Ted about the football match. Instantly I bolted into the next room to read it aloud to mother and sister and we all cheered in unison when we came to the Rah! It was a great score. I wish I could have seen the game. Mother went off for three days to New York and Mame and Quentin took instant advantage of her absence to fall sick. He was a very sad bunny next morning and spent a couple of days in bed. Ethel, as always, was as good as gold both to him and to Archie, and largely relieved me of my duties as vice-mother. I got up each morning in time to breakfast with Ethel and Archie before they started to school, and I read a certain amount to Quentin, but this was about all. I think Archie escaped with a minimum of washing for the three days. One day I asked him before Quentin how often he washed his face, whereupon Quentin interpolated, "very seldom, I fear," which naturally produced from Archie violent recriminations of a strongly personal type. Mother came back yesterday, having thoroughly enjoyed Parsifal. All horses continue sick. June 21, Dearest Ethel: I think you are a little trump and I love your letter, and the way you take care of the children and keep down the expenses and cook bread and are just your own blessed busy cunning self. You would have enjoyed being at Valley Forge with us on Sunday. It is a beautiful place, and, of course, full of historic associations. The garden here is lovely. A pair of

warbling vireos have built in a linden and sing all the time. The lindens, by the way, are in bloom, and Massachusetts Avenue is fragrant with them. The magnolias are all in bloom, too, and the jasmine on the porch. You have proved yourself; you have made good; you have justified the sorrow and worry you and darling Belle have shared. I am more pleased that I can say. Whether or not we shall see the much-heralded tremendous German offensive I have no idea; her army is still very powerful; but there is no question that the economic strain and social political unrest within her borders have grown very dangerous; and Austria is in anything in worse shape. My usefulness is very limited. I do fulfill a modest function, that of telling disagreeable truths which ought to be told but which it is very unpopular to tell and which nobody else will tell. This is a factor in making the Administration do about a fifth of what it ought to and could, instead of only a twentieth. But I tend to be regarded as merely a scold. I am writing darling Belle, saying that I do hope she will take thought primarily of the two children it is useless to ask her to take thought primarily of herself; that so she can serve you best. I suppose that Ted and Archie are in the trenches for good now. I do not venture to write you about either public or military matters. That will make no permanent difference to you; but I write about something that may make a permanent difference. Flora spoke to Ethel yesterday of the fact that you only wrote rarely to her. She made no complaint whatever. Now of course you may not keep Flora anyhow. But if you wish to lose her, continue to be an infrequent correspondent. Write enough letters to allow for half being lost. Affectionately Support Provided by: Learn More Related Features.

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