

Theodore Roosevelt and Ranching in the Badlands

In 1883, Theodore Roosevelt made his first visit to North Dakota. Like many other people at that time, he bought a ranch and began raising cattle in the badlands. This pathfinder will lead researchers to several resources available at the North Dakota State Archives highlighting early ranching in the badlands and Theodore Roosevelt's time in North Dakota.

Archival Collections

10036 Antoine Amedee Marie Vincent Manca de Vallombrosa, Marquis de Mores Collection

Family and business papers and miscellany. Family and business papers consist of correspondence, financial records, a scrapbook, language exercise notebooks, Marquis de Mores and Company records, and murder trial records. Correspondence Reports from the Pinkerton Detective Agency concerning investigation of suspected cattle and horse rustlers, safe passage letter through Indian reservations, telegrams, last wishes of the Marquis, and a letter to Gov. Gilbert A. Pierce concerning Standing Rock Sioux documents.

10085 Orin Grant Libby Papers, (Box 15, Folder 71, 72)

Documentation of Libby's professional and personal activities as Secretary of the State Historical Society of North Dakota, Grand Historian of the North Dakota Masonic Grand Lodge, and Professor of History at the University of North Dakota. Records relating to the SHSND consist of correspondence, research materials, and notebooks. Correspondence includes subject files concerning administration of the agency, historical research, curatorial applications, and agency projects. Research materials consist of original and copies, including biographies, census and enumeration records, Civil War and World War I letters, diaries and journals, newspaper clippings, reports, documents, historical sketches, and notebooks.

10119 Ray H. Mattison Papers

Mattison's manuscript "My Years in North Dakota" (excerpts from "As I Saw It: Recollections and Observations of a Nebraska Maverick, 1903-1978"), research notes on Theodore Roosevelt in North Dakota, and a press release about the dedication of the Theodore Roosevelt National Park and a research outline on "The Fur Trade on the Upper Missouri."

Useful Search Guidance

Subjects

- North Dakota Badlands
- Cattle Ranching
- Hunting

People

- Theodore Roosevelt, 1858-1919
- Marquis de Morés, 1858-1896

Locations

- North Dakota Badlands

Journal Articles

Recollections of a Bad Lands' Rancher
Elmer E. Ellis – *North Dakota Historical Quarterly* Vol. 1 Issue 1

Ranching in the Dakota Badlands
Ray H. Mattison – *North Dakota History* Vol. 19 Issues 2&3

Life at Roosevelt's Elkhorn Ranch
Ray H. Mattison – *North Dakota History* Vol. 27 Issue 3 & 4

10160 Alfred White Papers

Biography, a scrapbook containing copies of White's newspaper articles on settlement in western North Dakota, a photograph of White, and notes concerning Theodore Roosevelt in the Badlands.

10427 Frank S. Talcott Papers

Papers consist of memorabilia, railroad passes, menus, tickets, and programs relating to the Pan-American Exposition, North Dakota State Fair, Red River Valley Exposition, Buffalo High School, Benevolent Protective Order of Elks, and Williams College in North Adams, Massachusetts, and correspondence and newspaper clippings relating to Republican politics. Correspondents include Theodore Roosevelt and Moses Clapp, Chairman of the North Dakota State Central Committee.

10730 Henry Walz Papers

Two scrapbooks of correspondence, news clippings, letters, photos and other memorabilia covering topics that interested Henry Walz and were related to events in his own life. Walz was a ranch hand who worked for Theodore Roosevelt at his Elkhorn Ranch near Medora (N.D.) in the 1880s. Correspondence in the scrapbooks relates to reminiscences about life in the Medora area during its ranching days in the 1880s and 1890s. News clippings show that one of Walz's chief interests was his former employer, Theodore Roosevelt. Included are a few items from 1919 newspapers at the time of Roosevelt's death. Other news clippings relate to railroads, elderly Civil War veterans, and tourist attractions in the northwestern United States. One of the volumes contains comments that Walz wrote under various photographs and other items. The photographs in the scrapbooks are included in the inventory below and include locomotives and workers, whaling, dog sledding, Medora (N.D.), hunting, mail boats on the Snake River (ID).

10797 Katherine Pelissier (Kate Roberts) Papers

A scrapbook includes Mrs. Pelissier's reminiscences of life as a pioneer in the Medora DT area, photographs with Theodore Roosevelt, autographs of Madam de Mores and her daughter, letters from Dorothy Stickney, and photographs, and news paper clippings of local events.

**11116 North Dakota Humanities Council, Larry Remele Memorial Fellow Reports
Box 1, Folder 68, 75**

Collection consists of audiocassettes, papers, programs, and reports to the people of North Dakota tabloids by Larry Remele Memorial Fellows of the North Dakota Humanities Council.

11143 Joseph C. Meyer Papers

Unpublished manuscripts, an autobiographical sketch, and published essays by Joseph C. Meyer of Beach, ND. "Calamity Joe" Meyer was a pioneer rancher who raised cattle and traded horses, and later owned the Hebron Hotel.

11366 50 Years in the Saddle Club Collection

Box 2, Folder 188, 189; Box 4, Folder 88, 121

Research and organizational files of the 50 Years in the Saddle Club (Watford City, N.D.). The collection documents biographies and stories of ranchers and other residents of western North Dakota. The organization published the Series: 50 Years in the Saddle: Looking Back Down the Trail.

11493 Doreen Chaky Research Collection

Research for the book *Terrible Justice*, numerous freelance articles, and work with the *Williston Oil Reporter*, as well as article drafts and notes.

20102 Newton C. Young Manuscript

Manuscript entitled "North Dakota's Tribute to Ideals" describes the influence of North Dakota on many American writers, including Theodore Roosevelt, Elizabeth Custer, George Catlin, and J.M. Quinn.

20133 Theodore Roosevelt Papers

Papers consist of photographs and photocopies of letters and court documents relating to theft of Roosevelt's boat and ranching activities in the Bad Lands.

20184 Frank Greene Papers

Transcripts of letters from Theodore Roosevelt, Herman Hagedorn, and James Foley concerning events in western North Dakota during the period Roosevelt was ranching in the Badlands.

20372 George D. Wolfe Papers

Photocopy of an article concerning Theodore Roosevelt's Ranching experiences, entitled "Boss of the Maltese Cross."

20979 Medora and the Marquis de Mores Papers (Medora, North Dakota)

The collection includes a series printed in the *Minot Daily News* by Tom Miller, a photocopy from the editorial page of the *Minot Daily News Medora* (N.D.), photocopies of identified photographs from the GND photo album of newspaper publishers and committee members who promoted Medora, a 1958 program from the musical *Old Four Eyes*, and a copy of the *North Dakota History* publication on the career of the Marquis. January-April, 1946.

Books

Theodore Roosevelt, Icon of the American Century

1998 - James G. Barber; with an essay by Amy Verone; foreword by John Allen Gable

Call Number: 92 R677bar

The Works of Theodore Roosevelt: In Fourteen Volumes

1897 – Theodore Roosevelt

Call Number: 304 R677

Theodore Roosevelt and Conservation, 1858-1958

1958 – E. Laurence Palmer

Call Number: 333.72 P173t 1958

A Compilation of the Messages and Speeches of Theodore Roosevelt, 1901-1905

1906 – Alfred Henry Lewis

Messages and papers of the president

Call Number: 353.03 R677

Three Bonanza Ranchers in the Little Missouri Bad Lands

1960 – Donald Hugh Welsh

Call Number: 636.2 W465

A Historical Study of Beef Bonanza Ranching in Billings County, Dakota Territory

1941 – William B Richter

Library has only selected portions of study; Chapter 3 through Table 2

Call Number: 636.0883 R418h

Ranching with Roosevelt

1926— Lincoln A. Lang

Call Number: 917.84 R667ℓ

Online Resources

[Theodore Roosevelt in North Dakota](#)

Theodore Roosevelt Center at Dickinson State University website

[SHSND Photobook](#)

State Historical Society of North Dakota's Online Search Portal for all digitized photographs

[Digital Horizons](#)

Online consortium of historic photographs from the collections of the State Historical Society of North Dakota

[WorldCat](#)

State Historical Society of North Dakota's publication search portal

External Resources

[Elkhorn Ranch](#)

Article discussing Theodore Roosevelt's ranch on the National Park Service website

[Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail](#)

Theodore Roosevelt's 1899 memoir about ranching in the Badlands

State Archives

For more information related to the collections and resources available at the North Dakota State Archives, please email archives@nd.gov or call (701) 328-2668.



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