National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

History Program
Northeast Region

Theodore Roosevelt and His Sagamore Hill Home



Sagamore Hill National Historic Site

Historic Resource Study

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

and

HIS SAGAMORE HILL HOME

Historic Resource Study

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site

H. W. Brands
Kathleen Dalton
Lewis L. Gould
Natalie A. Naylor

Dr. Juliet Frey, Editor

Prepared for

Organization of American Historians

Under cooperative agreement with



Northeast Region
National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
2007 Printing



A note about this 2007 reprint: We extend hearty thanks to Natalie A. Naylor for her extremely careful edit of this document which created a consistent style in the citations throughout the articles. We are grateful to Sagamore Hill staff Howard Ehrlich, Josh Reyes, Nancy Hall, and especially Shaun Roche for reviewing the document and making these corrections.

We have taken this opportunity to correct some factual information (Eleanor Roosevelt was TR's niece, not cousin, for example, p. 31) and added some information that has been only recently discovered, (p. 115, n. 30). We have enclosed additions in square brackets and noted these as [SH-NPS]. We also re-numbered the footnotes, originally consecutive throughout, to being uniquely numbered for each author's piece.

Additionally, we have added a real title, *Theodore Roosevelt and His Sagamore Hill Home,* to be descriptive of the contents of these historic resource studies.

We are very grateful to authors H. W. Brands, Kathleen Dalton, Louis L. Gould and Natalie A. Naylor for these valuable additions to our knowledge about Theodore Roosevelt and his beloved Sagamore Hill home. We are grateful to the Organization of American Historians, especially Sue Ferentinos for their assistance in this project.

--Edited by Charles Markis, Chief of Interpretation, Sagamore Hill, May 22, 2007

Printed by the National Park Service
Sagamore Hill National Historic Site
Oyster Bay, New York
2007

Table of Contents

v	**Foreword**	*Gay Vietzke*
1	**Theodore Roosevelt and Sagamore Hill: An Introduction**	*Lewis L. Gould*
7	For Further Reading	
11	**A Sense of Place: Sagamore Hill, Oyster Bay, and the North Shore of Long Island**	*Natalie A. Naylor*
12	Oyster Bay	
15	Roosevelt's Purchase of Property in Oyster Bay and Construction of Sagamore Hill	
20	Sagamore Hill as Part of the Estate Movement	
21	Long Island Agriculture and Farming	
29	**"All Roads Lead to Oyster Bay"**	*Kathleen Dalton*
35	**The Summer White House**	*H. W. Brands*
36	The Technology of Keeping in Touch	
37	The White House Comes to Sagamore Hill	
40	Reporting the Summer Presidency	
42	Securing the Premises	
43	Improvements and Upgrades: Oyster Bay	
46	Improvements and Upgrades: The North Room	
47	Home vs. Office	
49	Sagamore at Work: Ending the Russo-Japanese War	
52	Legacies of the Sagamore Hill Summers	
55	**"The House is Overrun with Political People": Sagamore Hill after the Presidency**	*Lewis L. Gould*
65	**The Strenuous Outdoor Life**	*Kathleen Dalton*
67	An Environmentalist's Environment	
74	The Best of All Playgrounds	
78	The Strenuous Life	
83	The Simple Life	
85	Defender of American Arts	
89	**A Working Farm**	*Natalie A. Naylor*
90	Noah Seaman and Alfred Davis	
92	The Old Barn	
93	"Roosevelt the Husbandman"	

97	Robert Gillespie	
100	"Simply My Home"	
103	"No Healthier and Pleasanter Place"	
109	**The People of Sagamore Hill**	***Kathleen Dalton***
119	**From Country Estates to Suburbs**	***Natalie A. Naylor***
123	The Country House and Estate Movement on The North Shore of Long Island	
128	The Roosevelts' Neighbors	
131	Old Orchard	
132	Suburbanization and the Decline of the Gold Coast	
137	**Appendices**	***Natalie A. Naylor***
137	1. The Name "Sagamore Hill"	
138	2. The Population of Oyster Bay, Town 1850-2000, and Selected Villages, 1930-2000	
139	3. The Roosevelt Clan on the South Shore of Long Island	
140	4. Lamb & Rich, Architects	
142	5. Census Data on Sagamore Hill Residents and Employees, 1900-1930	
149	6. The Coe, Field, and Guggenheim Estates	
151	7. Long Island Country Houses Preserved as House Museums	
152	8. William McMillan, Architect of Old Orchard	
155	**Bibliography**	***Natalie A. Naylor***
155	Bibliographic Essay	
158	Recommendations for Additional Research	
159	Bibliography	
167	**Bibliography**	***H. W. Brands***
169	**Bibliography**	***Kathleen Dalton***
179	**Bibliography**	***Lewis L. Gould***
183	**About the Authors**	

List of Illustrations

In "A Sense of Place," pages 24-27

Figure 1 - Map of Cove Neck, Oyster Bay and Environs, 1873. *Atlas of Long Island, New York* (Beers, Comstock & Cline, 1873).

Figures 2 and 3 -Property Owned by Theodore Roosevelt and Neighboring Property, 1884 and 1906. Maps from Regina M. Bellavia and George W. Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site* (Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 1995), 21, 23. Report for National Park Service.

Figure 4 - Theodore Roosevelts's 1880 Sketch of his Property. In Sagamore Hill National Historic Site Archives; reproduced from a copy in Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report,* 18.

Figure 5 - Spatial Organization of Sagamore Hill, c. 1919. Map from Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report,* 80.

Figure 6 - Map of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site showing original location of stable, fields, garden, and sheds. Official Map and Guide, Sagamore Hill NHS.

In "A Working Farm," pages 104-108

Figure 7 - Photograph of Superintendent's House, no date (rear view). In Sagamore Hill National Historic Site Archives.

Figure 8, a and b - (a) Alfred Davis, Gardener; (b) Noah Seaman and Staff, 1903. Originals in *New York Tribune Illustrated Supplement,* June 7, 1903.

Figure 9 - Pictures of the Farm, 1906. From Walter E. Andrews, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Farmer," *Farm Journal* 30 (December 1906): 43.

Figure 10 - Flower Garden with Lodge in the Background, 1905. From Henry Beach Needham, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Country Gentleman." *The Country Calendar,* October 1905, p. 534. A copy also is in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files, from Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site.

Figure 11 - Haystacks at Sagamore Hill. Photograph no. 1137 in the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site Archives

Figure 12 - Theodore Roosevelt Watching Haying at Sagamore Hill, 1905. From Henry Beach Needham, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Country Gentleman," *The Country Calendar,* October 1905, 535. McFarland Co. photograph by O.P. Beckley. A similar McFarland photograph appeared in Charles Somerville, "How Roosevelt Rests," *Broadway Magazine* 18 (September 1907): 661.

Figure 13 - Harvest-Time on President Roosevelt's Farm in Which He Always Takes Part. From Charles Somerville, "How Roosevelt Rests," *Broadway Magazine* 18 (September 1907), 665.

Figure 14, a and b - (a) Floor Plan/Interior Layout of Superintendent's House/Lodge; (b) 2d floor. Based on information from Isabelle Gillespie Wildt, who lived in the house from 1914-1943; drawn by her son, George Wildt, November 2002.

Figure 15 - Roosevelt Saddles and Carriages, 1903. *New York Tribune Illustrated Supplement,* July 19, 1903.

In "The People of Sagamore Hill," page 117

Figure 16, a and b - (a) Grey Cottage in 1950; (b) Grey Cottage in 1990. In Files of the Cultural Landscape Report, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site Archives.

In "From Country Estates to Suburbs," pages 135-136

Figures 2 and 3 -Property Owned by Theodore Roosevelt and Neighboring Property, 1884 and 1906. (Repeated from page 25 in "A Sense of Place.") Maps from Regina M. Bellavia and George W. Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site* (Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 1995), 21, 23. Report for National Park Service.

Figure 17 - Map of Cove Neck, 1914. *Atlas of Nassau County, Long Island, N.Y.* (Brooklyn/New York: E. Belcher-Hyde, 1914), 2.

In "The People of Sagamore Hill," page 117

Figure 16, a and b - (a) Grey Cottage in 1950; (b) Grey Cottage in 1990. In Files of the Cultural Landscape Report, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site Archives.

In "From Country Estates to Suburbs," pages 135-136

Figures 2 and 3 -Property Owned by Theodore Roosevelt and Neighboring Property, 1884 and 1906. (Repeated from page 25 in "A Sense of Place.") Maps from Regina M. Bellavia and George W. Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site* (Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 1995), 21, 23. Report for National Park Service.

Figure 17 - Map of Cove Neck, 1914. *Atlas of Nassau County, Long Island, N.Y.* (Brooklyn/New York: E. Belcher-Hyde, 1914), 2.

Foreword

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site in Oyster Bay, New York, was established in 1963 as a unit of the National Park System in order to preserve in public ownership a significant property associated with the life of Theodore Roosevelt. The site had been the home of President Roosevelt and his family from the mid 1880s until his death in 1919. His widow, Edith, continued her residency until her own death in 1948. Between 1953 and 1962, the Theodore Roosevelt Association owned and operated the historic site, opening it to public visitation.

Roosevelt purchased the land just prior to his first marriage. The site, which served as the summer White House from 1902 to 1908, and afterward as Roosevelt's political base, was also a working farm with a garden, pastures, and agricultural fields. The property, which contained woodlands and fronted Cold Spring Harbor off Long Island Sound, afforded the Roosevelt family camping, hiking, shooting, swimming, and boating opportunities.

This historical resource study was undertaken in conjunction with a new National Park Service (NPS) planning effort, the first in forty years, designed to reassess park themes and resources. While a considerable scholarly literature has been produced on Roosevelt and the Roosevelt presidency, this literature only tangentially addresses Roosevelt's life at Sagamore Hill. The NPS's 1972 historic resource study and base map provide detailed accounts and vignettes of family life during Theodore Roosevelt's presidency, but do not place the chronicled events in a larger historical context or address the whole period of the Roosevelt family's residency. More recent NPS reports, which include a historical structure report, a historical furnishings report, and a cultural landscape report, document the physical history of the site.

In the essays that follow, three Roosevelt scholars—H. W. Brands, Kathleen Dalton, and Lewis L. Gould—and Natalie A. Naylor, a scholar on the history of Long Island, provide new insights on Sagamore Hill and its occupants. Brands provides an account of the convergence of the presidency as a full-time job with advances in communications that made a summer White House at Sagamore Hill possible; Dalton shows how the site represents

on a personal level the values of "America's greatest environmental president" and advocate of the strenuous life; Gould writes about Roosevelt's "media cabinet" and Sagamore Hill as the former president's base of operations beginning in 1909; Naylor provides an account of Sagamore Hill as a working farm and places the property within the history of estate development on the North Shore of Long Island. These authors' essays all illustrate how an understanding of place can enhance our perceptions of the past.

The following study was undertaken through the NPS's cooperative agreement with the Organization of American Historians (OAH). The collaboration between the NPS and the OAH has been particularly fruitful in bringing together cultural resource management and historical scholarship. We would like to give special thanks to Susan Ferentinos, the Public History Manager for the OAH, who managed the project on behalf of the organization, and to Paul Weinbaum, NPS Northeast Region History Program Manager, without whom this project could not have been completed. Our sincerest thanks also to park staff for their contributions to this excellent study.

Gay Vietzke
Superintendent
Sagamore Hill National Historic Site
May 2005

Theodore Roosevelt and Sagamore Hill: An Introduction

Lewis L. Gould

Few presidents have been more closely identified with a particular place during their years in office than is Theodore Roosevelt with Sagamore Hill, his home in Oyster Bay on New York's Long Island. The mansion, which he began planning shortly after marrying his first wife, Alice Hathaway Lee, later became the residence for himself and his second wife, Edith Kermit Carow; and their six active and energetic children.

After Roosevelt became president in September 1901, Sagamore Hill emerged as a summer White House to which the Roosevelts retreated from the heat and humidity of Washington summers to vacation, conduct government business, and entertain their fellow citizens as reported by the ever-present Washington press corps. Even after Roosevelt left the presidency in March 1909, Sagamore Hill continued to command national attention. Though no longer the "summer capital of the United States," as one newspaper put it, it remained the "home of the leader of the Republican party."[1]

The role of Sagamore Hill in the life of Theodore Roosevelt has been noted by his many biographers. The most sustained early account of the home was written by Hermann Hagedorn, longtime Roosevelt family friend and promoter of the family's historical reputation, in his book *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill.* [2] Until now, however, there has not been a publication devoted to examining the evolution of the house and property, appraising the impact of Roosevelt's use of his home on the development of the modern

[1] *Minneapolis Journal*, July 9, 1910.

[2] New York: Macmillan Company, 1954.

Theodore Roosevelt and Sagamore Hill: An Introduction

Lewis L. Gould

Few presidents have been more closely identified with a particular place during their years in office than is Theodore Roosevelt with Sagamore Hill, his home in Oyster Bay on New York's Long Island. The mansion, which he began planning shortly after marrying his first wife, Alice Hathaway Lee, later became the residence for himself and his second wife, Edith Kermit Carow; and their six active and energetic children.

After Roosevelt became president in September 1901, Sagamore Hill emerged as a summer White House to which the Roosevelts retreated from the heat and humidity of Washington summers to vacation, conduct government business, and entertain their fellow citizens as reported by the ever-present Washington press corps. Even after Roosevelt left the presidency in March 1909, Sagamore Hill continued to command national attention. Though no longer the "summer capital of the United States," as one newspaper put it, it remained the "home of the leader of the Republican party."[1]

The role of Sagamore Hill in the life of Theodore Roosevelt has been noted by his many biographers. The most sustained early account of the home was written by Hermann Hagedorn, longtime Roosevelt family friend and promoter of the family's historical reputation, in his book *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill.* [2] Until now, however, there has not been a publication devoted to examining the evolution of the house and property, appraising the impact of Roosevelt's use of his home on the development of the modern

[1] *Minneapolis Journal*, July 9, 1910.

[2] New York: Macmillan Company, 1954.

presidency, and reviewing how living at Sagamore Hill shaped the Roosevelt family. This new collection of essays is designed to accomplish these worthy goals.

As Natalie A. Naylor points out in her comprehensive essays in this volume, "A Sense of Place: Sagamore Hill, Oyster Bay, and the North Shore of Long Island," "A Working Farm," and "From Country Estates to Suburbs," Long Island began to be settled by the Dutch during the mid-seventeenth century. Two hundred years later it had become a place where wealthy New Yorkers spent summers and weekends to escape the heat and noise of the growing metropolis. Naylor's thorough research places the Roosevelt family and its property within the context of the community of Oyster Bay during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

From the time Roosevelt acquired the land near Oyster Bay in 1883 until he became president in September 1901, the Long Island estate gradually wove itself into the history of his growing family. At first the house was to be named Leeholm in honor of Alice Lee, but after she died after giving birth to their daughter Alice in February 1884, Roosevelt spent little time on the new dwelling. Then, in 1886, he married Edith Carow, a friend from childhood, and his interest in the house revived. Over the next fourteen years while Roosevelt pursued his political ascent and his new family expanded, the Long Island residence became the center of his emotional life.

Theodore and Edith called the place Sagamore Hill after a Native American word meaning "chief" that had been applied to a local Indian named Mohannis. In May 1887 Roosevelt told his close friend Henry Cabot Lodge that he and Edith "have been settling down, and have worked at the house like a couple of dusty, not to say grimy, beavers." Three years later he reported that "Edith and I have had some lovely rows on the bay, taking our lunch and books with us." And as a friend recalled of Roosevelt, "he taught his children to know the birds and animals, the trees, plants and flowers of Oyster Bay and its neighborhood."[3]

As Roosevelt's political career prospered during the 1890s, the estate at Sagamore Hill attracted increasing popular attention as the home of a rising Republican star. Following Roosevelt's triumphal service in the Spanish-American War, the Republicans in New York nominated him for governor. The formal ceremonies notifying him of this honor took place at Sagamore Hill. Whether Roosevelt was in fact a legal resident of New York State had been a contested issue at the Republican state convention, and so it was valuable to reestablish his ties with his New York home in the public mind at this time.[4]

---

[3] TR to Henry Cabot Lodge, May 20, 1887; July 31,1890, in Henry Cabot Lodge, ed., *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918* 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), I: 55, 99; William Roscoe Thayer, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Intimate Biography* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1919), 258.

[4] For the events of the summer of 1898 and Roosevelt's run for governor, see G. Wallace Chessman, *Governor Theodore Roosevelt: The Albany Apprenticeship, 1898-1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965), 25-70.

Two years later, when the Republican National Convention selected Roosevelt as William McKinley's running mate, Grand Old Party dignitaries assembled at Oyster Bay on July 12, 1900, to hear Roosevelt accept the vice-presidential nomination. Immediately afterward, Roosevelt began a strenuous round of speeches that lasted until the incumbent president had been safely reelected.[5]

While Roosevelt hit the stump in 1900, President McKinley spent his time at his home in Canton, Ohio, in observance of the tradition that sitting chief executives did not campaign. McKinley and his secretary, George B. Cortelyou, had already begun to lay the groundwork for enabling the presidency to operate outside of Washington during the summer months. The president had bought his old home in Canton in 1899 and told Cortelyou that with a base to work from, "I can get away any time, and could take you with all the help we need, and we could transact all the executive business there." In 1900 the administration set up a long-distance telephone connection between Canton and Washington, over which presidential business was conducted during part of the summers of 1900 and 1901.[6]

These arrangements were part of the history of the presidency that Theodore Roosevelt assumed when McKinley was assassinated in September 1901. At the start of the following summer, like other chief executives before him Roosevelt faced the problem of Washington's heat and humidity. So stifling was the climate in the years before air conditioning that the British government gave its diplomats an extra stipend for their willingness to endure the discomfort of a posting to the American capital. There was little doubt, therefore, that Roosevelt would seek to get away from Washington to Long Island.

Circumstances reinforced the wisdom of that choice. The White House had become quite dilapidated over the years and was in need of extensive renovation; the Roosevelts discovered its crumbling condition once they moved in. A renovation program led by architect Charles F. McKim was set up to run through the summer of 1902. After initially trying to stay in Washington into July, Roosevelt found that the heat, combined with the noise and dust of the renovation process, made his departure from the city an irresistible idea. Accordingly, he and George Cortelyou left on July 3, planning to return once the summer was over and the construction completed.[7]

---

[5] Hagedorn, *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill,* 90-94.

[6] For examples of these arrangements, see Memorandum, Long Distance Telephone Conversation, Washington Canton, August 12, 1900; and Long Distance Telephone Conversation, Washington Canton, September 16, 1900, both in George B. Cortelyou Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Box 64, Washington, D.C. McKinley is quoted in Margaret Leech, *In The Days Of McKinley* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 460.

[7] The context of White House construction and its impact on the plans of the Roosevelt family is well discussed in William Seale, *The President's House: A History* 2 vols.:(Washington: White House Historical Association, 1986), II, 659-673.

The move of the presidency to Sagamore Hill soon produced a shift in how the Roosevelts were covered by the press. At first, facilities for tracking the president's routine were primitive and the many reporters who flocked to Long Island faced difficult conditions. One of them recalled that "Oyster Bay sported one or two rickety horse cabs and only one telephone" for journalists who had to drive up the hill to the Roosevelt home. In time the cadre of reporters whom Roosevelt trusted evolved into what became known as the "Newspaper Cabinet," scribes who understood him and cast the news as he wished it to appear. Reporters who violated Roosevelt's confidences were exiled from Sagamore Hill, just as they were ostracized at the White House. By contrast, in return for their deference, the members of the "Newspaper Cabinet" received exclusives and were often part of the process through which Roosevelt framed his news releases. The presidential vacation residence became a place where news could be "spun" in a manner favorable to the incumbent.[8]

It did not take long before Roosevelt's summer residence also became a favorite spot to hold meetings with other leading Republican politicians. Shortly, it became the site of historic conferences, too—an example is the discussion leading to the treaty with Colombia that allowed the United States to build the Panama Canal.[9] And during the summer prior to the election of 1904, when Roosevelt had to sit on the sidelines (because of the tradition that incumbent presidents did not actively campaign), his home became the unofficial presidential election headquarters.

Roosevelt won the presidential election that year by a landslide. After voting in Oyster Bay on election day, he returned to Washington, where he told reporters that he would not seek another term in 1908. During the four remaining years of his presidency, the prominence of Sagamore Hill grew in the public mind.

As H.W. Brands points out in his insightful essay in this volume, "The Summer White House," which examines Roosevelt's role in establishing the modern presidency, major national events continued to involve the Sagamore Hill estate. For example, prior to the negotiations at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, that settled the Russo-Japanese war, Roosevelt entertained the foreign diplomats aboard the presidential yacht *Mayflower,* where his deft toasts got the talks off to a productive start. The eventual peace settlement confirmed Roosevelt's standing as a world figure. One cartoonist depicted Sagamore Hill as a citadel of international peace with a dove on alert, the dogs of war peacefully asleep.[10]

---

[8] John J. Leary, Jr., *Talks With T.R. From the Diaries of John J. Leary, Jr.* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920), 126. Earle Looker, *Colonel Roosevelt, Private Citizen* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1932), 11-31, has good information on the "Newspaper Cabinet." An early example of the press coverage that Roosevelt's residence received is A. Maurice Low, "The President's Home," *Saturday Evening Post,* 175 (October 11, 1902): 3.

[9] For these events, see Gould, *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt,* 94-95; Richard H. Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 240-243.

[10] In addition to the sources cited in Brands's essay, see Gould, *Presidency,* 186-187. For the cartoon, see *Leslie's Weekly,* September 14, 1905. An assessment of Roosevelt's achievement is William Sexton, "T.R.: Peacemaker

Although in this case an apostle of international peace,Roosevelt energetically pursued military preparedness, especially the building of a modern navy. Sagamore Hill figured in this endeavor also, as its proximity to Long Island Sound made it an ideal setting for reviewing American naval power. With the presidential yacht *Mayflower* at the ready, Roosevelt enjoyed the neighborhood spectacle.

During Roosevelt's second term, popular interest in his home life increased and a number of journalists and foreign visitors recorded their impressions of activities at Sagamore Hill. The muck-raking journalist Henry Beech Needham provided the readers of *McClure's Magazine* in January 1906 with a portrait of Roosevelt as outdoors-man. At Sagamore Hill, Needham wrote, "[T]he President lives out-o'-doors practically all of the time. There is horseback riding, tennis, and tramping—but much more of it, for it is vacation time theoretically."[11] A British guest several years later noted that the executive offices where Roosevelt's secretary and his staff carried on the government business were "situated over the village grocery store. There is something sublime in this disregard of appearances—in this Spartan simplicity on the part of the governors of a great nation of eighty millions of people."[12]

The atmosphere of Sagamore Hill as a private home and Roosevelt's role as a father and family man are well captured in Kathleen Dalton's essays in this volume, "'All Roads Lead to Oyster Bay,'" "The Strenuous Outdoor Life," and "The People of Sagamore Hill." Dalton's extensive review of the many ways in which life at the Roosevelt residence went on both for the family and for the people who served the Roosevelts will be of great value to students of the period. Covering the cultural aspects of Sagamore Hill with a keen eye for the striking detail, Dalton relates this single prominent home to important currents of change sweeping through the United States during the Progressive Era. As she explains, Roosevelt's ability to live an aristocratic life style and yet be seen as very much a man of the people was nowhere better illustrated than in the popularity that Sagamore Hill achieved.

---

of Oyster Bay," *Newsday,* September 7, 1978, reprinted in *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal,* 4 (Fall, 1978): 2-3. The story was written at the time of the Camp David accords under President Jimmy Carter.

[11] Henry Beach Needham, "Theodore Roosevelt—An Outdoor Man," *McClure's Magazine26,* (January, 1906): 250. Needham's article for McClure's accompanied another article about Roosevelt's home life for the magazine *Country Calendar.* See William Loeb to Shaw, June 30, 1905, Albert Shaw Papers, New York Public Library, Astor, Lennox, and Tilden Foundations; and Henry Beach Needham to Roosevelt, about July 19, 1905, Reel 56, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, microfilm edition.

[12]Charles Dawbarn, "Theodore Roosevelt: The Man and President. Impressions of a Visitor to Oyster Bay," *Pall Mall Magazine,* January 1909, 66. Not every visitor to Oyster Bay was impressed. The British ambassador, Mortimer Durand, whom Roosevelt did not like, wrote to his superiors that the president had greeted him in his riding clothes "which showed off his rather portly figure. In spite of much exercise he is getting heavy." Durand to Lord Lansdowne, August 10, 1905, Papers of Lord Lansdowne, F0800/144. Public Record Office, Kew Gardens.

By 1907 Theodore Roosevelt's presidency was entering its final stages. The summer routine of lengthy visits to Oyster Bay continued during the last two years in the White House. "Lovely tho the White House is," he wrote his son Kermit in June 1907, "it is not home; and Sagamore Hill is." A year later, Roosevelt's military aide, Archie Butt, spent an extended weekend with the Roosevelts. He reported to his mother that Roosevelt, along with his family, "makes you forget that you are in the house with the President, and that you are merely the guest of a very charming, witty, and hospitable gentleman." Butt noted how Edith Roosevelt set the tone for Sagamore Hill: "She really constitutes the atmosphere of the house, a sort of feminine luminiferous ether pervading everything and everybody." [13]

By the time Roosevelt left office in March 1909, Oyster Bay and Sagamore Hill had become national landmarks. Roosevelt was identified with his home, and reporters had emerged as characteristic parts of the landscape whenever the president was in residence. Once he was an ex-president, however, Roosevelt expected that the spotlight of attention would shift to his successor, William Howard Taft.

In part because Roosevelt went on an African hunting trip within a few weeks of relinquishing the presidency, the focus on Oyster Bay did abate during the year that its occupant was on the trail in pursuit of big game. As soon as Roosevelt returned from his safari, however, popular interest in his activities again increased, and media attention toward his life at Sagamore Hill achieved an intensity approached only by latter-day celebrities during the twentieth century. [14]

The key cause of the renewed attention was the possibility that Roosevelt would challenge Taft for the Republican nomination in 1912. The press closely tracked the flow of visitors from all segments of the Republican party out to Oyster Bay, while President Taft and his aides watched apprehensively from the White House.

By the end of 1911 Roosevelt was informing his political allies that he would consider a run for the Republican nomination in 1912 if the public demonstrated its enthusiasm for his candidacy. By early 1912 he was a declared candidate. His Long Island home once again became a political headquarters as he geared up for what proved to be a protracted and bitter campaign. Despite his best efforts to gain the GOP nomination and then to win the presidency as the candidate of the Progressive Party, Roosevelt came in second to Woodrow Wilson in the 1912 election.

For the six years of life that then remained to Theodore Roosevelt, Oyster Bay continued to be the base of operations from which he sought first to make the Progressive Party a viable political operation, then in 1914 to alert the American people to the need for military preparedness at the outbreak of World War I. Following the entry of the United States into the

---

[13] Roosevelt to Kermit Roosevelt, June 13, 1907, in Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 7:,4, 335; Lawrence F. Abbott, ed., *The Letters of Archie Butt* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1924), 69, 75.

[14] Roosevelt's status as a political celebrity is discussed in Lewis L. Gould, "The Price of Fame: Theodore Roosevelt as a Celebrity, 1909-1919," *Lamar Journal of the Humanities* 10 (Fall 1984): 5-18.

war in April 1917, Roosevelt pushed hard to be allowed to raise and command an American division in France. This proposal was rejected in a bitter public controversy and Roosevelt had to content himself with speaking out from Sagamore Hill on behalf of the war effort, and in the process assailing President Wilson. The ways in which Sagamore Hill served as a central domain for Theodore Roosevelt during the last ten years of his life are the subject of the essay I have contributed to this volume, "'The House is Overrun with Political People'": Sagamore Hill After the Presidency."

By 1918 Roosevelt's prodigious energies and robust health had begun to fail. The service of their sons in the military added an element of stress to the life that he and Edith now led at Oyster Bay, and the death in battle of their youngest boy, Quentin, was a staggering blow. The final year of Roosevelt's life was marked by hospitalizations and incomplete recoveries. In December 1918, after a stay in the hospital for the effects of rheumatism, he went home to convalesce. On January 5, 1919, the last full day of his life, he told his wife, "I wonder if you will ever know how I love Sagamore Hill." Early the next morning he died in his sleep. [15]

Roosevelt was buried on the side of a hill in Youngs MemorialCemetery near Sagamore Hill. Edith Roosevelt remained a resident of the house until she died in 1948 and was buried next to her husband. The Theodore Roosevelt Association, formed after Roosevelt's death to perpetuate his memory, acquired Sagamore Hill and restored it. It was opened to the public in 1953; a decade later the Association gave the house and the site to the government. Since 1963 the National Park Service has been the custodian of Sagamore Hill. [16]

More than a century after Theodore Roosevelt was president of the United States, Sagamore Hill still evokes the personality and impact of one of the most famous and esteemed leaders in American history. The essays in this book seek to provide a context through which readers can understand the decisive role that his home played in Roosevelt's life.

For Further Reading

For those who may wish to pursue additional information on Sagamore Hill and Roosevelt's life there, as well as other aspects of his life, below are suggestions for further study, with page references and comments that I hope will be helpful.

Roosevelt's own view of his residence is contained in his account of his life

---

[15] William H. Harbaugh, *The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 489.

[16] Karin Johnson, "A Visit to Sagamore Hill," *Gourmet,* June, 1986, pp. 42-47, 100-103, is an interesting and well-illustrated portrait of the house and its interior. David H. Wallace, "Sagamore Hill: An Interior History," in Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable, *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American,* 526-546, offers a thorough description of how the rooms in the house were used and the life of the family who lived there.

published after the 1912 election. See *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt: Autobiography* (20 vols., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), 20: 309-311, 319-329, 333-335, 337-338. Following Roosevelt's death in 1919, the first extended biographical treatment was published, *Theodore Roosevelt and His Life Shown In His Letters,* by Joseph Bucklin Bishop, (2 vols, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 2:21, 22, 309. This book does not say much on the subject of Sagamore Hill. Other books by friends and acquaintances give a fuller account: see, for example, William Roscoe Thayer, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Intimate Biography* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1919), pp. 72-73, 255-280; Bradley Gilman, *Roosevelt: The Happy Warrior* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1921), pp. 177-180; and William Draper Lewis, *The Life of Theodore Roosevelt* (Philadelphia, The United Publishers, 1919), 447-458.

The major and influential biography by Henry F. Pringle, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1931), 48, 109, 117, 535-536, discusses the role of Sagamore Hill largely in passing. Hermann Hagedorn, *The Bugle That Woke America* (New York: John Day, 1940), 10-11, 180-191, mentions Sagamore Hill in the context of Roosevelt's campaign for preparedness.

The significance of Sagamore Hill finally received sustained attention in Hermann Hagedorn's *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), which provides an in-depth portrait of the estate and its role in the life of the Roosevelt family.

William H. Harbaugh, *Power and Responsibility: The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1961), 70-71, makes some judicious comments about Roosevelt's home. Edmund Morris, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1979), 377-379, 389, 391, touches on but does not sum up the impact of Sagamore Hill on Roosevelt's pre-presidential life. David McCullough, in *Mornings On Horseback* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), ends his main narrative in 1886 before Sagamore Hill became the focus of Roosevelt's family life.

Recent biographical explorations of Roosevelt's life and times provide insights into the impact of Sagamore Hill. H.W. Brands, in *T.R.: The Last Romantic* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), vii-xii, uses the house as a way of launching his narrative about Roosevelt. His work contains numerous other references to Sagamore Hill. See ibid., pp. 476-477, 686-687, 694-696. Edmund Morris, *Theodore Rex* (New York: Random House, 2001), 32, 120-121, 254-256, evokes the atmosphere of the Roosevelt residence. Kathleen Dalton, in *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), 116, 119-120, 134, 363-364, uses the house as a backdrop for her exploration of Roosevelt's emotional and public life.

Francis Wilshin, et al., *Sagamore Hill and the Roosevelt Family* Denver: National Park Service, 1972 (2 vols.), is an unpublished government study that contains a wealth of information about the Roosevelt family and home, and is a valuable source for the site and its history.

David H. Wallace, "Sagamore Hill: An Interior History," in Natalie A. Naylor, et al., *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American* (Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992), 522-546, is among the latest scholarly studies of the Roosevelt home.

Henry Cabot Lodge, ed., *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918* (2 vols., New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925); and William Roscoe Thayer, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Intimate Biography* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1919), will also reward the interested reader.

John J. Leary, Jr., *Talks with T.R. From the Diaries of John J. Leary, Jr.* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920) and Earle Looker, *Colonel Roosevelt, Private Citizen* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1932) are helpful regarding press coverage during the Sagamore Hill years, as is, in particular, A. Maurice Low, "The President's Home," *Saturday Evening Post* (October 11, 1902).

Henry Beach Needham describes Roosevelt's activities at Sagamore Hill in "Theodore Roosevelt—An Outdoor Man," *McClure's Magazine,* January 1906. Charles Dawbarn's article, "Theodore Roosevelt: The Man and President. Impressions of a Visitor to Oyster Bay," *Pall Mall Magazine,* January 1909, offers distinctive insights. Students of Roosevelt's life at Sagamore Hill will also be interested in Lawrence F. Abbot, ed., *The Letters of Archie Butt* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co.), 1924.

For a modern, personal view of the house, see Karin Johnson, "A Visit to Sagamore Hill," *Gourmet,* June 1986.

A Sense of Place:
Sagamore Hill, Oyster Bay, and the North Shore of Long Island

Natalie A. Naylor

Long Island has been shaped by its geology and topography, its geographic location, and its human history and political structure. A brief overview of these factors helps provide the context and background for understanding Theodore Roosevelt's Sagamore Hill country home in Oyster Bay on the North Shore of the island.

Long Island stretches 120 miles east from Manhattan Island and lies south of Connecticut, separated from it by Long Island Sound. The effects of the glaciers left the North Shore hilly, with many harbors and peninsulas (or "necks") on its irregular shoreline. The flat outwash plains in central and southern Long Island have always been easier to farm than the northern side.

Dutch explorer David Pietersz DeVries was the first to record the name of Oyster Bay. In June 1639, he anchored in the bay and wrote in his journal, "There are fine oysters here, whence our nation has given it the name of Oyster Bay or Harbor."[1]

When DeVries landed there, Long Island was home to Algonquian-speaking native peoples. On the North Shore of present-day Nassau County and western Suffolk County were the Matinecocks. Roosevelt named his estate for the Sagamore Mohannis, who had signed the deed

---

[1] Quoted in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherlands, 1609-1664* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 202. In the original Dutch, the name was *Oester-baye.*

for the land in the seventeenth century, a deed TR proudly displayed in his home. (See Appendix 1 for Roosevelt's explanation of the name Sagamore Hill and its earlier use as a place name.)

European settlement in the Oyster Bay area dates from 1653. The town (township) of Oyster Bay extends from Long Island Sound on the north to the Atlantic Ocean on the south. A barrier beach in South Oyster Bay, on the eastern part of the island of Jones Beach, protects the southern coast. (The town's portion of the barrier beach now includes Tobay [Town of Oyster Bay] Beach and the J.F.K. Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary.) Oyster Bay was part of Queens County until Nassau County was formed in 1899 from the three eastern towns of Queens, after the three western towns had joined greater New York City in 1898. The hamlet of Oyster Bay is the town seat where the town hall and many town offices are located. Oyster Bay village is an unincorporated area in the town.[2]

TR's Sagamore Hill is on the Cove Neck peninsula, which is bordered by the waters of Oyster Bay Harbor on the west and Cold Spring Harbor on the north and east. (Figure 1, page 24.) Cove Neck became an incorporated village in 1927. Laurel Hollow, which includes some of the southeastern part of the peninsula, was incorporated in 1926, and adjacent Oyster Bay Cove was incorporated in 1931. "Estate villages" such as these were created by estate owners to protect their interests and, in some cases, to avoid town taxes for public improvements. These villages were residential, not densely settled, and had no "downtown" or business section. Although population increased in Laurel Hollow and Oyster Bay Cove beginning in the 1950s, zoning regulations have maintained large lots for houses and kept these villages residential. Cove Neck continues to have one of the lowest population densities in the county. Historical population figures for the town and these villages are in Appendix 2.

Oyster Bay

Oyster Bay is 35 miles from Manhattan and its protected harbor means it is easily accessible by water. From colonial days it was involved in commerce, with sloops and brigs plying the coastal trade and larger ships trading with the Caribbean.[3] Packet boats and later steamships carried passengers to New York City, though the trip could take

---

[2] Thus, the "village of Oyster Bay" is not officially incorporated as a village. Nonetheless, the community west of Sagamore Hill, where the staff of Roosevelt's summer White House had their offices in the business district, is often popularly referred to as a village to differentiate it from the town of the same name.

[3] See Geoffrey L. Rossano, "To Market, To Market: Oyster Bay and the International Economy in the Mid-Eighteenth Century," in *Evoking a Sense of Place,* edited by Joann P. Krieg, (Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1988), 63-73.

several hours. Travel was expedited when the Long Island Railroad reached Syosset in 1854. Passengers could take a stagecoach to Oyster Bay from Syosset, which was the closest railroad connection to Oyster Bay. After the Glen Cove branch of the railroad was extended to Locust Valley in 1871, an alternative rail route to Oyster Bay was available.

The railroad promoted Long Island in a series of guidebooks it published for visitors. The water was the big appeal in Oyster Bay. The railroad's 1882 booklet stated: "The attraction of this celebrated watering place is in its bay, which, sheltered on the north and south by well-wooded hills and rocky cliffs, and the gentle declivities of Centre Island, is much sought after by those who seek beauty or amusement in the advantages it offers." Among the amusements mentioned were the regattas and rowing races of the Seawanhaka Yacht Club, "sailing boats for fishing parties and clambake excursions," bathing on the "unsurpassed" sandy beach, and "splendid wild-fowl shooting" nearby.[4]

In the "Gazetteer of Long Island" section of his *Handbook of Long Island* (1885), Richard M. Bayles described the area where Theodore Roosevelt had just had his home built:

> *Oyster Bay*—a cosey [cozy] and comfortable village pleasantly situated on the harbor and in the northern part of the town of the same name. It has a population of 1,255, and 7 churches—Episcopal, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, African Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Quaker. Stages connect the village with Syosset, about 4 miles south, and with Locust Valley, the same distance west. The people are engaged in farming, the culture of asparagus being an important item. The Cove [now Cove Neck and parts of Oyster Bay Cove and Laurel Hollow] is a section adjoining the village on the east.[5]

The railroad finally reached Oyster Bay in 1889. The terminus in Oyster Bay is closer to the water than any other Long Island train station, giving Oyster Bay an advantage for those seeking convenient access to the shore for boating and yachting. In an 1890 promotional booklet, the railroad observed that some of the summer residents had not welcomed this convenience, fearing that the community would become less exclusive:

> Until this year Locust Valley has been the terminus of the Glen Cove branch, but now Oyster Bay has that distinction. Notwithstanding the fact that the permanent inhabitants of Oyster Bay desired and were entitled to this extension of the railroad, there

---

[4] *Long Island Illustrated* (1882), 42. The railroad continued to publish these booklets well into the 1920s, with variations in titles, text, and illustrations. The railroad's *Long Island of To-Day* (1884) and *Hand-Book of Long Island* (1888) use much the same language in their descriptions of Oyster Bay.

[5] Richard M. Bayles, *Bayles' Long Island Handbook* (Babylon: Privately printed, Budget Steam Print, 1885), 45.

> were many among the summer visitors who opposed it, fearing that with the coming of the [railroad] cars the quiet town would lose much of the exclusiveness for which it has been noted. Such fears will doubtless prove to be groundless, for the class of people who bring discredit upon a place and make it common prefer to seek resorts nearer the cities. Oyster Bay will remain just as exclusive and just as charming as in years past, when it was reached by a long and wearisome stage-ride [from the Syosset or Locust Valley railroad station].[6]

The railroad's account proceeded to describe the attractions of the community for its summer residents:

> It is indeed a pretty village, and it is not strange that property owners zealously guard its interests. Situated directly on a beautiful bay, the boating facilities are unsurpassed, a fact easily seen on a summer's day by counting the yachts and pleasure-boats which harbor there. It is the headquarters for several prominent yacht-clubs, and regattas and rowing-races are frequently held during the season. The drives are numerous and delightful. The place is noted for its many fine residences. There are several old homesteads which played important parts in the early history of the country, and many relics of colonial times are to be found.[7]

A bird's-eye view of Oyster Bay in 1900 provides an excellent overview of the village on the eve of TR's presidency. The large (18" x 22") engraving lists and identifies businesses and churches and has individual pictures of twenty prominent buildings, including the "Residence of Gov. Theodore Roosevelt." An inset shows Centre Island and Cove Neck. A more idealized view of the landscape is Louis Comfort Tiffany's depiction of Oyster Bay in stained glass, which is on permanent exhibit in the American wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.[8]

---

[6]Long Island Railroad, *Out on Long Island* (New York: Long Island Railroad, 1890), 57-58.

[7]Ibid, 58. Rowing was an activity TR enjoyed throughout his life; he always preferred rowing to sailing. Among the "old homesteads" in Oyster Bay was the seventeenth-century Youngs house, located at the northwest corner of what is now East Main Street and Cove Neck Road. Today, a historical roadside marker commemorates President George Washington's overnight stay with the Youngses in 1790. Theodore Roosevelt was acquainted with the Youngs family in Oyster Bay. He bought his property on Cove Neck from Thomas Youngs, and William K. Youngs, the last of the family who lived in the Youngs homestead, was TR's personal secretary in Albany when he was governor.

[8]The Oyster Bay Historical Society reprinted the bird's-eye view engraving and it is available from the Society (24 Summit Street/P.O. Box 297, Oyster Bay, NY 11771). Edward Lange, a German-born artist, lived in Elwood (Commack) in the 1870s and 1880s and painted houses and town views. His Oyster Bay work includes a (much less detailed) bird's-eye watercolor of Oyster Bay (c. 1886) and an ink drawing of the Bay View House (hotel). Lange's pictures are reproduced in Dean F. Failey and Zachary N. Studenroth, *Edward Lange's Long Island* (Setauket: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1979), 16. Tiffany's Laurelton Hall estate was south of TR's on Cove Neck.

Peter Ross in his 1902 *History of Long Island* described Oyster Bay at the turn of the century. He mentioned the traditional shell fishing and maritime activities in Oyster Bay and its environs, but focused on the summer colony:

> Besides its important oystering and shipping trade it is the centre of a colony of summer homes of the very highest class. Its importance has steadily increased since the railroad gave it easy access to the outer world. Its cottages are most picturesque and reach outfrom it in all directions, and it is well supplied with hotels and boarding houses. As the home of the Seawanhaka Yacht Club it is a centre for that class of sport, and the clubhouse of that organization, a most imposing structure at the entrance to the bay [on Centre Island], with more or less of its "fleet" in front and its dock always a busy, bustling place during the season, is itself a prime attraction to visitors. Oyster Bay, in fact, has become quite a fashionable cesntre, and its dignity in this respect seems certain to steadily increase.[9]

Ross took special note of Theodore Roosevelt, now Oyster Bay's leading citizen:

> Of recent years it [Oyster Bay] has come into especial prominence as the residence of Theodore Roosevelt, ex-Governor of New York and President of the United States. His splendid cottage has been the scene of many an important gathering since his return from Cuba, where, as Colonel of the famous "Rough Riders," he won a national pre-eminence and became one of the foremost figures in American public life.[10]

Roosevelt's Purchase of Property in Oyster Bay and Construction of Sagamore Hill

The 1873 map of Cove Neck (Figure 1) shows fewer than a dozen houses on the Cove Neck peninsula. Seven are clustered on the Oyster Bay Harbor side on the northwestern end of the peninsula, with most owning relatively little property (probably less than ten acres each).

Theodore Roosevelt's grandfather, Cornelius Van Schaack Roosevelt, had rented a home in Oyster Bay, where he died in 1871. TR's father, Theodore, Sr., after renting different

---

[9] Peter Ross, *A History of Long Island From its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time* (New York: Lewis Publishing, 1902), 934.

[10] Ibid., 934. Ross devotes fifteen pages to a "Biographical Sketch of President Roosevelt" (939-54), which includes two 1898 portraits of TR and two photographs of Sagamore Hill (one is of the exterior of the house and the other is of the library). Ross obviously wrote some of this material after Roosevelt's election as governor of New York in 1898, but before he became president in 1901.

summer homes in New Jersey and along the Hudson for his family, came to Oyster Bay in 1874, when TR was 15. TR's sister Corinne later wrote that their "father decided to join the colony which had been started by his family at Oyster Bay, Long Island." For more than a decade, the Roosevelts rented Tranquility, a house less than a mile east of the center of the village. Clearly, relatives and the water were the major attractions. Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., was elected to the Seawanhaka Yacht Club on July 6, 1874, joining many relatives. Cornelius Roosevelt (Jr.), Hilbourne L. Roosevelt, Alfred Roosevelt, and James Alfred Roosevelt were charter members, and Emlen Roosevelt and John E. Roosevelt had joined in 1873. The Roosevelt clan would soon be joined by J. Roosevelt Roosevelt (of Hyde Park) and Frederick Roosevelt, who joined the Seawanhaka Club in 1875.[11]

Young Theodore delighted in the Oyster Bay area when growing up. In his diary and correspondence he records riding, shooting birds, and rowing on the bay and across Long Island Sound. Summer vacations during college also were spent in Oyster Bay, where he collected his *Notes on Some Birds of Oyster Bay* (1879). TR spent his two-week honeymoon with Alice Lee at Tranquility in Oyster Bay in November 1880. Within a few weeks, he began to purchase property nearby on Cove Neck.[12]

TR's decision to purchase land in Oyster Bay was the result of his fond memories of roaming the area in the summers. Like his father, he was also joining relatives in the area. After renting a summer house in Oyster Bay, TR's uncle, James Alfred Roosevelt, purchased land in Oyster Bay in 1880 and was making plans to build "Yellowbanks" on Cove Neck (completed in 1881). TR's cousin, Dr. James West Roosevelt, had a four-acre estate, "Waldeck," on Cove Neck, bordering on Oyster Bay Harbor. TR re-sold some of the land he had purchased to his aunt and to his sister, ensuring the growth of the Roosevelt colony on Cove Neck.[13] Other Roosevelt relatives had settled on the South Shore

---

[11] Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, *My Brother Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), 89. Tranquility (also spelled Tranquillity) was located on the south side of what is now East Main Street, west of Cove Neck. It was demolished in the 1930s. For the history of the Tranquility house, see Robert B. MacKay, "Turmoil Begat 'Tranquility,'" in *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American*, edited by Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable (Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992), 45-53; and John E. Hammond, *Oyster Bay Remembered* (Huntington: Maple Hill Press, 2002), 208-10. "Seawanhaka" was an Algonquian name for Long Island, meaning "land of shells." Roosevelt members are listed in *Constitution, By-Laws, Sailing Regulations &c. of the Seawanhaka Yacht Club of Oyster Bay* (New York: Corlies, Macy, 1876). The yacht club later added "Corinthian" to its name, signifying that the members were amateur sportsmen.

[12] David McCullough, *Mornings on Horseback* (New York: Touchstone, 1981), 89; Hermann Hagedorn, *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), 6; and Regina M. Bellavia and George W. Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site* (Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 1995), 140.

[13] Many of the summer residents of Oyster Bay were members of the Union League in New York City as well as the Seawanhaka Yacht Club (MacKay, "Turmoil Begat 'Tranquility,'" 47–49). See also *Long Island*

of Long Island in the Sayville area. Though less well-known today, the South Shore flourished as a summer colony earlier than the North Shore.[14]

TR purchased the land on Cove Neck from Thomas Youngs. Between 1880 and 1884, TR purchased 155 acres, extending from Oyster Bay Harbor on the west to Cold Spring Harbor on the east, for a total of $30,000. He sold 28 of his acres to his sister Anna (Bamie) and 32 acres to his aunt, Anna Bullock (Mrs. James K.) Gracie, leaving him with 95 acres. In 1894, TR sold a six-acre field to his uncle, James A. Roosevelt, leaving him with 89 acres. An additional purchase of a meadow and beach and land along Eel Creek was made in 1900. In 1906, he exchanged some land with his cousin, W. Emlen Roosevelt, to permit a right of way for a road, decreasing his holdings to 87 acres. This remained the size of the estate until his widow, Edith, gave four acres to Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., to build Old Orchard in 1938. (See Figures 2-3, Property Maps, 1884 and 1906, page 25.)[15]

Portions of Cove Neck had been farmed for generations.[16] The property that Theodore Roosevelt bought had been pasture and farmland, but much of it was woodlands. In his deed Thomas Youngs included the right to harvest existing crops and those stored in the "farm barn," which was the only existing structure on the property.[17] The Roosevelts used this old barn until it collapsed in 1904.

A map that Roosevelt drew of his property in 1880 (Figure 4, page 26), shows that more

---

Country Houses and Their Architects, 1860-1940 (hereafter cited as *LI Country Houses),* edited by Robert B. MacKay, Anthony Baker, and Carol A. Traynor (New York: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities [SPLIA]/W.W. Norton, 1997), 23; and the chapter below titled "From Country Estates to Suburbs" for additional information on the Roosevelt estates on Cove Neck.

[14] Appendix 3 has information on the Roosevelts on the South Shore of Long Island.

[15] Maps showing the ownership of land, particularly TR's property, are in Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report,* 20-23, 109. The sale to James Roosevelt was because of TR's financial problems: Theodore Roosevelt, *Letters from Theodore Roosevelt to Anna Roosevelt Cowles, 18 70-1918,* edited by Anna Roosevelt Cowles (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), 146. The 1900 purchase, apparently not documented previously, is mentioned in letters of Edith to TR dated c. September 1, 1900, September 2, 1900, and September 9, 1900 (manuscripts, 1900 folder, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard University). This purchase was in cooperation with Emlen and may not have been formalized until the 1906 exchange. The Theodore Roosevelt Association sold eleven acres of the Smith's Field area in 1961 and bought two other acres, so they transferred 78 acres to the federal government in 1963. Five contiguous acres north of Sagamore Hill Road were purchased by the Trust for Public Land in 1985 and added to the property, resulting in 83 acres of land which are now part of the property (Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report,* 150, 161).

[16] Cooper's Bluff on the northeastern end of the peninsula is mentioned often in accounts of life at Sagamore Hill. For a description of farm life in that area of Cove Neck in the eighteenth century, see *Diary of Mary Cooper: Life on a Long Island Farm, 1768-1773* [on Cove Neck], edited by Field Horne (Oyster Bay: Oyster Bay Historical Society, 1981). See also a description of the Swan and other farms in Oyster Bay in 1860, in the section below, "Long Island Agriculture and Farming."

[17] Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill,* 6.

than one-third of the property was woodland and beach. There were several fields, including one identified as buckwheat and another as a corn field, as well as an asparagus bed and an orchard. TR wrote about his ideas for the house some 30 years later:

> I did not know enough to be sure what I wished in outside matters. But I had perfectly definite views what I wished in inside matters, what I desired to live in and with; I arranged all this, so as to get what I desired in so far as my money permitted; and then [the architect, Charles Alonzo] Rich put on the outside cover with but little help from me. I wished a big piazza, very broad at the n.w. corner where we could sit in rocking chairs and look at the sunset; a library with a shallow bay window opening south; the parlor or drawing room occupying all the western end of the lower floor; as broad a hall as our space would permit; big fireplaces for logs; on the top floor the gun room occupying the western end so that north and west it looks over the sound and bay. I had to live inside and not outside the house; and while I should have liked to "express" myself in both, as I had to choose I chose the former.[18]

The house was sited on the top of the hill in what had been a wheat field. The architects, Lamb & Rich, first proposed "extremely high-pitched gables and tall chimneys," which were reduced in the final design.[19] Lamb & Rich had already established a reputation in building country homes. Sagamore Hill was featured in an article in *American Architecture and Building News* in 1893, before TR became nationally famous.[20] (For additional information on Lamb & Rich, Architects, including other commissions, see Appendix 4.)

Following plans drawn up by the architects, TR contracted in October 1883 with John A. Wood & Son, carpenters in Lawrence, to build a stable and lodge on the property at a cost of $5,160. He signed a contract with the same firm for the "dwelling house at Oyster Bay" at a cost

---

[18] Theodore Roosevelt to the editor of *Country Life in America,* October 3, 1915, quoted by David H. Wallace, "Sagamore Hill: An Interior History," in Naylor, Brinkley, and Gable, *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American,* 529-30.

[19] An illustration of the original perspective was published in the *American Architect and Building News* in 1893 and is reproduced in MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 244. Curiously, although the architectural drawing appeared eight years after the house was completed, there was no indication that it does not depict the house as it was built. Architectural descriptions of Sagamore Hill are in Lisa and Donald Sclare, *Beaux-Arts Estates: A Guide to the Architecture of Long Island* (New York: Viking Press, 1980), 163-69; Leland M. Roth and Bret Morgan, *Shingle Styles: Innovation and Tradition in American Architecture, 1874 to 1982* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999), 62-67; and American Institute of Architects [AIA], Long Island Chapter, and the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities [SPLIA], *Architectural Guide to Nassau and Suffolk Counties, Long Island,* edited by Robert B. MacKay, Stanley Lindvall, and Carol Traynor (New York: Dover, 1992), 46.

[20] "House of Theodore Roosevelt," *American Architecture and Building News* 39, no. 395 (1893): 110. TR in 1893 was serving on the U.S. Civil Service Commission in Washington, D.C.

of $16,975 on March 1, 1884, two weeks after the death of his wife and mother.[21] The house was rather moderately priced for the day. The median cost for a country house in this era was in the $20,000-$30,000 range.[22]

Sagamore Hill was designed for year-round use and for many years was the primary residence for the Roosevelt family and the home in which they summered for several months when TR was serving in Albany or Washington. It had a hot-air furnace (Edith later added a second furnace) and eight fireplaces. Despite the two furnaces, it was not easy to heat. Describing the heating problems, Edith referred to the house as being like a "bird cage."[23]

Unlike most other estate owners, TR did not own a townhouse in the city. He commuted daily on the train from Oyster Bay when he was New York City police commissioner during 1895-1897 (sometimes staying overnight in the city with his sister Bamie). Thus, he was among the earliest generation of suburban commuters from the area. (The railroad, as noted earlier, completed its branch line to Oyster Bay in 1889.) Most of the other country houses in Oyster Bay and the North Shore were used only during the summer and some weekends. Few people commuted to the city from the North Shore until the twentieth century. The number of commuters increased in the 1910s and 1920s with direct rail service after the Long Island Railroad opened its East River tunnels.

---

[21] Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., in his memoir *All in the Family*, indicates that the house was built in a wheat field and that TR himself planted the trees near the house (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1929), 14. The estate was originally called "Leeholm" after TR's first wife, Alice Lee. Later, Theodore Roosevelt changed the name of his property from Leeholm to Sagamore Hill. Copies of "Agreement for Building" are in the Theodore Roosevelt vertical file in the Nassau County Museum Collection, Long Island Studies Institute at Hofstra University.

The building costs in equivalent 2002 dollars would be about $92,000 for the stable and lodge and $309,000 for the main house. These figures do not include the cost of the land or the architect's fees. (The conversion was calculated using a website that (in 2005) no longer exist9s: <www.cjr.org/database/converter>.)

Lamb and Rich had been designing shingle-style houses in New Jersey and several houses for Samuel P. Hinckley, including "Sunset Hall" in Lawrence, in what is now southwestern Nassau County in 1883. See Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style: Architectural Theory and Design from Richardson to the Origins of Wright* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 101-2, and his figs. 69-72; and Arnold Lewis, *American Country Houses of the Gilded Age* (New York: Dover, 1982), pl. 32.

[22] Of the known costs of 58 houses built in this era which were depicted in George P. Sheldon's *Artistic Country-Seats* (published in 1886-1887), only five were under $10,000, seventeen were between $10,000 and $20,000; eleven between $20,000-$30,000; nine, $30,000-$50,000; ten, $50,000-$100,000; and six cost more than $100,000. Figures are from Lewis, *American Country Houses of the Gilded Age)*, x.

[23] An 1898 article stated that the children enjoyed the outdoor life "for nearly eight months of the year" (*New-York Tribune*, October 2, 1898, copy in the East Hampton Library, Long Island Collection). Edith Roosevelt to Alice Roosevelt Cowles, February 1918 (re "bird cage"), quoted by Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family*, 392.

The country estate would enable TR to pursue his interests in natural history and the strenuous life, and provide a healthy and wholesome environment for his children. Over the west side doorway, the motto from the Roosevelt family crest was carved into the lintel, *"Qui plantavit curabit"* (He who has planted will preserve).[24] After generations of his ancestors living in Manhattan, TR was the first in his family who literally would be planting on his land. In establishing Sagamore Hill, he envisioned himself as a gentleman farmer, with crops planted and harvested on his estate.

Sagamore Hill as Part of the Estate Movement

Sagamore Hill was built quite early in the estate movement, before the North Shore became a popular resort area for country estates of the wealthy. Some of the features of Sagamore Hill reflect its early construction, others reflect TR's own values, and some aspects reflect TR's financial situation. He was well-to-do, but not really wealthy when compared to William Robertson Coe, Marshall Field III, Otto Kahn, William K. Vanderbilt (Jr. or Sr.), or his own cousin, Emlen Roosevelt, whose spacious homes were nearby. At one point, after some financial losses in the West, TR was concerned that he might need to sell the property. For many years, Edith constantly tried to keep expenses contained in order to live within their income.

Like most other country estates, Sagamore Hill was designed by architects. The architectural style (Queen Anne/Shingle Style) reflected architecture popular at the time the house was built, and a style which the Lamb & Rich architectural firm had used for other houses. As indicated earlier, it was toward the lower end in terms of the cost of building a country house at the time. TR did not have a landscape architect for the grounds of Sagamore Hill. Unlike many of the later, larger estates (including William Robertson Coe's "Planting Fields" west of the village of Oyster Bay), Sagamore Hill did not have formal gardens or a landscape design. The grounds remained much more natural and pastoral—indeed, rustic. The number of outbuildings was also rather modest, with a barn, stable and lodge, cottage, chicken coop and tool shed, and pig sty, of which only the stable/lodge was designed by an architect. (See Figures 5 and 6, page 27.) Sagamore Hill did not have an elaborate farm complex, which some of the other Long Island country estates featured. (Architect Alfred Hopkins specialized in farm groups, ranging from relatively small ones for estates in Brookville, Locust Valley, and Oyster Bay, to very large ones for Louis Comfort Tiffany and Marshall Field III.)

Although TR's 87 acres may have been close to the median size of estate properties at the turn of the last century, the 22-room main house was considerably smaller than the average and decidedly unpretentious. Indeed, it was less than the 25 rooms sometimes regarded as the minimum size for country houses. The number of full-time servants (inside the main house and for the farm and grounds) was relatively modest as well—usually about nine in the years 1900-1920

---

[24] MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 287. The family crest is reproduced in Naylor, Brinkley, and Gable, *Theodore Roosevelt,* 84.

(plus day laborers as needed), and reduced to only four in 1930 (see census data in Appendix 5). A more usual number was from 25 to 50 employed on a 100-acre estate, though small houses usually had between 10 and 15 servants. Some of the large North Shore estates had more than 100 servants and employees on staff.

Appendix 7 lists Long Island estates and country houses which are preserved as historic house museums. Most of these were built in the first decades of the twentieth century and all are much grander than Sagamore Hill. Visiting Coe Hall and Falaise today, visitors can see the antiquities their owners brought back from Europe. In contrast, TR displayed his trophies from hunting expeditions—animal heads and skins are prominent on the first-floor public rooms.

Long Island Agriculture and Farming

Long Island is usually described as rural and agricultural in the nineteenth century, with fishing and other maritime activities also among the typical occupations. After the opening of the Erie Canal in the 1825 and as railroads extended to the West, Long Island ceased to be the breadbasket for Manhattan, since grains could be grown more economically in the West. Agriculture on Long Island shifted from raising livestock and cultivating grain to dairying and intensive vegetable production.

An article in *The Country Gentleman* reported on agriculture and soil conditions in Oyster Bay in 1860, a generation before TR established his country home. Benjamin Swan, who lived on Cove Neck, took the author, John Johnston, on a tour of the neighborhood, which included the estate of his brother Edward. Johnston indicated that the "greater part of their [the Swans'] farms are in [yellow locust and red cedar] timber of second growth which they expect will be very valuable at no distant day." Other crops mentioned in the neighborhood were corn and turnips. It was noted that a "great majority of the farmers there carry all they raise to New York city—hay, straw, and almost every thing else—and turn them into cash." Manure was often brought back from city stables, and sloops brought manure for farms along the coast, but the soil was insufficiently manured and was worn out. Johnston observed that the "land is of excellent quality, and mostly of easy culture, and if properly managed would be the garden of the state." As it had a longer growing season than upstate, he thought it an "excellent country to farm in." He concluded, "I was told that there were some men keeping dairies and doing very well; improving the soil and making it rich. Some are doing the same by gardening on a large scale, and many are doing well at the latter on a small scale; but how the farmer that sells all, or nearly all, his hay, straw, and corn, can do well, I cannot comprehend."[25]

A Sense of Place[25] John Johnston, "John Johnston on Long Island," *The Country Gentleman,* October 14, 1860 (clipping in Agricultural vertical file, Nassau County Division of Museum Services collection, Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University).

Many of the year-round residents in Oyster Bay were baymen who farmed the waters of the bay. Some combined oystering with farming. (The Frank M. Flower & Sons Oyster Company began in Oyster Bay in 1887, the same year that Theodore and Edith Roosevelt moved into Sagamore Hill. The Flower company now seeds the oyster beds; its hatchery is located in nearby Bayville.).

Suzannah Lessard, in an article on the town of Oyster Bay, summarized well the change in Long Island agriculture:

> Gradually [in the nineteenth century], the self-sufficient farm, producing almost every necessity for its owner and his workers, who lived on it, was replaced by a more specialized agriculture: at first, grain, and then, when the Midwestern granaries monopolized that market, livestock, dairy products, and vegetables (cabbage, peas, corn, potatoes, brussels sprouts, asparagus, and cucumbers), for which New York City provided a rapidly expanding market. Seafood (fish, clams, and oysters) also brought in revenues, and a few industries sprang up.[26]

By the early 1900s, market or truck gardening for the city markets dominated farming on Long Island. The number of farms and acreage devoted to agriculture steadily declined, particularly on the North Shore, as the wealthy bought farms for estates and agriculture proved less profitable. Farm acreage in the towns that became Nassau County declined from 90,738 acres in 1875, to 69,347 acres in 1900. The county had 1,658 farms in 1900; 1,017 in 1910; 935 in 1920; and 766 in 1925. Nonetheless, one-third of the county's land was still farmland in 1920, with the average acreage per farm 64 acres (less than 20 percent of Nassau's farms were larger than 100 acres in that year). Corn, hay, forage, and potatoes were the most important crops, while horses, dairy cows, and chickens were the most prevalent animals on county farms in 1920. The most popular fruits grown in Nassau County were peaches, apples, strawberries, and grapes. By 1964, there were only 187 farms in Nassau County (average size 30 acres), and horticulture and nurseries accounted for 80 percent of the value of farm products.[27]

---

[26] Suzannah Lessard, "Suburban Landscape: Oyster Bay, Long Island," *New Yorker*, October 11, 1976, 66. For overviews of the history of Long Island agriculture, see: Edith L. Fullerton's pamphlet, *History of Long Island Agriculture* (New York: Long Island Railroad, c.1929); Halsey B. Knapp, "Long Island's Agriculture," in *Long Island: A History of Two Great Counties, Nassau and Suffolk*, edited by Paul Bailey, 3 vols. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1949), 2:17-34; and Lewis Radcliffe,"Long Island's Shellfisheries," in *Long Island*, ed. Paul Bailey, 2:1-16.

[27] Edward J. Smits, *Nassau, Suburbia, U.S.A.* (Syosset: Friends of the Nassau County Museum, 1974), 13; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920, Vol. 6, pt. 1, Agriculture: Reports for States with Statistics for Counties: The Northern States* (microfilm), 212-13, 218-19;"Nassau's Decline As Farming Community," *Nassau Daily Review*, January 3, 1927; and "Nassau Farmer Going: U.S.," *Newsday*, July 28, 1966. [In 2005, only four or five farms survive in Nassau County with total acreage less than 100 acres. "The Farmers in the 'Burbs," *Newsday*, Oct. 9, 2005, G 13. SH-NPS] For an excellent detailed study of agriculture on western Long Island, focusing on deagriculturalization in the late nineteenth century and suburban growth, see Marc Linde and Lawrence S. Zacharias, *Of Cabbages and Kings County: Agriculture and the Formation of Modern Brooklyn* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999).

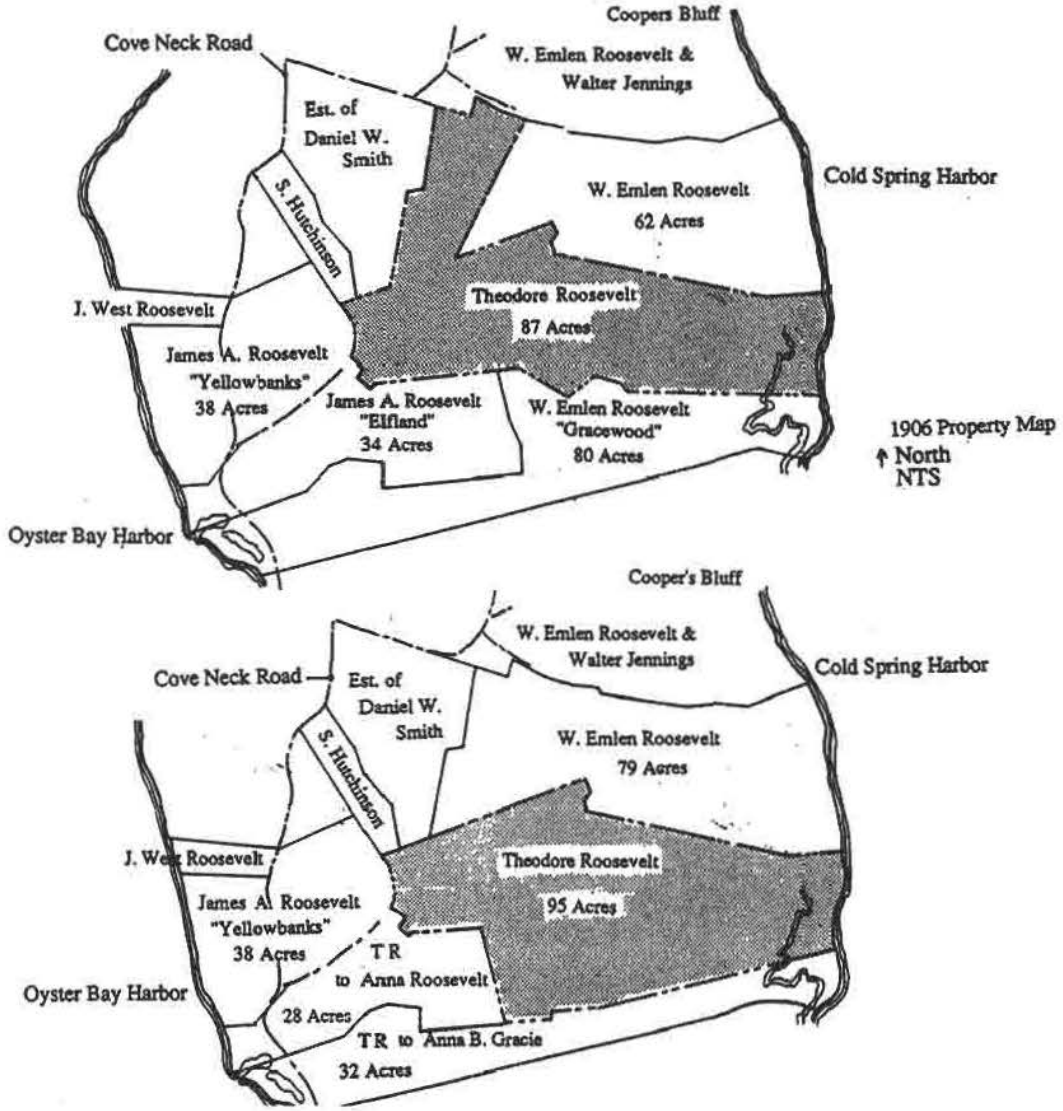
Theodore Roosevelt, who was himself a gentleman farmer, had a recreational habit of riding "point-to-point" through the fields of neighboring farms. The local farmers did not appreciate his intrusions. Edna T. Layton, who was born in 1906, grew up on a farm in East Norwich, just south of Oyster Bay. In her memoirs, she recounted:

> In my early childhood, Theodore Roosevelt lived in Oyster Bay. He had a habit of riding horseback for miles around. It was not uncommon for him to ride right across my Grandfather's farm. He did not go around a field, but right across it, thus ruining whatever crops his horse stepped on. This made nearby farmers very angry. They did *not* like "Teddy." They said he was "too big for his boots." If Mr. Roosevelt saw a farmer, he might ride up and ask him questions with a superior air which did *not* please the farmers. I can remember his condescending to say a few words to me a couple of times when he rode over our farm. Looking back, some of the dislike of "Teddy" might have been because the Laytons, like most of their neighbors, were staunch Democrats.[28]

[28] "The Early Life and Education of Miss Edna T. Layton," edited by Mary Jane Lippert, *Freeholder* (Oyster Bay Historical Society), 4 (Summer 1999): 3-4. Layton wrote her memoirs in 1993 for her family. Her account includes a good description of some aspects of truck farming on a 100-acre farm.



Figure 1. Map of Cove Neck, Oyster Bay and Environs, 1873. *Atlas of Long Island, New York* (Beers, Comstock & Cline, 1873).



Figures 2 and 3. Property Owned by Theodore Roosevelt and Neighboring Property, 1884 and 1906. Maps from Regina M. Bellavia and GeorgeW. Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site* (Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 1995), 21, 23. Report for National Park Service. See also Fig.17, page 136.

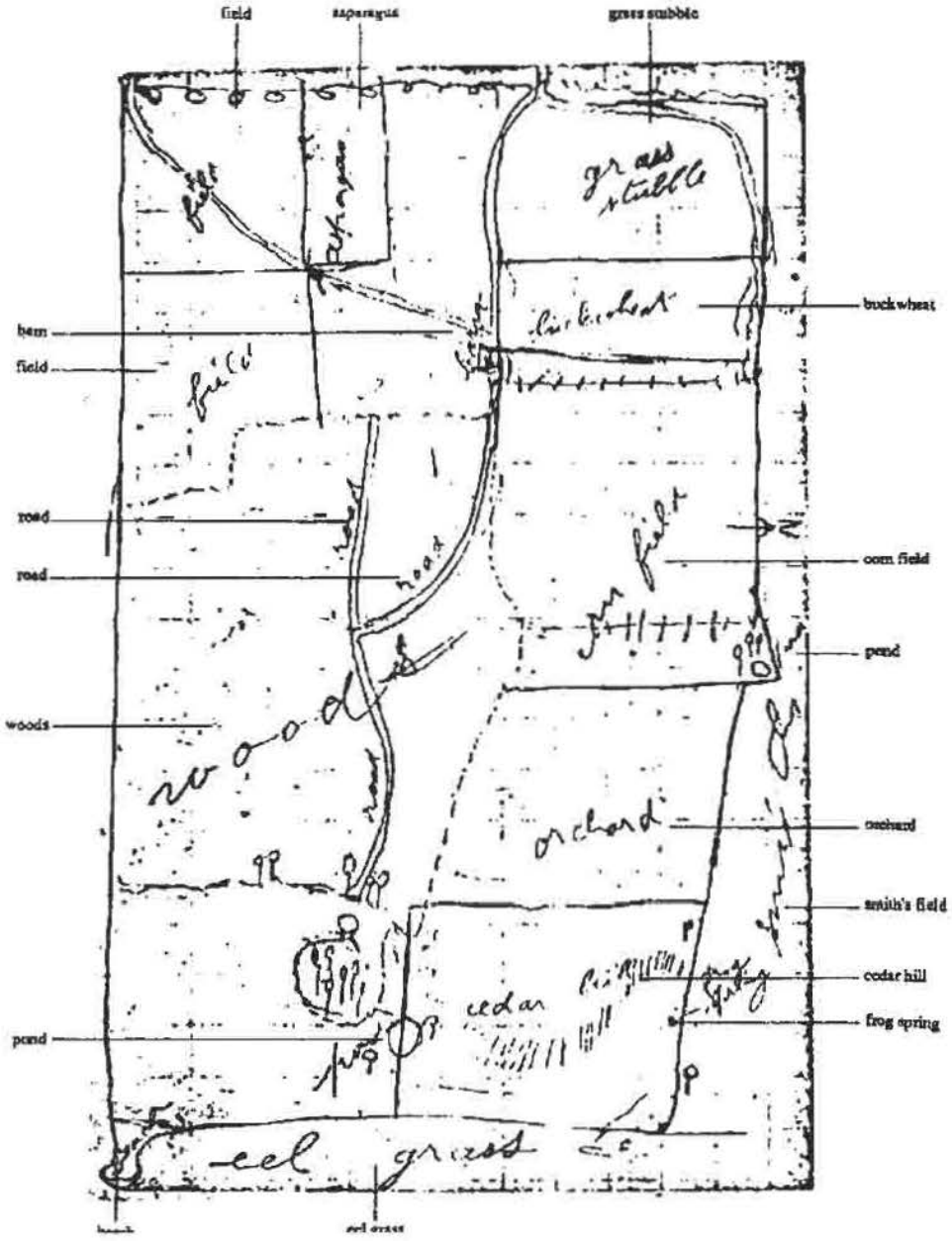


Figure 4. Theodore Roosevelt's 1880 Sketch of his Property. In Sagamore Hill National Historic Site Archives. Reproduced from a copy in Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 18.

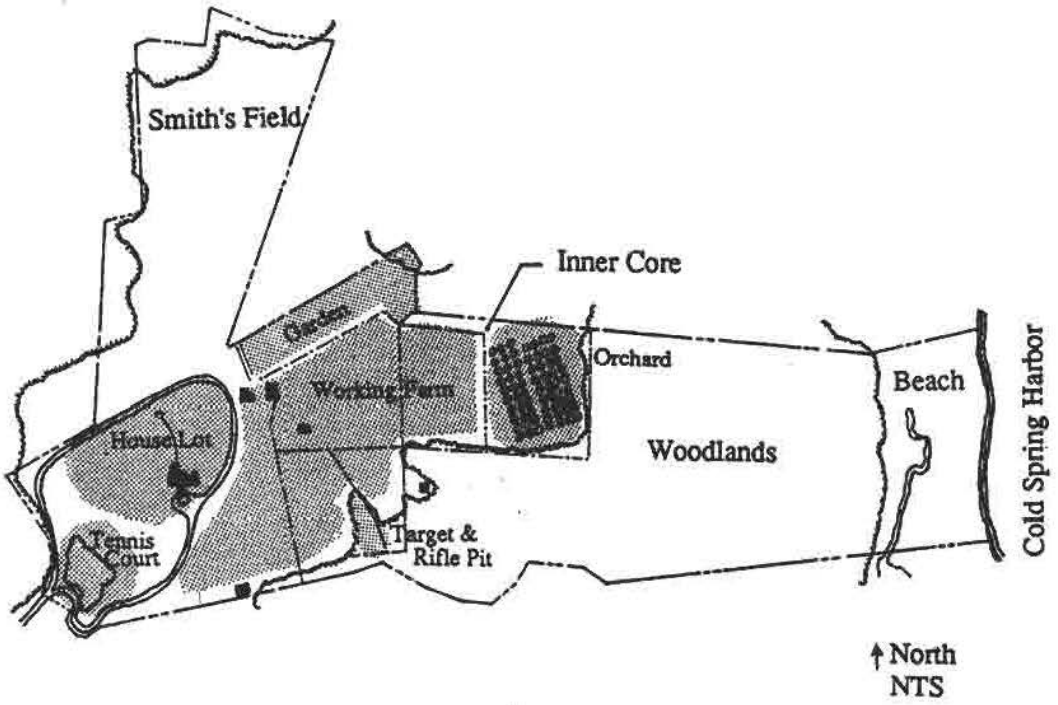


Figure 5. Spatial Organization of Sagamore Hill, c.1919. Map from Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report,* 80.

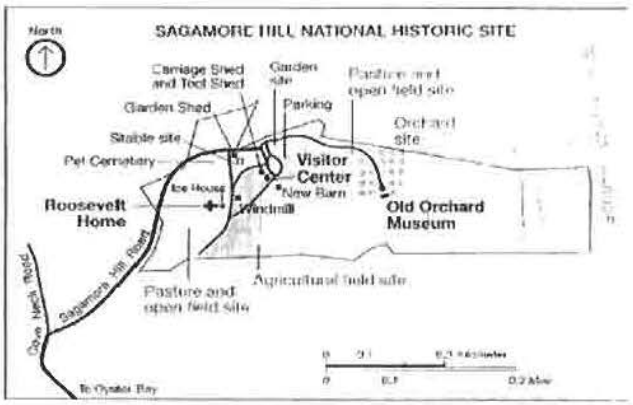


Figure 6. Map of Sagamore Hill National Historic Site showing original location of stable, fields, garden, and sheds. Official Map and Guide, Sagamore Hill NHS.

"All Roads Lead to Oyster Bay"

Kathleen Dalton

Theodore Roosevelt's Sagamore Hill—along with Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Hyde Park home, Springwood—stands as the most historically important presidential home owned by the nation.[1] Theodore Roosevelt remains one of America's most influential presidents, a dynamic leader who invented the modern presidency, initiated effective trust-busting, approved the landmark Pure Food and Drug Act and Meat Inspection Act to protect consumers, won railroad regulation, developed far-reaching foreign policies, and undertook pioneering work in conservation. As described in my book *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life,*[2] he also deserves to be understood as an important cultural leader and a spokesman for muscular Christianity, the strenuous life, and a child-centered family life, led simply.

During the 1950s Sagamore Hill was seen primarily as the home of a great man, and as a reflection of American life in the early part of the century. Today, historians are gaining new understandings of TR's life that influence our interpretation of the significance of Sagamore Hill. Interpretive themes now include conservation, technology of the period, the Roosevelts' daily life, and TR's career as a public servant. As the site continues to be reinterpreted[3] in the context of revised scholarship, it can also be placed within the context of an expanded socia

---

[1] Monticello and Mount Vernon are privately owned.

[2] New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

[3] Background Information for Group Leaders Preparing to Visit Sagamore Hill, U.S.Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Oyster Bay, New York.

and cultural history of the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era. Such scholarship makes it easier to understand historic homes such as Sagamore Hill as examples of by-gone customs, beliefs, and social relationships, and thereby to use the homes to acquaint visitors with social history as well as political history.

In recent years the National Park Service has reaffirmed its commitment to "people-friendly" sites that encourage national pride and increase historical awareness through, for example, interpreting the social relations between master and servant and revealing attitudes toward nature, recreation, marriage, and child rearing. All these are topics relevant to Sagamore Hill. Park Service historic sites thus have a crucial role to play in teaching about American history in broadly focused and entertaining ways.[4] What new lessons, then, can be learned from Sagamore Hill?

Before Theodore Roosevelt became president, Sagamore Hill was already the stage upon which many important scenes of his life were played out. He and his young wife, Alice Hathaway Lee, walked over the land and planned to build a country home together. After Alice died following childbirth in 1884, TR's sister Bamie (Anna Roosevelt Cowles) supervised the building of the house. She shared the residence with her brother when he paid frequent visits during the two years he lived on his ranches in the Dakotas.

From the time TR and his second wife, Edith Kermit Carow, moved into the house for full-time residence in May 1887, it became the home base for his career as a civil service reformer, magazine writer, and historian. When TR served in Washington, D.C., as civil service commissioner (1889-1895), Sagamore Hill was the family's summer home, where he wrote important articles and speeches about the need for civil service reform. The civil service movement helped reduce the corruption that had bogged down American politics in the late nineteenth century, and TR played a significant role in challenging the power of bosses who took kickbacks and sold government jobs. [5]

When he became one of New York City's police commissioners (1895-1897) TR often commuted between Sagamore Hill and the city on the Long Island Railroad. Though he did most of his police work at his Mulberry Street office in Manhattan, reshaping the Police Department to make it more effective and cleaning up brothels and saloons, Sagamore Hill was his home base a good part of the week.

It was when TR gained national recognition as a war hero that Sagamore Hill first entered the limelight of public attention. In 1898, after his service as assistant secretary of the navy and lieutenant colonel and later colonel of the Rough Riders in the Spanish-American War, Roosevelt came home to Sagamore Hill and was greeted by cheering crowds. In the fall of that year, Sagamore Hill witnessed frequent political meetings as TR ran for governor of New York. His election to that office meant the family had to move to the Governor's Mansion in Albany for most

[4]National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, "Rethinking the National Parks for the 21st Century," on-line.

[5]See David H. Wallace, *Sagamore Hill: Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, New* York (Harpers Ferry, Va.: National Park Service, 1991).

of 1899-1900. Nevertheless, during the summer and on occasional weekends, TR took welcome breaks in Oyster Bay from the political struggles he waged in Albany.

TR also lived almost all of his frustrating vice presidency (1901) at Sagamore Hill, writing articles and biding his time. In the pre-presidential years the Roosevelts welcomed many important visitors to their Oyster Bay home, including future president Woodrow Wilson, future first lady and TR's niece, Eleanor Roosevelt, and future president Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was a cousin, and who gained his youthful political education from his mentor, TR.

Certainly, most familiar historically are the famous events of Roosevelt's presidency that unfolded in the six summers (1902-1908) during which he made Sagamore Hill his summer White House. Important episodes in his career took place in the Sagamore Hill library. For example, he met there with Henry Cabot Lodge and other Senate leaders over labor problems, including the 1902 Anthracite Coal Strike, which he settled when he moved back to the White House in the fall. In the same room in August 1903, TR and Secretary of State John Hay talked for several hours about America's need for a Panama Canal, the likelihood of a Panamanian Revolution, and the advisability of U.S. intervention to win Panamanian independence from Colombia and thereby secure the right to build an American-controlled Panama Canal. Within months of this conversation, the intervention took place.

In 1905 TR agreed to mediate an end to the Russo-Japanese War. As negotiations regarding the war stalled, delegates at the conference site in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, hastened to consult the president. It was from TR's library that his effective use of diplomacy, by telephone and telegraph, broke the impasse and gained agreement on terms for a peace treaty.

It was in the library also that TR met many times with Gifford Pinchot, one of the fathers of modern environmentalism, as together they charted out their campaign for the conservation of America's natural resources. TR also announced from Sagamore Hill his controversial support for the spelling reform movement's campaign to simplify and remove British spellings (e.g., "labour," "colour") from American usage. Although TR did most of his work as president in Washington, D.C., he did in fact change the course of American and world history when he came home to Oyster Bay.[6]

In 1909, following the end of his presidency, Roosevelt returned to Sagamore Hill for a decade of work as a writer and political prophet. Activists and reformers found TR increasingly congenial company in the years when he moved left politically and worked for progressive causes far more radical than those he had advocated as president. Sagamore Hill served as the vital political center for the Bull Moose party as it chose its strategies for the election of 1912 and when in 1913-14 it engaged in building the Progressive National Service. Bull Moosers such as Pinchot and Frances Kellor made frequent visits to talk over reform ideas with TR.

---

[6] See Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt,* for peace treaty 282-286, spelling reforms 318.

In his post-presidential years, TR still held a good deal of influence over public opinion. He was voted the most popular man in America in a magazine poll in 1913, and late in life received between 4,000 and 5,000 letters a week.[7] To the end of his life he used his pen to argue for conservation and the minimum wage, and even planned from Sagamore Hill yet another run for the White House, aimed for 1920.

Sagamore Hill also played an important role in women's history. The 1912 election, especially its Bull Moose campaign, is today interpreted as a watershed moment when the women's political network, which had been so influential in municipal reforms, joined party politics. Bull Moose women, including TR's daughter Ethel (later Mrs. Richard Derby), helped raise money for the Progressive Party, and she and donors such as Anne Morgan and Dorothy Whitney Straight sat with TR in the North Room and talked with him about the future role of women in politics. TR became an active suffrage campaigner during the fight for New York State suffrage in 1917. He and Edith welcomed hundreds of suffragists at a rally at Sagamore Hill that year. (In those years, as he had during his presidency, TR typically spoke to large groups such as the suffragists from the veranda, and met with delegations in the North Room and with individuals in the library.)[8]

In November 1917, women won the vote in New York after a struggle which suffrage leaders referred to as the "Gettysburg" of the suffrage movement. Yet national suffrage continued to be an uphill fight. After Alice Paul came to see TR at Sagamore Hill to discuss ways to force the reluctant President Wilson to support suffrage, she and other suffrage strategists picketed the White House on behalf of the national suffrage amendment, called the Anthony Amendment.

Other women leaders saw Sagamore Hill as a strategic center for envisioning how to gain more clout within the two-party system. Over lunch in 1917 in Sagamore Hill's dining room, Cornelia Bryce Pinchot urged TR to pressure the Republican Party to appoint women to state party committees, which he did.

During World War I Sagamore Hill drew frequent visitors and press attention as the home of a key preparedness movement leader, one of President Wilson's loudest critics, and the emerging leader of the Republican opposition—all TR. From Sagamore Hill TR wrote speeches and articles advocating preparedness and welcomed organizers of the preparedness movement. After America entered the war, he urged active participation and planned the ill-fated Roosevelt Division of volunteer soldiers during meetings in his library and the North Room. He and Edith held receptions on the veranda for the local doughboys being trained on Long Island before they went overseas. TR's searing editorials for the *Kansas City Star* pummeled the Wilson administration and kept the ex-president in the news. He held important

---

[7] Kathleen Dalton, "Why America Loved Teddy Roosevelt: Or Charisma is in the Eyes of the Beholders," in Robert J. Brugger, ed., *Our Selves/Our Past: Psychological Approaches to American History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981); see also Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt,* 647.

[8] Ethel Roosevelt Derby to Richard Derby, Dec. 22, 1917, and in her diary, Dec. 28, 1917, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard University (hereafter TRC-HU).

political meetings in his library and planned Republican strategy for unseating Democratic legislators in 1918.

Throughout TR's residence at Sagamore Hill, Oyster Bay's proximity to New York City increased the flow of visitors. Roosevelt's habit of inviting old friends and new acquaintances to visit his home meant that journalists, reformers, and politicians (including President Howard Taft), and dignitaries from around the world made their way to Oyster Bay. Many famous intellectuals called on him, such as artist Frederic Remington; novelists Edith Wharton and Owen Wister; British playwright James M. Barrie, creator of Peter Pan; and Edna Ferber, author of *Showboat* and *Giant.* Pugilist John L. Sullivan also came to see TR, but Mrs. Roosevelt did not invite him to stay overnight because he was known to have a sordid personal life. TR was excited in September 1907 that America's honored writer and humorist Mark Twain was to visit, but evidently their plans fell through.[9] Because so many important encounters happened at Sagamore Hill a cartoonist joked that "All Roads Lead to Oyster Bay."[10]

Sagamore Hill is also historically significant because it was TR's favorite haven for his writing career. There he wrote *Gouverneur Morris,* much of the four volumes of *The Winning of the West, Rough Riders,* most of *Oliver Cromwell,* his *Autobiography,* the final version of *Through the Brazilian Wilderness,* and his share of the children's book he coauthored with Henry Cabot Lodge, *Hero Tales from American History.* He also wrote many editorials and essays for the *Outlook* and *Metropolitan* magazines, among other publications, in the Gun Room and the library of Sagamore Hill. The author of thirty-five books and innumerable magazine articles, Theodore Roosevelt was the most prolific presidential author. Along with Thomas Jefferson, he was a man who would be remembered for his writings even if he had not been president.

Today, though Roosevelt is not judged among the great scholarly historians, he is understood as a significant popular historian of the gentleman-amateur school, broadly knowledgeable and boldly interpretive, though little inclined to do original research. As a historian he was a fierce nationalist and defended expansionism and justified the conquest of the West, while deploring the selfish motives of slave-owners and advocates of Manifest Destiny when their land hunger provoked the Mexican War. Controversial as TR's writings might be in modern times, his prolific output certainly stands as an inducement for a visit to Sagamore Hill.

---

[9] TR wrote magazine editor Albert Shaw that Twain was expected at Sagamore Hill in mid-September, Sept. 3, 1907, Morison Rejects,[letters not included in *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt,* ed. by Elting Morison, *et al.* SH-NPS] TRC-HU; Twain visited TR in the White House several times.

[10] Kathleen Dalton, "Famous Visitors to Sagamore Hill," public lecture at Sagamore Hill National Historic Site sponsored by the Friends of Sagamore Hill and the Theodore Roosevelt Association, May 27, 2001. The list of visitors to Sagamore Hill in the Guest Book, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site Archives is incomplete, but useful as a research tool, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Oyster Bay, New York. (hereafter SAHI NHS Archives).

The Summer White House

H. W. Brands

Theodore Roosevelt wasn't the first president to spend summers away from the White House. Since the American capital had moved to marshy and malarial Washington at the beginning of the nineteenth century, presidents, members of Congress, and other federal officials had evacuated the city during the summer to the extent their jobs and public sentiment allowed. In fact, the nature of government during the nineteenth century allowed for extended slow periods during the summer. When Americans looked to government during that era, they typically looked to state and local governments; the federal government dealt chiefly with matters of foreign and military policy, which had never required more than intermittent attention. Consequently, when Andrew Jackson spent summers at the Hermitage outside Nashville, or Grover Cleveland vacationed at Buzzards Bay, or William McKinley returned to his home in Canton, Ohio, the federal government scarcely skipped a beat.

Things changed, however, at the very end of the nineteenth century. The Spanish-American War made the United States into an imperial power with direct interests that spanned the Pacific and the Caribbean, and indirect stakes in the imperial contests of Europe. As commander-in-chief and America's foremost diplomat, the president found himself on call year-round. Leisurely summers away from the office were no longer feasible; even if they had been feasible, they might not have been politically defensible.

The new conditions would have affected any president, but the fact that Theodore Roosevelt took office in 1901 gave them added bite. Roosevelt grasped the levers of power with an enthusiasm that shocked his more staid fellow citizens. Having been one of the minority agitating for war with Spain and the acquisition of empire, Roosevelt eagerly embraced the opportunity to practice statecraft year-round. War and revolution were no respecters of August, and so neither was Roosevelt.

Moreover, Roosevelt adopted an attitude toward domestic governance that

rivaled his activist thinking on foreign affairs. The first progressive president, Roosevelt believed that the federal government must be far more alert than previously to the imbalances that had developed between the private sphere of capitalism and the public sphere of democracy, and far more vigilant in defense of the rights of the American people. Monopoly—"trusts," to use the contemporary term—never slept, and therefore neither could those charged with protecting the people from its ravages. Congress might still take summers off, but the chief executive, the sole American official elected by the people of every state, must not.

In consequence, the presidency became, under Roosevelt, a full-time job. Yet Roosevelt, who had grown used to lengthy summer holidays during his privileged youth, and who had come to consider time spent in the out-of-doors essential to mental, physical, and moral health, couldn't imagine chaining himself to a desk in the White House at Washington. Furthermore, as a devoted family man with six children almost as hyperactive as himself, he couldn't in conscience deny them the kind of summer opportunities he had experienced as a boy in various rural and coastal locales outside New York City. During the decade before Roosevelt became president, the Roosevelt clan had gotten used to summers at Sagamore Hill. Roosevelt couldn't see depriving himself or the rest of his family of their summers by the sea merely because he was now responsible for the welfare of the nation.[1]

The Technology of Keeping in Touch

As it happened, the same years that saw the expansion of American interests and responsibilities witnessed important changes in the technology of communication. This wasn't entirely a coincidence: the communication revolution was a principal factor in the American decision to expand outward. But the elaboration of the telegraph system and the introduction of telephones made instant communication cheaper and far more widespread than before. A president located anywhere in America—in Oyster Bay, for instance—could maintain voice contact with the rest of the executive branch at Washington. Summers had often been a time for presidents to travel about the country to encourage supporters and intimidate opponents in the several states; now a president could accomplish much of that labor by phone. The laying of undersea cables put the president in contact with American ambassadors and military attachés at the ends of the earth. Though the primary lines of communication came together at the State, War, and Navy Departments in Washington, it was an easy matter to relay the messages those departments received to wherever the president happened to be.

---

[1] On Roosevelt's career and presidency, see H. W. Brands, *TR: The Last Romantic* (New York: Basic Books, 1997); Lewis L. Gould, *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991); Edmund Morris, *Theodore Rex* (New York: Random House, 2001). Warren Zimmerman, *First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), explains how Roosevelt and his generation remade American diplomacy and the American presidency.

Better than every president before him and nearly all since, Roosevelt understood and appreciated the symbiosis between the presidency and the press (the singular medium that would pluralize to media with the introduction of radio and television). He realized what a great story he was and how the press allowed him to reach the public at large over the head of his party, which had always viewed him with skepticism tending toward suspicion. Had his summer relocations taken him out of the spotlight, he might well have reconsidered the whole issue, or at least shortened his holidays. But the same advances in communication that allowed him to keep his finger on the pulse of the world allowed reporters to file their stories from the most out-of-the-way locales, including the Western Union office in downtown Oyster Bay, and allowed their publishers to hasten their filings into print in every city in the country for the next edition.[2]

The White House Comes to Sagamore Hill

Roosevelt's first summer as president began for him on July 5, 1902. He arrived in Oyster Bay after commemorating Independence Day in Pittsburgh, where he spoke in favor of strengthened antitrust laws. The president's special train was greeted by his three eldest children, who had come to Oyster Bay earlier with their mother, and hundreds of residents and tourists who braved a thunderstorm to welcome the village's favorite son. Accompanying Roosevelt were George Cortelyou, the president's secretary; and two stenographers. Two New York detectives, two members of the recently formed Secret Service, and two Post Office inspectors followed the president's entourage the three miles from the Oyster Bay station to Sagamore Hill.

The next day being Sunday, the president returned to the village to attend services at Christ Episcopal Church. Secretary Cortelyou took the opportunity to brief reporters on the nature and expected extent of the president's vacation and on the effects his presence might have on Oyster Bay. "The President has planned to make his holiday as brief as possible and get all the rest he can and freedom from the burden of public affairs," Cortelyou said. "To that end he will transact in Oyster Bay only the most immediately pressing business. Everything else will be transmitted to Washington for attention there, either by the regular White House force, or, in cases where other action is required, by the various departments... .The President will not receive delegations, and hopes to have all matters intended for him, not of the most pressing importance, submitted by correspondence." As for the impact on Oyster Bay: "There will be no elaborate office established, and the only clerical force will consist of two stenographers."[3]

---

[2] Although focused on European imperialism, Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), has much to say about the revolution in communications technology.

[3] *New York Times*, July 7, 1902, quoted in Sherwin Gluck, *TR's Summer White House: Oyster Bay* (Oyster Bay, N.Y.: Sherwin Gluck Publisher, [privately printed], 1999), 25. Though difficult to find,

During the following week Cortelyou oversaw the establishment of what reporters were soon calling the "Executive Branch of the Oyster Bay 'White House,'" in a small suite of offices on the second floor of the Oyster Bay Bank Building. The correspondent covering the story for the *New York Times* couldn't help remarking, "In addition to the bank's offices there are two dentists, of whom the President might make a choice if his teeth should need attention. In the basement there is a poolroom, where Mr. Roosevelt could play, if he chose, at the rate of 2 1/2 cents a cue. Next door there is a saloon." The suite initially consisted of two rooms, one measuring 10 feet by 12 feet, the other six by eight. These were shortly furnished with five ordinary telegraph wires and a quadruplex.[4]

Roosevelt established a summer routine during his first week at Sagamore Hill. He would breakfast with the family in the dining room, then retire to the library at the front of the house to meet with Cortelyou, who brought the latest cables and other dispatches. The president would read the messages, dictate replies (to one or both of the stenographers), sign commissions of army and navy officers and appointments of postmasters, and conduct whatever other business required his attention. If the work went quickly he would steal away before lunch for a hike or horseback ride; otherwise his recreation would await the afternoon, which was typically spent with his children and often some of their cousins. When the president deemed the day's work done, Cortelyou and the office staff would return to the village, where Cortelyou would brief reporters, the president's messages would be sent to Washington and their other destinations, and Cortelyou and staff would prepare for the next day's audience.

Although Cortelyou managed to enforce the rule of no delegations (a rule dictated as much by the lack of accommodations in Oyster Bay for groups as by the president's desire for privacy), he couldn't keep individuals from calling less formally. More to the point, he couldn't keep the president from inviting the calls. Within days of Roosevelt's arrival, Cortelyou told the press that members of the Cabinet had been invited to Sagamore Hill. Members of Congress soon began arriving as well, along with candidates for federal judgeships, influential state officials, visiting foreign dignitaries, and others who engaged the president's attention or curiosity.[5]

Gluck's compilation of newspaper articles provides a wealth of information about Roosevelt's presidential summers. More anecdotal but also more comprehensive is Hermann Hagedorn, *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill* (New York: Macmillan, 1954). Beyond these two works, readers interested in the operation of the summer White House and in life at Sagamore Hill should look to the accounts of Roosevelt's presidency cited above; to Joseph Bucklin Bishop, *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time*, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919-20); to Sylvia Jukes Morris, *Edith Kermit Roosevelt: Portrait of a First Lady* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1980); and to Elting E. Morison and John M. Blum, eds., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 8 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951-54). Except where indicated, the Roosevelt letters cited below are from this collection, which is organized by date.

[4] *New York Times*, July 8, 1902, quoted in Gluck, *TR's Summer White House*, 26.

[5] Visitations to Sagamore Hill can be followed in the daily chronologies at the back of volumes 4 and 6 of Morison and Blum, *Letters*.

Invited guests were cleared by Cortelyou's Oyster Bay office and their names were forwarded to the Secret Service agents stationed at the top of the drive from the village to Sagamore Hill. Uninvited guests were turned away; those who persisted were referred to Cortelyou's office, where they were usually informed that the president was too busy to see them, but occasionally talked their way onto the list of invited guests.

Roosevelt's idea that first summer had been to live much as he had lived during summers before he became president. This became impossible, partly as a result of circumstance and partly from Roosevelt's personality. He had the run of Sagamore Hill and the surrounding hills, forests, beaches, and waterways, and in these precincts he was rarely bothered by his Secret Service guards, who largely confined themselves to keeping unauthorized persons off the grounds and away from the president. But when he went into the village, where the close approach of strangers could not be avoided, his guards became his shadows, casting an unavoidable and often uncomfortable aura around his interactions with his neighbors. He discovered that he couldn't attend church without causing a sensation. He felt obliged to issue orders through Cortelyou to the effect that photographers would not be allowed near Christ Church, and that crowds of onlookers would not be allowed to gather for his arrival and departure.

Nor did the church itself provide much sanctuary. As the anniversary of McKinley's September 1901 assassination approached, Roosevelt indicated that a sermon commemorating the life of his predecessor would be appropriate and appreciated. Instead the rector dwelt on the life and accomplishments of Roosevelt himself, urged the president to attack the trusts, and wondered aloud whether the assassination of McKinley wasn't God's way of bringing the American equivalent of the biblical David to power in Washington.

Roosevelt's reaction was visible even to the reporters who saw him afterward. "President Roosevelt attended Christ Episcopal Church today," wrote one, "and at the conclusion of the services left with angry eyes blazing through his spectacles. Few persons have ever seen the President quite as enraged and at the same time self-controlled. He was filled with rage like a man abused by a woman, who is too much of a man to hurt or harm her, and has to be content with compressing and controlling his anger between his set teeth."[6]

In time, however, Roosevelt came to terms with the reality that things were different now that he was president. Oyster Bay and Sagamore Hill could not be the retreats from the world they had been before 1901, but were—at least whenever the president was there—very much a part of the larger world. Sagamore Hill might be called the "summer White House," but the emphasis in that phrase was clearly on the last two words.

A public reception for the people of Nassau County, hosted by the president and Mrs. Roosevelt on the grounds of Sagamore Hill, demonstrated the degree to which Roosevelt acknowledged and adapted to the new reality. Quite unlike anything the Roosevelts had hosted at Sagamore Hill before, the September 15 reception was, in fact, a late-summer version of the

---

[6] *New York Times*, Sept. 15, 1902, quoted in Gluck, *TR's Summer White House*, 51.

receptions the Roosevelts held at the White House in Washington each New Year's Day. The guests came by special train, by stage, by wagon, by horse, by bicycle, and on foot, and began lining up at the entrance to the grounds long before the scheduled 3 o'clock commencement of the affair. When some of the large group of police detectives who augmented the Secret Service that day reported that the visitors were clogging the roads in the vicinity while waiting to get in, Roosevelt told them to throw open the gates and let the crowd in early. Eight thousand guests drank lemonade, ate cookies, and shook the president's hand. The afternoon was a trial for the Secret Service agents and the detectives, who circulated among the crowd and scrutinized the receiving line with unrelenting care, and who were assisted in this latter task by the president's eldest son, Ted. But the president enjoyed himself immensely, and judged—accurately, no doubt—that most of those who walked away with a souvenir cup would vote Republican at the next presidential election.

Reporting the Summer Presidency

Almost no one who had experienced Washington summers in those pre-air-conditioned days begrudged the president his time at Sagamore Hill. Congress took summers off (unless the president called a special session, as Roosevelt did on occasion); the Supreme Court took summers off. In fairness, the president should have his holiday.

Yet the reporters who had to cover the summer White House were hardly happy with the arrangements there. Many considered Oyster Bay far more of a hardship post than summertime Washington. "Its roads are muddy or sandy, according to the weather," wrote a Boston reporter. "Its sidewalks are few and hard to find; it has but one public house, and that contains but nine rooms for the use of travelers; there is not a decent restaurant in the place. There are many one-horse towns on Long Island, but it is doubtful if there is another as uninteresting as Oyster Bay."[7]

Beyond this, the circumstances of reporting on Sagamore Hill made the correspondents' task more difficult than in Washington. In Washington, with the White House literally a stone's throw from busy thoroughfares, monitoring the comings and goings at the president's house was relatively easy; at Oyster Bay, with the president ensconced on his hilltop, that crucial part of the job was harder. At Washington, reporters entered the White House itself for their briefings by Cortelyou; here Cortelyou kept them three miles from the president's living quarters. Favored reporters—Joseph Bishop, Herman Kohlsaat, Jacob Riis—were occasionally invited to Sagamore Hill, which made their un-favored peers the more envious, and the editors of the un-favored correspondents the more anxious for something to print. It also increased Roosevelt's leverage with the press in that reporters who wrote nice things about him might hope for an invitation, while those who criticized would be left forever in the dark.

Camped out in Oyster Bay and desperate for stories, reporters resorted to

---

[7] *Boston Herald* quoted in Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family,* 143.

following the Roosevelt children and quizzing the neighbors. When Archie rode into town on the pony Algonquin, reporters wrote it up. After Roosevelt returned from an overnight jaunt with some of the children, reporters cornered a local who had met him coming home. (The fellow got a laugh, and a couple of column-inches, by relating how he had asked the president, "Been out all night with the boys?") After several of the children participated in a village field-day, with Ted demonstrating his prowess with pistols, a reporter summarized, "Altogether it was a rip-roaring event from the standpoint of this sedate place."[8]

Roosevelt recognized that he couldn't control everything the press wrote about him and his family, but he wished the fourth estate would show simple respect. The *New York Sun* habitually crossed the line, in the president's view, prompting him to write the paper's editor. "I do not know that there is much harm in the stories," Roosevelt conceded to Paul Dana, but he suggested they hardly warranted space in any decent paper. "They are not proper stories to be told about the President or members of his family." Roosevelt spoke to Dana as one man to another: "The plain truth, of course, is that I am living here with my wife and children just exactly as you are at your home; and there is no more material for a story in the one case than in the other."[9]

Even papers disposed to respect the Roosevelt family's privacy couldn't resist registering bemusement at the president's unusual ideas regarding relaxation. The *Chicago Tribune* ran a series of sketches under the heading, "The President is resting at his home at Oyster Bay." The sequential panels showed how "He first chops down a few trees," "Then has a little canter cross country," "After which he takes a brisk stroll of twenty miles," "He then gives the children a wheelbarrow ride," "And rests a moment or two [in this picture Roosevelt is swinging wildly on a hammock]." The final panel delivered the punch line: "By which time he is ready for breakfast." On another occasion the same paper described Roosevelt's week at Sagamore Hill under the head "Our versatile President and his summer friends": "Monday: He entertains the champion tennis player"; "Tuesday: He entertains some old Rough Rider comrades"; "Wednesday: He entertains some fellow LL.Ds"; "Thursday: He entertains a couple of old-time hunter friends"; "Friday: He entertains a few fellow politicians"; "Saturday: He entertains some brother historians and authors." The *New York World,* upon learning that the president had ridden to the house of his uncle, Robert Barnwell Roosevelt, on Long Island's south shore, 35 miles from Sagamore Hill, remarked wryly: "Now that the President has proved by actual experience that the trip from Oyster Bay to Sayville and back can be made on horseback, with what new discovery will he next thrill a waiting nation?"[10]

---

[8] Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family,* 154-55.

[9] Theodore Roosevelt to Paul Dana, quoted in Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family*, 156.

[10] *Chicago Tribune* and *New York World* quoted in Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family*, 172, 180, 235.

Securing the Premises

While reporters were trying to get close to Sagamore Hill, the president's security detail was trying to keep people away. Given the circumstances of his accession to the presidency—upon McKinley's assassination—it was only natural for the Secret Service to take particular precautions for the president's safety. Roosevelt wasn't the most cooperative client. He adopted a rather fatalistic view of his situation, reckoning that if anyone were willing to trade his life for the president's there was little that could be done to stop him. Roosevelt frequently carried a pistol, but he appreciated that in a crowd—such as those that came to Sagamore Hill—he'd never be able to defend himself against a determined assassin.

The Secret Service, however, took no such fatalistic view and from the first its officers determined to defend the president's life, with their own lives if necessary. Agents based for the summer in the village were assigned rotating shifts at Sagamore Hill. (How many were on duty at a given time varied according to circumstances and was, for obvious reasons, kept confidential.) During the day and at other times when traffic up the road could be anticipated, a guard monitored the entrance and checked identities against a list of expected visitors. At deliberately irregular intervals agents roamed the perimeter and the rest of the property. The house itself was guarded around the clock.

The security proved advisable from the start. Early the first summer a powerful-looking man came up the road demanding to see the president. With some difficulty the guard managed to shoo him away, but only after surmising that he wasn't quite right in the head. It turned out that the man had been a priest and had been defrocked for some crime or sin; in his anger he hoped Roosevelt could make his situation right.

A more alarming incident occurred during the second White House summer at Sagamore Hill. In this case the intruder came armed and got into a fight with the guard who refused to let him pass, even though—or especially because—he said he was supposed to marry Alice. The noise caused Roosevelt to do exactly the wrong thing; the president appeared at the door of the house, silhouetted by the light at his back, a perfect target for an assassin, as this man was trying to be. "I wanted to kill him," the man admitted afterward. "I had my shooting-iron ready." And so he did: a 32-caliber, pearl-handled revolver. Roosevelt typically made light of the incident. Returning inside, he told Edith that the noise was simply the Secret Service dealing with a drunk. Later, when it was suggested that the man was unbalanced, the president remarked mischievously: "Of course he's insane. He wants to marry Alice."[11]

Roosevelt occasionally slipped his security leash, leaving the Secret Service wondering where he had gone and if he had been kidnapped. But he ultimately came to terms with this infringement on his freedom. "The secret service men are a very small but very necessary thorn in the flesh," he wrote Henry Cabot Lodge. "Of course they would not be the least use in preventing any assault on my life." But they did help keep the

---

[11]Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family,* 181-82; Brands, *TR,* 558.

unwanted away—"as you would realize if you saw the procession of carriages that pass through the place, the procession of people on foot who try to get into the place, not to speak of the multitude of cranks and others who are stopped in the village."[12]

Improvements and Upgrades: Oyster Bay

The president's second summer at Sagamore Hill began earlier than his first. Indeed, the advance work for Roosevelt's return commenced in May 1903. The *Brooklyn Standard Union* described the activities even as it reflected on their meaning:

> Preparations are now going actively forward for the transfer of the Presidential offices from Washington to the "summer capital," at Oyster Bay, L.I. This movement bodily of the working equipment of the executive office of the Nation to the retreat chosen by the Chief Magistrate as the scene of his vacation is an innovation introduced by President Roosevelt. Other Presidents, notably McKinley, were wont, in their day, to indulge in long vacation absences from the seat of government, but for the most part they contented themselves under such circumstances with a single secretary and stenographer, leaving the remainder of the executive office force at the White House, through which indeed most of the public business was transacted.
>
> However, the increase in the scope of governmental affairs, now that Uncle Sam has become a world power, renders impossible a continuance of this simple plan. It has remained for the resourceful Mr. Roosevelt to meet the exigencies of the new condition by virtually removing the White House offices to the little village on the north shore of Long Island during the summer months. According to present plans, the White House staff will be doing business at the new stand by July 1, and it is unlikely that the Presidential business will move back to the city on the Potomac earlier than Oct. 1.[13]

As the Brooklyn paper intimated, the White House operation was more extensive the second summer than the first, and to accommodate the larger operation it secured larger quarters. Moore's Building had just opened at the northeast corner of Main and South Streets in Oyster Bay, on the site where the landlord, James Moore, had owned a grocery store for some years. The new structure, a two-and-a-half story brick building in the Queen Anne style, featured a mansard roof and a peaked tower that commanded Oyster Bay's busiest intersection. James

---

[12] TR to Henry Cabot Lodge, August 6, 1906, in Joseph Bucklin Bishop, *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time*, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919-20), 2:22.

[13] *Brooklyn Standard Union*, May 1903, quoted in Gluck, *TR's Summer White House*, 55.

Moore had moved his store into the new building's first floor during the spring of 1902, but a year later the second floor remained underutilized. William Loeb, Jr., who had been Roosevelt's personal secretary as vice president and then assistant to George Cortelyou, had been promoted to presidential secretary when Cortelyou was named secretary of the new Department of Labor and Commerce; it was he who arranged the lease of space in Moore's Building for the expanded White House summer operation. For the remaining summers of Roosevelt's presidency, Moore's Building served as the home away from home of the executive office of the president.

Though larger than the previous accommodations, the new digs were hardly elaborate. A reporter for the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* toured the facilities and rendered them for readers in Ohio:

> The presidential offices "over the corner feed store opposite the dry goods store and just below that saloon," as one Oyster Bayan describes them, are neat and clean but not ornate. There are a half dozen small rooms with a large array of windows. The reception parlor into which visitors are ushered is not arrayed with a view to the encouragement of large delegations. It is ten by twelve feet in size, has bare floors, and white finished walls. An electric bulb hangs pendant from the center of the ceiling. There are two windows and one door. The furniture consists of: one split bottomed chair, one rocking chair, a steam radiator, a pile of newspapers in the corner. The other rooms have rugs, desks, typewriting machines. There are no pictures on the walls and no books except a shelf of reference works over the secretary's desk.[14]

Besides offering more space, the new facilities boasted better communications technology. A direct, dedicated telegraph line linked the Moore's Building offices to the White House, as did a similar telephone line. As had been true of the Oyster Bay Bank Building offices, a telephone line linked the new offices to Sagamore Hill. Besides assuring Loeb and his assistants secure and instant access to the capital, the lines to Washington allowed the State, War, and Navy Departments to share the latest intelligence from around the globe. As a reporter who toured the facility explained, "The telephone office is never closed night or day, and by means of the direct wires to Oyster Bay it will be possible to promptly inform the Chief Executive of any new event which might threaten to disturb the peace of the world." The new facilities also enabled the president to hold long-distance Cabinet meetings with the department secretaries back in Washington, although he apparently never availed himself of this opportunity.[15]

---

[14] *Cleveland Plain Dealer,* Aug. 9, 1903, quoted in Gluck, *TR's Summer White House*, 90.

[15] *Brooklyn Standard Union,* May 1903, quoted in Gluck, *TR's Summer White House*, 56.

In fact, Roosevelt rarely set foot in the Moore's Building offices. Rather, he communicated with the outside world almost exclusively through Loeb, and he almost always talked to Loeb face-to-face. Roosevelt never liked telephones; as a result the line between Moore's Building and Sagamore Hill was used by the Secret Service far more than by the president.

Cortelyou's initial announcement in 1902 had given the impression that the president would not be conducting much business while at Sagamore Hill, but by the second summer the procession of visitors to the president's summer home looked very much like the processions of visitors to the White House in Washington—except that many of the Sagamore Hill guests looked tired and annoyed from having had to travel so far to find the president. On one day—July 7, 1903—Roosevelt greeted Secretary of State John Hay, Senator Marcus Hanna of Ohio, Senator Charles Fairbanks of Indiana (who would later become Roosevelt's vice president), and Senator Thomas Kearns of Utah. On July 22 of the same year the Sagamore Hill guest list included Senator Thomas C. Platt of New York (Roosevelt's old sponsor and sparring partner from his days as governor), Congressman Joseph Cannon of Illinois (who was about to become Speaker of the House), Governor Richard Yates of Illinois, Republican gubernatorial candidate Morris Belknap of Kentucky, and Ambassador (to Germany) Charlemagne Tower. On August 14 the president hosted Treasury Secretary Leslie Shaw, Interior Secretary Ethan Hitchcock, and Senator Shelby Cullom of Illinois.[16]

Somewhat more in keeping with the holiday motif, but no less serious, were the president's outings on Long Island Sound to observe various naval exercises. In August 1903 the U.S. North Atlantic Fleet steamed into Long Island Sound and anchored off Lloyd's Neck Point, not far from Sagamore Hill. From the piazza of his house, Roosevelt could easily observe the four long lines of vessels, each stretching two miles from east to west, but for the formal review he went aboard the presidential yacht *Mayflower,* itself a converted warship, and cruised up and down the lines, greeting the captains of the ships and acknowledging the salutes from the vessels' guns. "It required two hours for the President to complete his round of visits," a reporter covering the exercise explained, "and at the end of his tour every ship in the fleet except the destroyers had saluted him twenty-one times, a total of 6,300 guns."[17]

The Sagamore Hill summer of 1904 was shorter than the previous ones on account of the election that year. The highlight of the season was Roosevelt's nomination for president by the Republican Party. The decision for Roosevelt was pro forma. "Barring a cataclysm I shall be nominated," the president predicted to his second son, Kermit, the day before the convention gathered. "There is a great deal of sullen grumbling, but it has taken more the form of resentment against what they think is my dictation as to details than against me personally. They don't dare to oppose me for the nomination."[18] Yet the candidate, even if he happened to be president of

---

[16] Morison and Blum, *Letters,* 4:1359-61.

[17] *New York Times,* Aug. 18, 1903, quoted in Gluck, *TR's Summer White House,* 97.

[18] TR to Kermit Roosevelt, June 21, 1904.

the United States, was required by custom to await patiently the outcome of the deliberations. Roosevelt filled his time with his usual outdoor exploits. On the Fourth of July, Gifford Pinchot joined the president and Mrs. Roosevelt for an all-day picnic in a rowboat. Later that month Roosevelt led his gang of boys on a tramp. Writing to James R. Garfield, the son of the former president and a man who shared Roosevelt's tastes in recreation (Roosevelt would name him secretary of the interior), the president described the adventure:

> Our imitation of your point-to-point walk went off splendidly. I had six boys with me, including all of my own except Quentin. We swam the millpond (which proved to be very broad and covered with duckweed) in great shape, with our clothes on; executed an equally long but easier swim in the bay, with our clothes on; and between times had gone in a straight line through the woods, through the marshes, and up and down the bluffs... I did not look exactly presidential when I got back from the walk.

In a postscript, Roosevelt added the denouement: "Last night I spent camping with Kermit, Archie and two of their friends. We went in two rowboats, and camped eight or ten miles off down the sound. I fried beefsteak and chicken, and Kermit potatoes; we all decided that the cooking was excellent and the trip a success."[19]

On July 27 Roosevelt received the Republican delegation that officially notified him of his nomination. More than fifty leaders of the G.O.P. trekked to Oyster Bay and up Sagamore Hill; the president, in formal dress and accompanied by Edith and the children, greeted the guests on the piazza. Speaker Cannon delivered a speech of notification which largely reiterated the party platform. Roosevelt responded with a longer speech of his own, endorsing the same themes, congratulating his administration on its past performance, and predicting similar success in a second term. Following the speeches, the guests found shade under the trees scattered about the lawn and the Roosevelt children served lemonade and ice cream.

Improvements and Upgrades: The North Room

T

The experiment of making a summer White House of Sagamore Hill proved so successful that the Roosevelts soon considered expanding the place. The constant stream of visitors strained the capacity of the house on the hill; equally to the point, as the world discovered that this president, unlike most of his predecessors, didn't take summers off, Sagamore Hill increasingly had to stand in for the real White House in affairs of state.

The prime mover in the decision to expand appears to have been Edith. Theodore didn't mind greeting visitors in his rumpled vacation clothes and he probably would have been happy to continue receiving them in his modest library by the front door. But Edith, who had just finished

---

[19]TR to James R. Garfield, July 13, 1904.

renovating the White House at Washington, had firmer notions of etiquette and wanted to put a better foot forward. The Washington renovations had included construction of the West Wing, which housed the offices of the president's staff, and had freed up space in the main building for formal receptions and the like. In Oyster Bay, Moore's Building functioned as the local equivalent of the West Wing, but nothing was the equivalent of the Main Hall or East Room of the White House. Because the Sagamore Hill addition would be paid for with their own money (taxpayers funded the changes at the White House in Washington), Theodore and Edith waited to go ahead until after his 1904 reelection, which guaranteed that Sagamore Hill would be the summer White House for four more years. They engaged architect and friend C. Grant La Farge to design a room to be added to the north side of the house, one grand enough for the most distinguished guests yet not so formal as to upset the domestic ambience of the rest of the house. (It also had to be big enough to accommodate most of Roosevelt's game trophies, which Edith wanted to move out of the hall and dining room.)

Theodore and Edith had specific ideas about the annex. "About the windows," Roosevelt wrote La Farge in January 1905, "we do not want transoms or windows that open in or out. We want windows that open up and down with outside blinds." La Farge had suggested a skylight. "We are a little doubtful as to whether the skylight is advisable. It might be more care than it was worth." On the other hand, they liked the fireplace La Farge had sketched, and offered only minor revisions. "Would having the four pillars and the wood back of them, and the wood above the fireplace, of handsome wood look incongruous? We love your plan with the bay windows and with the pillars as a feature, and the big fireplace."[20]

The work was done during the spring of 1905 and by the time the family arrived for that summer their old house had grown considerably. Roosevelt was quite pleased with the change. "You cannot imagine how delighted I am with the new room," he wrote La Farge. "Really I like it better than any room in the White House, which, as you know, is my standard of splendor." To Henry Cabot Lodge he declared, "I am thoroughly enjoying Oyster Bay, and I want to show you the north room, which Grant La Farge made. We think it delightful."[21]

Home vs. Office

The addition of the North Room—which, aside from the installation of the telephone, was the primary structural concession to the president's official duties—solved some of the problems of running the White House out of a family home, but not all. Between the North Room, where Roosevelt hosted small gatherings of his most distinguished guests, and the piazza, where he received the larger crowds he couldn't or wouldn't invite indoors, the

---

[20] TR to Christopher Grant La Farge, January 27, 1905.

[21] TR to Henry Cabot Lodge, July 18, 1905, quoted in Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family*, 233.

expanded house met most of the president's needs for greeting guests. As per his practice in Washington, he regularly invited eclectic groups to lunch, served around the large table in the dining room. At such meals the conversation would range over history and art and literature and politics and biology and diplomacy, with Roosevelt serving as linchpin while the guests contributed their expertise. Afterward the group would adjourn to the piazza if the weather was nice, or the library or the North Room if it wasn't. "In one afternoon," Archie Roosevelt recalled of his father in those days, "I have heard him speak to the foremost Bible student of the world, a prominent ornithologist, a diplomat and a French general, all of whom agreed that Father knew more about the subjects on which they had specialized than they did."[22]

Most guests left the same day they came, which was why lunch rather than dinner was the more public meal. As the accommodations in Oyster Bay were meager, and because New York City was but an hour's train ride away, visitors from a distance typically stayed in the city. Special guests were fetched from New York or the Connecticut shore by the presidential dispatch boat, the *Sylph,* and brought to one of the docks on Cove Neck; the well-heeled (J. P. Morgan, for instance) came on their own yachts.

Some visitors were invited to spend the night in the guest bedrooms on the second floor. These, most frequently, were personal friends of Theodore and Edith, people they had known since long before the presidency and who had visited Sagamore Hill before it became the summer White House. Henry Cabot Lodge, Owen Wister, Grant La Farge,
Hermann Speck von Sternberg, and Jacob Riis fell into this category. Now and then, visitors whose primary connection was political spent the night. Charles Fairbanks was one; James J. Wadsworth was another. An August 12, 1903, conference that included Senators Allison, Spooner, Platt, and Aldrich ran all night, making unexpected guests of the bunch. [23]

One special visitor was Baron Kentaro Kaneko, the Japanese foreign minister, who happened to be a Harvard classmate of Roosevelt's from the 1870s. The baron was in the country on business—in response to Roosevelt's offer to mediate an end to the Russo-Japanese War—but the Sagamore Hill visit was mostly personal. He hiked and swam with Roosevelt, and ate dinner with the president, Edith, and son Quentin. He and Roosevelt talked until eleven, at which point Roosevelt led Kaneko to his guest room by candlelight. "Where else in the world," Kaneko recalled later, "could a similar situation have occurred: a President leading his foreign visitor upstairs by the light of a tallow dip?"[24]

(Another Asian visitor was similarly impressed. The special envoy from China's dowager

---

[22] Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family*, 236.

[23] Chronologies in Morison and Blum, *Letters.*

[24] Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family,* 216.

empress declared that Sagamore Hill had excellent *feng shui,* "better feng shui indeed than any other house I have seen in America except Mount Vernon."[25]

Edith, as mistress of Sagamore Hill and First Lady, tolerated the political and diplomatic comings-and-goings. But to a greater degree than her husband she drew a distinction between the White House in Washington, which was the nation's house first and the Roosevelts' only by election, and Sagamore Hill, which was the family's house first and the nation's by invitation. She generally joined her husband for the luncheons with guests, letting the conversation flow around her, and then retired to her parlor across the hall.

On occasion, however, Edith refused entirely to take part. Grand Duke Boris Romanov of Russia, the brother of Czar Nicholas, was traveling in the United States during the summer of 1902 and indicated a desire to meet the president. The Russian ambassador conveyed the request, with a strong recommendation that the president invite the grand duke to Sagamore Hill. More than most second sons of royalty, Boris amused himself in dissipation, and he seemed to enjoy his reputation as a rake. Had Roosevelt been merely a private citizen he never would have let Boris anywhere near his house, but as president he was willing to put his personal moral code aside. Edith simply couldn't. At first she told Theodore that the grand lecher should never sully Sagamore Hill by his presence, that her house was *not* the White House, whatever function it served during summers. Finally, though, a diplomatic solution was discovered. She arranged to be invited to a neighbor's house on the day the grand duke was to visit Sagamore Hill; Roosevelt, without offering apology, let her absence speak for itself. Neither he nor she publicized what had happened, but when word leaked out the reaction was favorable. "As the mistress of the ordinary American home would not have been at home when the Grand Duke called," the *New York Sun* remarked, "the mass of them will learn with extreme gratification of the President's wife's absence from her board when Duke Boris shared it with her husband."[26]

Sagamore at Work: Ending the Russo-Japanese War

During the summer of 1905 the concept of a summer White House was put to its most serious test. Since early 1904, Japan and Russia had been at war, contesting for control of northeastern Asia. To the surprise of much of the world, the Japanese dealt their far larger foe a series of devastating—and humiliating—blows. Roosevelt admired Japan's prowess, if not necessarily its ethics (Japan had started the war unannounced, with a sneak attack on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur), and he thought the Russians had their setbacks coming. "For several years Russia has behaved very badly in the far East, her attitude toward all nations, including us,

---

[25] Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family* 237

[26] Hagedorn, *Roosevelt Family,* 165.

but especially toward Japan, being grossly overbearing," he told Ted. Yet as the war continued, Roosevelt worried that a completely victorious Japan might become as overbearing and badly-behaving as czarist Russia. His worry turned to alarm in May 1905 when, at the battle of Tsushima Strait, the Japanese annihilated a Russian fleet that had steamed all the way from the Baltic. Lest the balance of power in Asia be destroyed as thoroughly as the Russian fleet, Roosevelt quietly encouraged the two sides to begin peace negotiations.[27]

They expressed interest, but—to the president's dismay—said they wanted the negotiations to take place in the United States, at Washington. "I think it would be far better for them to meet at The Hague," Roosevelt told son Kermit. "I feel that if they meet here each side will expect me to do the impossible, whereas if they meet at The Hague, I may at some critical moment render unexpected and therefore valuable assistance." The Russians and Japanese insisted on America, but Roosevelt managed to deflect them a few hundred miles north of Washington, to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. As he and others in the administration explained, Washington was unbearable during the summer (especially for diplomats from northern countries such as Japan and Russia). More to the point, the president wouldn't even be at Washington during the summer, but instead at his summer home in Oyster Bay.[28]

The envoys from the two belligerents stopped at Sagamore Hill en route to Portsmouth. Japan's lead negotiator, Jutaro Komura, arrived first and confirmed Roosevelt's positive opinion of Japan's capabilities. "I have seen Baron Komura and am favorably impressed with him," the president wrote William Howard Taft, the secretary of war. Sergei Witte, Komura's Russian counterpart, impressed Roosevelt rather otherwise. Witte "talked like a fool" to the press, Roosevelt told Cecil Spring Rice, a British diplomat who was a longtime Roosevelt friend and diplomatic sounding board. "The only possible justification of his interviews is to be found in his hope that he may bluff the Japanese; in which he will certainly fail."[29]

Though partly a matter of luck and the season, the arrangement for the peace talks—with the negotiators at Portsmouth and Roosevelt at Sagamore Hill—could hardly have been more conducive to Roosevelt's purposes. The president's geographic distance from the talks allowed him to keep an optimal diplomatic distance, and the fact that he was nominally on vacation enabled him, when he chose to do so, to ignore the press, which naturally wanted to know what his role in the discussions was.

At the same time, the communications facilities at Moore's Building were utilized to their utmost. Roosevelt received regular briefings via cable from Portsmouth regarding the progress of the talks. He heard daily from the State Department at Washington and from pertinent American embassies in Europe and Asia. The sensitive cable traffic was received in cipher and

---

[27] TR to Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Feb. 10, 1904.

[28] TR to Kermit Roosevelt, June 14, 1905, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress.

[29] TR to William Howard Taft, July 29, 1905; TR to Cecil Spring-Rice, July 24, 1905

had to be decoded by the clerks, who also encoded the president's outgoing cables.

Most sensitive of all, and most decisive for the final outcome of the conference, was Roosevelt's communication with the heads of the interested states. Roosevelt wrote repeatedly to Czar Nicholas, urging him to accept what Roosevelt considered reasonable Japanese offers, lest the Russian position in Asia utterly collapse. "It seems to me that if peace can be obtained substantially on these terms, it will be both just and honorable, and that it would be a calamity to have the war continued when peace can be thus obtained," the president told the czar. When Nicholas remained reluctant, Roosevelt cabled the czar's cousin, German Kaiser Wilhelm. "I feel that you have more influence with him than either I or anyone else can have," Roosevelt told Wilhelm. "As the situation is exceedingly strained and the relations between the plenipotentiaries critical to a degree, immediate action is necessary. Can you not take the initiative by presenting these terms to him at once? Your success in the matter will make the entire civilized world your debtor."[30]

Meanwhile Roosevelt worked on Tokyo to make the Japanese terms more acceptable. Japan was insisting on a monetary indemnity; Roosevelt thought this shortsighted. "You know how strongly I have advised the Russians to make peace," he told Baron Kaneko. "I equally strongly advise Japan not to continue the fight for a money indemnity. If she does, then I believe that there will be a considerable shifting of public opinion against her."[31]

Eventually Roosevelt's pressure, combined with the logic of circumstances, brought the belligerents together. Although he still thought the Russians conceited and deceptive ("No human beings, black, yellow, or white, could be quite as untruthful, as insincere, as arrogant—in short as untrustworthy in every way—as the Russians under their present system," he fumed), the president tactfully tendered praise all around. To the Japanese emperor he offered "earnest congratulations upon the wisdom and magnanimity" of the Japanese government. To Nicholas he wrote, "I congratulate you upon the outcome and I share the feelings of all other sincere well-wishers to peace in my gratitude for what has been accomplished." To Germany's Wilhelm he offered "profound appreciation" for the Kaiser's assistance.[32]

Roosevelt's reward for ending the Russo-Japanese War—beyond the satisfaction of having preserved what remained of the status quo in northeastern Asia—was the Nobel Peace Prize. Though inscribed to Roosevelt personally, the prize might well have included mention of the people and facilities of the summer White House at Sagamore Hill, without which Roosevelt's timely and effective mediation would have been impossible.

---

[30] TR to Czar Nicholas, in message to Witte, Aug. 21, 1905, Library of Congress; TR to Wilhelm, Aug. 27, 1905.

[31] TR to Kaneko, Aug. 22, 1905.

[32] TR to William Rockhill, Aug. 29, 1905; TR to Emperor of Japan in TR to Komura, Aug. 29, 1905; TR to Nicholas, Aug. 31, 1905; TR to Wilhelm, Aug. 30, 1905, Library of Congress.

Legacies of the Sagamore Hill Summers

The successful conclusion of the Portsmouth talks lay to rest residual concerns that the president couldn't effectively fulfill his duties while away from Washington. Roosevelt's rivals would still find fault with his affinity for vigorous exercise (this in an era before any scientific understanding of the merits of cardiovascular fitness), but given that most of the critics complained that he governed too much, rather than too little, they couldn't credibly fault him for excessive time away from Washington. In any event, much of the grumbling had originated with the press corps, which couldn't find anything interesting to do, or anyplace decent to stay, in the sleepy village on the Sound. There was little evidence that voters took Roosevelt's vacations amiss, and he had always preferred their approval to that of the political professionals or the pundits.

By 1907 William Loeb and the White House staff had the hegira north down to a science. On June 14 the *Oyster Bay Guardian* reported the onset of summer:

> President Roosevelt is again at Sagamore Hill, Secretary Loeb is again at his suite of offices in the Moore Building with his corps of assistants, and Oyster Bay has been metamorphosed from an ordinary village to the seat of government of the greatest country on the face of the earth. This change took place on Wednesday afternoon, and so quietly did it occur that the usual routine of business was not disrupted in the least. Flags were displayed on many dwellings and business houses, and unusual activity was noticeable among the old occupants of the band wagon, to whom the Presidential salutation acts, not alone as nourishment, but as an inflator. The time of and the route of the President's arrival was not generally known, but a crowd gathered at the station about three p.m., and waited until after five before the special train arrived. There was no roping out the ordinary citizens to make room for the parade of a few self-appointed masters of ceremonies, and every man, woman and child were afforded an equal opportunity to see their townsman, the President.[33]

So comfortable was Roosevelt with summering at Sagamore Hill—not least because the country was comfortable with the idea of his doing so—that he made his vacation there in 1907 the longest yet. Arriving in mid-June, he stayed till late September. No international crises interrupted his routine, which had achieved a degree of perfection of its own. "During the three and a half months the president has occupied the old homestead," a reporter observed just before Roosevelt returned to Washington, "he has had the quietest, and at the same time the busiest, vacation since he became an occupant of the White House. The records show that since June 12 the President has received 125 persons. Some of the callers have been distinguished foreigners, and a few have made purely social calls, but the majority of them have been government officials on strictly government business." In fact, compared to previous years, the president's

---

[33] *Oyster Bay Guardian*, June 14, 1907, quoted in Gluck, *TR's Summer White House*, 25.

calendar was fairly clear. Roosevelt was a lame duck, and like all lame ducks he was less interesting to the political world than those fowl with strong wings. Yet, as always, Roosevelt made good use of his time. He had taken to composing his annual messages at Sagamore Hill; this year's edition was almost finished by the end of the summer. He wrote several other speeches, some delivered on day outings from Oyster Bay, others for a trip he was planning to the West.[34]

Because Roosevelt chose not to seek reelection in 1908, the end of summer that year saw the final closing of the executive-branch offices at Moore's Building and the permanent departure of the White House from Oyster Bay. Roosevelt subsequently returned to Sagamore Hill, but simply as a private citizen, albeit a very famous one who still drew crowds and news correspondents.

The institution of the summer White House didn't catch on at once. Presidents who lacked Roosevelt's private wealth often lacked summer homes, although several, starting with Woodrow Wilson and continuing through Bill Clinton, borrowed vacation homes from friends and supporters. Also, with the introduction of air-conditioning in the 1920s, evacuating Washington during the summer became less essential.

Yet presidents still desired to get away from Washington, and the demands on their time grew only more relentless as the twentieth century progressed. During the Cold War and after, presidents insisted on being in constant touch with their military and diplomatic establishments; and so when Dwight Eisenhower went to his farm at Gettysburg, John Kennedy to Hyannis Port, Lyndon Johnson to the LBJ Ranch, Richard Nixon to Key Biscayne, Ronald Reagan to Simi Valley, George H. W. Bush to Kennebunkport, and George W. Bush to Crawford, they traveled with entourages far more extensive than anything Theodore Roosevelt had required. Yet to the degree they reflected on their situation, they must have thanked Roosevelt for demonstrating that the president could get out of Washington without abandoning his responsibilities to the nation.

---

[34] *New York Times,* Sept. 23, 1907, Gluck, 346; Morison and Blum, *Letters,* 6:1611-12.

"The House is Overrun with Political People": Sagamore Hill after the Presidency

Lewis L. Gould

In the decade between Theodore Roosevelt's presidency and his death in January 1919, Sagamore Hill remained almost as much in the media spotlight as it had been during his presidential years. Exploring how the Roosevelt family adapted to the changes in the public's view of their home and the extent to which Sagamore Hill became a political base for Roosevelt illuminates much about the last phase of his life and public career.

Few former presidents have experienced as turbulent a post-presidency as Roosevelt did between March 4, 1909, when he gave way to William Howard Taft, and January 6, 1919, when he died in his sleep at Sagamore Hill. Leaving the political party that had supported his career for almost 30 years, Roosevelt ran as the candidate of the Progressive Party in 1912. He was an undeclared candidate for the GOP nomination in 1916. Had death not intervened, he would almost certainly have been the nominee of his party in 1920. During these years, Roosevelt also hunted big game in Africa, explored the River of Doubt in Brazil, sought to raise a division to fight in France in World War I, and criticized President Woodrow Wilson before and during America's involvement in the war.

Roosevelt did all this in the glare of public scrutiny. From the moment he left Washington on the day Taft was inaugurated, Roosevelt was the "greatest man in the United States," according to a poll conducted by *American Magazine* in 1913. Abundant evidence exists of Roosevelt's allure for the public. His presence on the street in New York City attracted a crowd, motion pictures were made about his hunting exploits, and newspaper fascination with him persisted down to the day of his death. Elihu Root had it right: Whatever Roosevelt might

do to "act like a private citizen," he could not "possibly help being a public character for the rest of his life."[1]

This problem did not emerge immediately for Roosevelt in the weeks after he left the White House. He had made plans to embark on a hunting safari in Africa in late March 1909, and preparations for that venture took up most of the family's time. One of the former president's Cabinet members, George von Lengerke Meyer, visited Oyster Bay on March 20, three days before the departure for Africa. "At lunch all the family were present with the exception of Alice Longworth. We all made it a point to be gay, Mr. Roosevelt saying that he had been so busy that he had not missed the presidency for a single moment." In a flurry of publicity, Roosevelt sailed on March 23, leaving Sagamore Hill to Edith Roosevelt and the family. Since Mrs. Roosevelt traveled herself, there was little for the press to cover.[2]

During the year that Roosevelt was away, press coverage of the expedition kept his name before the public. The political problems of the Taft administration fueled expectations that Roosevelt might return as a challenger to the incumbent. While the former president was disappointed that Taft had fired his friend, Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot, over a dispute with Secretary of the Interior Richard Ballinger, Roosevelt did not intend to break with the administration once he reached the United States. He told Pinchot that circumstances in 1912 might "be such as make it necessary to renominate Taft, and eminently desire to re-elect him over anyone whom there is the least likelihood of the Democrats naming." So Roosevelt faced a delicate balancing act to maintain his popularity and yet not become a source of party friction.[3]

When Roosevelt arrived in New York on June 18, 1910, he encountered a huge crowd that greeted him with enthusiastic cheers and a parade through the city. The same adulation followed him out to Oyster Bay. Newspapermen accompanied him to Sagamore Hill, where they set up a vigil at the bottom of the hill. Upon his landing in New York, Roosevelt had told the press that he had nothing to say publicly and would not be giving interviews on political issues. He repeated that statement to the journalists the next day when he spoke to them at Sagamore Hill following his daily walk. "I am glad to see you, and if you did not represent the newspapers you would be more than welcome. But I can't say a word—not a word—and will have nothing to say here at any time. I don't want to make Sagamore Hill public grounds, and if I should receive you and talk to you I would be overrun, and it would spoil all my intended peace and rest for the summer." The newspaper vigil continued, however, as reporters told their readers that Roosevelt's veranda at Sagamore Hill was "his favorite spot, the antithesis of restless,

---

[1]For the quotations in this paragraph, see Lewis L. Gould, "The Price of Fame: Theodore Roosevelt as a Celebrity, 1909-1919," *Lamar Journal of the Humanities*, 10 (Fall, 1984): pp. 7, 10.

[2]M.A. DeWolfe Howe, *George von Lengerke Meyer: His Life and Public Services* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1920): pp. 428-429.

[3]Theodore Roosevelt to Gifford Pinchot, June 28, 1910, in Elting E. Morison, et al., eds., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt* 8 vols.(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951-1954), 7: p. 95, hereafter cited as Morison.

crowded, New York, which he regards with what is becoming an aversion, for he says, that he cannot even step on to the sidewalk or look into a shop window without being surrounded by a crowd."[4]

Had Roosevelt been able to adhere to a strict policy of silence on political issues, Sagamore Hill might have remained an oasis of quiet while he did his work at the office of the *Outlook* magazine in New York City. During the week following his talk to the newspapermen, however, a parade of guests came to the Roosevelt home and the former president continued to make political news. On June 23, Pinchot and James R. Garfield arrived in the late afternoon and talked until midnight. An exuberant Garfield recorded in his diary: "Glorious to have him back & ready to lead the great fight against special interest & for the common weal."[5]

Four days later, Senator Robert M. La Follette, a leader of the progressive Republicans opposing President Taft, also arrived at Oyster Bay to talk with Roosevelt. Within a week, the flow of Taft's opponents to Oyster Bay was causing political gossip. Then Roosevelt went to Cambridge, Massachusetts, to attend the Harvard University commencement. There he discussed New York politics with the state's governor, Charles Evans Hughes. These talks led to Roosevelt's decision to support the governor in his fight for a bill to establish a direct primary in that state. The move drew Roosevelt back into politics once again, despite his vows to reporters and other politicians that he would remain aloof. Even a brief meeting with Taft at Beverly, Massachusetts, the president's summer residence, did not still the talk. As these events occurred, the concentration on coverage of Oyster Bay and Sagamore Hill, already intense, quickened as July began.[6]

The newspapermen covering Roosevelt, and the former president himself, had to work out procedures to manage the flow of news. One reporter for a Seattle newspaper informed his publisher that the "colonel has kicked on so many newspapermen being there, has put a ban on their coming up the hill and has not permitted more than two or three a day." Working with the correspondent from the New York *Herald,* Roosevelt agreed that "on big days the colonel would receive the whole bunch; on days that the colonel did not consider so big he would send down word how many he would receive and the boys would select the proper number." One of the newspaper reporters who covered him during the post-presidency recalled that "watching TR

---

[4] *New York Tribune,* June 20 (first quotation),June27 (second quotation), 1910.

[5] James R. Garfield Diary, June 23, 1910, Box 9, James R. Garfield Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

[6] For a survey of these events, see George E. Mowry, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement* (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1946; New York: Hill and Wang, 1960), 130-133; and Lewis L. Gould, *Reform and Regulation: American Politics from Roosevelt to Wilson* (Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, 1996), pp. 126-127.

at Sagamore Hill possessed some of the excitement of observing from a news-outpost as close as possible to a volcano."[7]

To those who visited him, Roosevelt made clear his unhappiness with Taft. The civil service reformer, Lucius B. Swift, came in July with another Indianan, William Dudley Foulke, and they heard Roosevelt say, "I could cry over Taft." Roosevelt was particularly exercised about the letter Taft had written him just after the 1908 election, in which he had, so Roosevelt believed, assigned Taft's half brother, Charles P. Taft, and Roosevelt equal credit for making him president. Roosevelt "said in a tone which showed his deepest feeling 'He might as well say Abraham Lincoln and the bond-seller Jay Cooke saved the Union.'"[8]

The parade of politicians and reformers through Sagamore Hill naturally sparked press speculation about Roosevelt's future intentions. "Sagamore has become a sort of Mecca" for politicians, noted *The Literary Digest.* The Taft administration watched the flow of their political opponents to see Roosevelt with a mixture of apprehension and dismay. The attorney general, George Wickersham, said that the "pilgrimage of insurgents to the shrine on Sagamore Hill" convinced him of the existence of a "certain opposition from that radical and restless spirit which there has a momentary abiding place, which will sooner or later break into open antagonism to his successor—despite recent amenities at Beverley." Two weeks later, however, the president's secretary told reporters, "Our position is that we don't know what Oyster Bay is going to do and we don't give a damn."[9]

The public concentration on Roosevelt's actions from his home intensified the friction with Taft and led to further divisions within the Republican party. In August Roosevelt became embroiled in New York politics over the issue of who would chair the GOP state convention. That fight brought even more politicians to Sagamore Hill for advice and counsel. Later in the month Roosevelt went west to deliver the speeches that formed the core of his campaign for "The New Nationalism." His challenge to Republican orthodoxy raised the stakes for the struggle in New York. By the middle of September, Roosevelt's daughter wrote to a journalistic friend: "A great deal seems to be happening in these parts & I wouldn't miss this fight for anything. Now that father really is in it he's rather enjoying himself I believe. The house is overrun with political people & it's good fun."[10]

---

[7]Ashmun Brown to Erastus Brainerd, July 8, 1910, Erastus Brainerd Papers, University of Washington Library, Seattle (first and second quotations); Earle Looker, *Colonel Roosevelt, Private Citizen* (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1932), 23 (third quotation).

[8] Lucius B. Swift to Ella Swift, July 8, 1910, Lucius B. Swift Papers, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis.

[9] "Little Journeys to Oyster Bay," *The Literary Digest* 41 (July 23, 1910): 117; George W. Wickersham to Charles Nagel, July 3, 1910, Box 11, Charles Nagel Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University; H.J. Haskell to William Allen White, July 21, 1910, William Allen White Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.

[10] Ethel Roosevelt to James T. Williams, ca. September 20, 1910, James T. Williams Papers, Duke University Library.

In the middle of these discussions, Taft and Roosevelt had another awkward personal meeting. Roosevelt left Oyster Bay by a motor launch on September 20 to see Taft at New Haven, Connecticut, but bad weather forced him to break off his trip in Stamford, Connecticut, and go the rest of the way by car. The gathering was a failure and only intensified the strain between the two former friends. During the rest of the fall, Roosevelt campaigned hard for his friend Henry L. Stimson, who was the Republican nominee for governor of New York. It was a Democratic year, however, and the GOP went down to defeat nationally. Many observers took the result as a repudiation of Roosevelt himself. The frenzy of admiration for him receded, the reporters were less present at Oyster Bay, and a period of quiet returned to the Roosevelt home. "Mother and I are having the most enjoyable time possible here at Sagamore," Roosevelt wrote his oldest son in December 1910. These assurances to family and friends were sincere, but Roosevelt tended to become restive at Sagamore Hill when the tumult of political activity ebbed away. [11]

Despite the political setback he had received, Roosevelt continued to welcome distinguished visitors to Sagamore Hill. In January 1911 the Governor General of Canada, the fourth Earl Grey, visited and recalled that there the "spirit of efficiency and contentment seemed to find a natural home." After the two men had talked for hours, Grey had a memorandum made of his conversation which gives a good sense of Roosevelt's rambling discourse when he felt comfortable at home. In his thank-you note, Grey noted the "absence of a newspaper anywhere." Roosevelt responded that "I have grown absolutely to distrust what they say." [12]

Roosevelt's political fortunes fluctuated during 1911 as he and the dissident Republicans decided whether or not he should oppose President Taft's renomination in 1912. His former Cabinet officer, James R. Garfield, came to Oyster Bay in February and again in May to sound out the situation. "We spent the whole evening discussing the political situation & went to the bone," Garfield wrote in his diary in February. "Who shall be the candidate—that is the problem." In May, Garfield, Gifford Pinchot, and Edith Roosevelt talked with Roosevelt about "what our course is to be." At this time relations between Roosevelt and Taft had warmed slightly and the former president did not think he would be a candidate the following year. [13]

After the middle of 1911, however, the bond between Taft and Roosevelt once again frayed, and the possibility of a race for the Republican nomination that matched the one-time friends seemed a live possibility. Roosevelt's friends from both wings of the GOP made their journeys to Sagamore Hill to take the political temperature. Elihu Root and Henry Stimson

---

[11]Roosevelt to Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., December 5, 1910, in Morison, *Letters*, VII, p. 177.

[12]Quotations from Lewis L. Gould, ed., "The Paladin and the Rough Rider: Lord Grey's Account of a Visit with Theodore Roosevelt in 1911," *Durham University Journal*, 76 (June, 1984): 169-175.

[13]James R. Garfield Diary, February 17, 1911, May 22, 1911, Box 9, James R. Garfield Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

lunched with Roosevelt in late September and found him "quite engrossed and much excited over protective coloration in animals." A month later, the split between Roosevelt and Taft intensified when the Justice Department filed suit against the United States Steel Company and attacked Roosevelt in the documents supporting the indictment. Roosevelt began listening sympathetically to those progressives who told him that he could win the Republican nomination. Just what Roosevelt would do became the major political issue of the day, and going to see him at Sagamore Hill struck many Republicans as a good way to find out.[14]

The visiting politicians got mixed signals from the prospective candidate. Henry Stimson, by now Taft's secretary of war, and George von Lengerke Meyer, Roosevelt's secretary of the navy, who stayed on at the same post under Taft, went over to Oyster Bay on January 7, 1912. Their reaction was "Why were we ever worried about his attitude? He is just the same as he always has been and has no thought of becoming a candidate." Two days later, however, Roosevelt was telling other friends who had visited him at his home that if the Republican nomination "comes to me as a genuine popular movement of course I will accept." Once that decision had been made, Oyster Bay and Sagamore Hill again became beacons for those interested in seeing Roosevelt in the White House for another four years.[15]

Through the turbulent year that ensued, Roosevelt commuted from Oyster Bay to New York to conduct first his campaign for the Republican nomination and, when that failed, the effort of the Progressive Party to win the White House. With his customary energy, he waged extended speaking tours on behalf of both campaigns, which took him away from home for much of the year. In October he was the target of an assassin's bullet that brought him back home to Sagamore Hill to convalesce. Roosevelt's daughter-in-law, Eleanor Alexander Roosevelt, recalled of that summer: "Something was going on every minute of the day....the house was always full of people. They came by ones, by twos, and by tens. All day long conferences were held in every room downstairs. The telephone never stopped ringing. A car full of newspapermen was always in the offing." For a year, Sagamore Hill and Oyster Bay where the informal headquarters of American progressive reform.[16]

The election results left Roosevelt in second place behind Woodrow Wilson but ahead of William Howard Taft. In the year that followed, Roosevelt struggled to keep the remnants of the Progressive Party together amid the sagging that always occurs after an unsuccessful presidential campaign. The crowds at Oyster Bay went away and Sagamore Hill became less of a showplace and more of a private home once more. In addition, Roosevelt spent a good part of 1913 in travels around the United States and, later in the year, departed for his trip to the Brazilian wilderness.

---

[14] Elihu Root to Henry Cabot Lodge, 29, 1911, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

[15]Henry L. Stimson, "Personal Reminiscences, 1911-1912, Confidential," circa March 1913, Henry L. Stimson Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University (first quotation); Roosevelt to Henry Beach Needham, January 9, 1912, in Morison, et al., eds., *Letters of Theodore Roosevelt,* 7: 475.

[16]Hagedorn, *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill,* 313.

That journey, which lasted until the spring of 1914, left Roosevelt debilitated with an illness that plagued him for the rest of his life.

When he returned from Brazil and then a brief trip to Europe in mid-1914, there remained before him the election campaign of 1914 as well as the outbreak of World War I. During these years, Roosevelt commuted into New York City to his office at the *Outlook Magazine* and later at the *Metropolitan Magazine.* He told his son Kermit in February 1915 that "I should go quite crazy if I had to sit more than a few days in New York; and I am more grateful than I can say that I have Sagamore Hill at which permanently to reside."[17]

His efforts on behalf of the faltering Progressive Party attracted some public attention back to Oyster Bay and Sagamore Hill. It was, however, Roosevelt's criticism of Woodrow Wilson on foreign policy from late 1914 onward that made Roosevelt's home a beacon for those Republicans who were urging the White House to take a more aggressive stance on national defense. Reporters, many of them sympathetic to Roosevelt's position, once again reappeared to conduct what Roosevelt called a "sort of political death watch." The "Newspaper Cabinet" disagreed. The reporters were there, as John Leary told Roosevelt, because their editors "realize the hold you have on the American people. It's the tribute of the people to the man, for , after all, we only give the public what it wants." [18]

During the years 1915 and 1916, the "Newspaper Cabinet" of Roosevelt came into its full influence. The former president let the reporters look at documents he was preparing and helped them to present news coverage in the manner that best served his interests. In return, they kept up a constant flow of news from Sagamore Hill that maintained Roosevelt in the public eye. As one of Roosevelt's early biographers put it, journalists "hung about him at Oyster Bay, even in his days of defeat, like a guard of honor."[19]

Roosevelt's activities from 1915 through 1918 gave the scribes at Oyster Bay ample material for their news columns. As the United States struggled with the problems of neutrality, the former president was a strong voice for greater military preparedness and a defense of American maritime rights. In his encouragement of such programs as the Plattsburg, New York, camp to train future soldiers, Roosevelt provided a public alternative to the administration's policies. Similarly, in the first half of 1916, the possibility that Roosevelt might seek the Republican presidential nomination again insured that Oyster Bay would remain a center of public attention. When Republicans came to Sagamore Hill to offer Roosevelt their support for the GOP prize, the reporters there said that he had told his visitors to nominate him only "because

---

[17]Roosevelt to Kermit Roosevelt, February 8, 1915, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

[18]John J. Leary, *Talks With T.R.* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1920), 139.

[19]Bradley Gilman, *Roosevelt The Happy Warrior* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1921), 335.

you think it is in your interest, and the interest of the Republican party, and because you think it to the interest of the United States to do so."[20]

The Republican party chose Charles Evans Hughes instead of Roosevelt to oppose Woodrow Wilson in 1916, but the former president often occupied as much of the spotlight as did the GOP presidential nominee. Roosevelt cautioned newspapermen on the Oyster Bay watch not to stress his activities lest it hurt Hughes's chances for election. He hoped to be left alone, but, as the reporters reminded him, there would never be a time when he would not be an object of attention. "I will be glad when people will recognize me as a private citizen and the papers treat me as such," Roosevelt told John J. Leary. "That time will never come in your life," Leary responded. "Twenty years from now if I am alive I expect to go to Oyster Bay now and then on a T.R. assignment."[21]

Following the defeat of Hughes in 1916, the United States and Germany reached a confrontation over submarine warfare that led to American entry into the conflict in April 1917. Roosevelt immediately announced his plans to raise a volunteer division for service on the Western Front in France. That put Roosevelt at loggerheads with the Wilson administration, which wanted to raise an army through the draft. The president also had no intention of letting Roosevelt, whom he very much disliked, upstage the war effort through his personal gallantry or death in battle. The public controversy that ensued once again riveted attention on what Roosevelt was doing at his home.

Woodrow Wilson and the War Department rejected Roosevelt's proposal in the spring of 1917. That left Roosevelt with only the sad duty of disbanding the organization he had assembled to create the division and process the volunteers that had flooded him with requests to serve in France. He met with twenty key aides at Sagamore Hill in a ceremony that the newspapers covered in full. Roosevelt then turned his efforts to obtaining places for his sons in the American war effort; his success meant that Sagamore Hill became the site where Roosevelt and his wife waited expectantly and fearfully for news about their sons in battle. As he told his son Quentin, "we keep the logs blazing in the library and find it cosy (sic) and comfortable. I am kept very busy writing and occasionally speaking, always on behalf of the war; so long as we are still in the talky-talky stage some one has to do the talky-talky on the right side."[22]

Inevitably, the war took its toll on the Roosevelt family. In the summer of 1918, a cryptic message to "Watch Sagamore Hill for---" reached a newsman in Oyster Bay and he passed it on to Roosevelt, who immediately understood that something had happened to one of his sons. The youngest boy, Quentin, an aviator in France, had been shot down by the Germans. The

---

[20]"Roosevelt or Hughes," *The Literary Digest* 52 (April 15, 1916): 1043.

[21]John J. Leary, *Talks With T.R.* 138. For a sidelight on Roosevelt's relations with newsmen at Oyster Bay in these last years, see Charles Willis Thompson, "Roosevelt Ten Years After," *The Commonweal* 9 (January 16, 1929): 308-310. Roosevelt's relations with the Hughes campaign are discussed in Henry Cabot Lodge to Elmer Stevens, June 23, 1916, and Lodge to W.S. Bigelow, June 24, 1916, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

[22]Roosevelt to Quentin Roosevelt, January 27, 1918, in Morison, *Letters* 7: 1277.

personal tragedy completed the transformation of Theodore Roosevelt into an old man at the age of sixty. The five months of life remaining to him were a period of sickness and pain, with trips in and out of the hospital. [23]

Nonetheless, he persisted in his efforts to rally the American people behind the policies of the Republican party to which he had recommitted himself after the fissure of 1912. He continued to criticize Woodrow Wilson and his plans for a League of Nations if it did not protect the rights of the nation's wartime allies, the British and the French. In late December he left the hospital over the Christmas holidays and returned to Oyster Bay.

There, amid his books and his memories, he continued to work on public issues through his fatigue and pain. On January 4, 1919, his African American valet, James Amos, rejoined him at Oyster Bay. "His face bore a tired expression," Amos later wrote. "There was a look of weariness in his eyes. It was perfectly plain that he had suffered deeply." In the evening, Roosevelt "got me to turn his chair so he could look out toward Centre Island. He had played there as a boy." [24]

On Sunday, January 5, Roosevelt did a little work through his discomfort. One member of the "Newspaper Cabinet" called him to ask whether he could safely go to New York "and have dinner with his wife." Before doing so, said the scribe, "I'd like to make sure there will not be any news from you." Roosevelt answered: "You go right along, Jimmy, and have dinner with your good wife. Nothing is going to happen here."[25]

Edith Roosevelt wrote to her oldest son about their final night together at Sagamore Hill. "Father spent his last evening in your old nursery & loved the view of which he spoke, & as it got dark he watched the dancing flames & spoke of the happiness of being home, and made little plans for me." Then around eleven o'clock Theodore Roosevelt asked Amos to lift him into the bed. His last words were: "James, will you please put out the light."

Early on the morning of January 6, 1919, Roosevelt drew his last breath at Sagamore Hill and joined those, as he had written, "who are called to go out into the darkness." He was buried near his home on the side of a hill two days later.[26]

---

[23]For a portrait of TR in these last months, see Hamlin Garland, "My Neighbor, Theodore Roosevelt," *Everybody's Magazine* 41 (October 1919): 16, 94. George H. Doran, *Chronicles of Barabbas, 1884-1934* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1934, 1952), 217-218. The story of how he was informed about Quentin Roosevelt's death is in Hagedorn, *The Roosevelt Family,* 412.

[24]James E. Amos, *Theodore Roosevelt: Hero to His Valet* (New York: John Day Co., 1927), pp. 154, 155.

[25]Hermann Hagedorn, *The Bugle That Woke America:* The *Saga of Theodore Roosevelt's Last Battle for his Country* (New York: John Day Co., 1940), 209.

[26]Amos, *Theodore Roosevelt,* p. 156. Roosevelt to Arthur H. Lee, September 8, 1918, in Morison, *Letters,8:* 1368. The quotation from Edith Roosevelt is from David H. Wallace, "Sagamore Hill: An Interior History," in Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable, eds., *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American* (Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992), 542.

The public and private events that occurred at Sagamore Hill during the last decade of Theodore Roosevelt's life added a poignancy and drama to the story of his family home that became an enduring part of the Roosevelt legend. More than just a summer White House during his presidency, the mansion witnessed the heady days of 1910 when a return to the presidency seemed so much a possibility. There was the frenzy and excitement of 1912 when Roosevelt articulated a political vision that resonated for several generations. And there were the sad days of Roosevelt's last years when Sagamore Hill's owner was tested by pain and the approach of death. In a eulogy to his old friend, General Leonard Wood titled his essay "The Man Who Sleeps at Oyster Bay." It is the aura of Roosevelt's historical presence at Sagamore Hill that makes his home still the place where visitors go to recapture the sense of the man and his vibrant times.[27]

---

[27]Leonard Wood, "The Man Who Sleeps at Oyster Bay," *The Ladies Home Journal,* October, 1919,. 12, 168,170.

The Strenuous Outdoor Life

Kathleen Dalton

Perhaps the least understood aspect of Sagamore Hill's historic significance derives from Theodore Roosevelt's role as cultural leader and advocate for the "strenuous life." In his generation the temptations of sensational recreation, saloons, peep shows, night clubs, Coney Island amusements, and daring new cinema worried progressive reformers. Adding to the reformers' alarm at the increasing passion for degrading forms of recreation among the general public was the sense that such pursuits—along with frivolous liaisons and instant Reno divorces—were eroding family life. The elite, too, seemed to have given up all moral standards to indulge in conspicuous consumption and gross materialism as they built garish castles in Newport and cavorted with European royalty.

In response, from the "bully pulpit" of the presidency Roosevelt preached cures for the follies of a self-indulgent generation. As an antidote to the excesses he saw, he self-consciously practiced and preached a "simple life" of country living and faithful family attachment. From Sagamore Hill he showed the public how to live healthfully through sport, play, and vigorous endeavor close to nature. In his *Autobiography* he publicized the life he led at home and the "nook of old-time America around Sagamore Hill," which seemed the perfect remedy for the urban ambience of greedy commercialism, vanity, and vice that in his eyes so marred the early years of the twentieth century. [1]

---

[1] For the best details of TR's family life at Sagamore Hill see his "Outdoors and Indoors" chapter in Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography* (originally published in 1913, New York, Da Capo, 1985); nook quote, 355.

TR used Sagamore Hill to exemplify virtuous family life for the same reason that he wrote advice on how to conduct family life or develop clean habits in the *Ladies' Home Journal:* he had a moral message to impart. When a photographer came to Sagamore Hill in 1912 to take some of the earliest newsreels of a politician at home, TR made sure the American people saw him engaging in wholesome outdoor recreation. He insisted on being filmed playing with his dog and chopping wood on the grounds of his home.

TR also used Sagamore Hill and the example of his life there to remind the nation that "for unflagging interest and enjoyment, a household of children, if things go reasonably well, certainly makes all other forms of success and achievement lose their importance by comparison." The stories he told about the ideal country childhood he had provided for the Roosevelt children offered his readers what he thought was the "proper mixture of freedom and control" in raising children close to nature.[2]

For all these reasons it makes sense to explore the story of Theodore Roosevelt's personal relationship with the house and recall how he came to live there in the first place, in order to understand on a deeper level what Sagamore Hill can mean historically as an educational resource.

Sagamore Hill was precious to TR because to him it represented much more than a comfortable home. He had been drawn to it from the beginning as a site where nature could cure the ills of urban life. Growing up as a sickly aristocratic boy born of an old Knickerbocker family, he spent his childhood years at 28 East Twentieth Street in Manhattan, except for a Grand Tour of Europe and spring and summer trips to the countryside. His father, "Thee," Theodore Roosevelt, Sr., was a muscular Christian, a believer in spreading a manlier and more physically active version of Christianity to build boys' characters in tandem with their bodies in order to toughen them for the struggles of adult life. As a child, Theodore suffered from severe asthma and Thee had taken his son camping and hiking to strengthen him. He encouraged Theodore's walks in the woods to study and collect animal life; as a result TR became an amateur taxidermist and scientist, specializing in ornithology. Thee had finally called upon the boy to "make his own body" by strenuous activity and force of will, making nature his ally in the fight against invalidism and weakness. TR met that challenge and believed ever afterward that nature and active sports had saved his life.

Oyster Bay itself had important associations with health and recovery for the boy. He first came to Oyster Bay to visit relatives and to seek fresh air to relieve his asthma attacks, but he stayed for longer periods when his parents, Thee and Martha Bulloch Roosevelt, rented a summer house in Oyster Bay which they called "Tranquility." Father and son walked in the woods of Cove Neck near the later site of Sagamore Hill, and hunted and watched the abundant bird life that lived on the Long Island Sound. When his father challenged him to throw off his asthma, TR hiked, ran, hunted, rowed, and swam at Oyster Bay, and in the winters devoted his energies to rope and pulley exercises at a gym in Manhattan.

---

[2]Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography,* 349, 355.

With its verdant hills and quiet waterside village, Oyster Bay was thus was forever connected in TR's mind with his struggle to overcome ill health and make himself strong. When he married at the end of his student career at Harvard, he brought his bride, Alice Hathaway Lee, to Oyster Bay to honeymoon at Tranquility.

Although TR and Alice made their home in Manhattan, and for a time in Albany while TR served in the New York State legislature, they looked forward to the time when they could build their own country home. After first considering an upstate location, they settled on Oyster Bay, no doubt because of the family ties there and the fond associations for TR with his youth and his jaunts with his father. The young couple purchased property on the hill in Cove Neck just outside the village of Oyster Bay, and began to build. TR thought of "Leeholm"—the name for the house while Alice Lee was alive—as a haven from politics and city life, but most of all he imagined it as a welcoming environment for his return to nature.[3]

After Alice died following childbirth in 1884, TR spent some time at his ranches in the Dakotas, but soon returned to take up full-time residence on the East Coast. In 1887 he brought his second wife, Edith Kermit Carow, to Sagamore Hill. He looked forward to her help in making a home filled with children where he could show his fellow countrymen how to live a strenuous life of active sports and outdoor living in close and respectful contact with nature. Early in the couple's years there, Sagamore Hill appeared as a sportsman's home in a print in *Harper's Weekly,* and became known locally as a site for fox hunting and polo.

In addition to the house itself, the farm, the grounds, Cooper's Bluff, the windmill, the tennis courts, the dock, the barn, the rifle range, the stables, the "Fairy Orchard" where the Roosevelt children played, the pet cemetery, and the woods that witnessed the Roosevelts' point-to-point obstacle treks are all historic treasures that can teach current and future generations about Roosevelt's environmental beliefs and his philosophy of the vigorous life. TR adored Sagamore Hill and lived many of the most important personal moments of his life there. The home remains a vital key to understanding him and his times.

An Environmentalist's Environment

One of the most significant aspects of Sagamore Hill is that it was the home of America's greatest environmental president and one of its greatest nature lovers. Early biographers such as Henry F. Pringle (*Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography)* ignored TR's historic conservation policies, and it was not until William H. Harbaugh's important *Power and Responsibility: The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt,* and later Lewis L. Gould's *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt,* that biographers paid due attention to the story of TR's adventurous forest reserves

---

[3]Material adapted from Kathleen Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002).

policies, his federal game preserves, and his unorthodox use of the Antiquities Act to save the Grand Canyon. Today most historians agree that TR's place in history would have been guaranteed alone by what he did as president to protect the American environment.[4]

Like his father, TR believed in the nature cure for fearful and sickly boys, especially privileged scions such as his own sons, and at Sagamore Hill he taught his sons to set aside the soft comforts of civilized society in order to test their courage and ingenuity in nature. Being challenged by survival in a wild setting seemed to him an excellent character-building experience, so he encouraged his sons to explore the terrain around them unsupervised. He urged them to practice shooting, chopping down trees, swimming, hunting, playing sports, and collecting animal life all over the grounds of the estate. His study of the science of natural history and his love of the outdoors were among the first of TR's passions to be shared with his own children. Hoping to lead future generations toward the study of nature, he wrote that natural history and appreciation of nature should be taught in the public schools.

When interpretive experts in the National Park Service consider how best to present Sagamore Hill to the public, especially as it relates to the subject of nature, one obvious resource is the information we have about how TR showed his own visitors around Sagamore Hill. Perhaps most illustrative is the visit of the famous naturalist John Burroughs in 1907. TR showed Burroughs what mattered most to him outside of his family and his work: the natural world, including the birds, small animals, and trees of Sagamore Hill. He told Burroughs that during their time together he wanted most of all "to talk and to hunt birds."[5]

As the two men walked around the grounds of Sagamore Hill and came near a large locust tree, TR heard the black-throated green warbler and listened to its song with Burroughs, who was also an expert on bird songs. He took his guest along the edge of the apple orchard to show him the nesting area, in a cavity of an old apple tree, of a family of high-holes (Northern flickers). TR had recently found a fledgling fallen on the ground and had replaced it in the nest; he knocked on the tree to let Burroughs hear the sound of the hungry fledglings. They then followed the forested path to the bay and together listened for the song of the rose-breasted grosbeak which often nested in the tulip-trees nearby. TR took Burroughs to a pond where they heard the call of night herons, and he pointed out an oak he especially liked which had grown up where there had once been an open field.

TR and Burroughs then returned to the area of the old barn in search of more bird life. In the nearby clover meadow TR looked for the nest of a pair of red-shouldered starlings

---

[4] Henry F. Pringle, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1931); William H. Harbaugh, *Power and Responsibility: The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Farrar Straus & Cudahy, 1961); and Lewis L. Gould, *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991).

[5] John Burroughs, *Camping and Tramping with Roosevelt* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1907), 81- 102; Burroughs' visits to Sagamore Hill were evidently May 10, 1899, and in 1907, 1910, and 1914. In 1907 John Lewis Childs also joined them.

(red-winged blackbirds). He showed Burroughs the old barn built by early settlers, with its huge timbers cut from virgin forest, a barn which he said he kept for the flavor of old times. The President identified sparrow eggs in a fallen nest and showed the naturalist a purple finch nesting in a tree near the house. Burroughs was impressed by his host's quick eye and ear for birds, and later listed TR's favorite Sagamore Hill birds:

Maryland yellow-throat (common yellowthroat)
Black and white creeper (black and white warbler)
Yellow-breasted chat
Ovenbird
Prairie warbler
Great crested flycatcher
Wood peewee
Sharp-tailed finch (sharp-tailed sparrow)
Little-eared owl (Eastern screech owl)

When they settled down for a visit on the piazza, TR called attention to the flight song of the ovenbird, and showed Burroughs in a book he had nearby (*Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail)* how the illustrators had drawn animal anatomy inaccurately. Later TR took Burroughs to the North Room to see the skin of the gray timber wolf, bear skins, and panther and lynx skins, which he thought would interest the naturalist. Though TR's tour was tailored to the interests of his nature-writer friend, those were also his own interests as he walked across his property. Burroughs wrote after his tour of Sagamore Hill that TR's "nature-love is deep and abiding."[6]

As Burroughs had witnessed, Sagamore Hill was the site of TR's continuing study of the bird life of the Oyster Bay area. As a youth he had written a pamphlet describing local birds, and as an active member of the Audubon Society he worried that the influx of human population and development would diminish the varieties of Long Island's song birds. He organized the Bird Club of Long Island and worked with the Audubon Society for bird protection. TR wrote, "When I hear of the destruction of a species, I feel just as if all the works of some great writer had perished; as if we had lost all instead of only part of Polybius or Livy." In later years, his Cove Neck neighbor and cousin William Emlen Roosevelt and his wife Christine donated twelve acres of wooded land to provide a bird sanctuary in TR's honor near the Youngs Cemetery in Oyster Bay. [7]

[6]Burroughs, *Camping and Tramping,* 107.

[7]Alexander C. Flick, ed., *History of the State of New York* New York State Historical Association publications, 10 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), 160; Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt;* Theodore Roosevelt, *Notes on Some of the Birds of Oyster Bay,* Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard University (hereafter TRC-HU). As he did at Sagamore Hill, Roosevelt took time to make lists of the birds he sighted on the grounds of the White House or on walks or rides in Rock Creek Park, and he remained proud that the snowy owl, Egyptian plovers, and spruce grouse that he had mounted as a youngster were part of the permanent collection of the American Museum of Natural History.

Observing bird life at Sagamore Hill was a daily pleasure for Roosevelt. The bright colors of indigo buntings and thistle finches (goldfinches) were reminders of the beauty of the changing seasons, and he compared his affection for the bird songs of Sagamore Hill to his love for his family. In his *Autobiography* he recalled how much he loved the sound of the flickers on the roof, even when they woke him. He savored the call of the herons in the marshes on the cove. The spring brought him the "piercing cadence of the meadow-lark" and the "cheerful, simple, homely song of the song sparrow."[8] For TR the bird songs of Sagamore Hill were a precious resource and he wanted as much as anything else to teach other Americans to listen to the nature around them and protect it.[9]

Sagamore Hill also provided the setting for TR's scientific pursuits. A capable amateur scientist, he looked at the natural world as a gift that warranted protection and appreciation. From his library he kept up his scientific reading, and as a Harvard overseer he urged the Harvard faculty to modernize the way it taught zoology. In 1896 from Sagamore Hill he wrote a scientific essay for the journal *Science* in which he took issue with C. Hart Merriam's reclassification of coyotes into eleven different species. Merriam's new system emphasized small structural distinctions among the animals rather than broad commonalities. Roosevelt's argument so impressed professional scientists that they invited him to debate with Merriam at the Biological Society's annual meeting. Later, when Merriam discovered a new species of elk, he named it *Cervus Roosevelti* after his contentious friend. [10] The same year TR, in residence at Sagamore Hill, edited three books with George Bird Grinnell on North American big game: *American Big-Game Hunting, Hunting in Many Lands,* and *Trail and Camp Fire.*

Nature preservation and enjoying and caring for the bounty of Long Island's natural beauty were always part of TR's agenda at Sagamore Hill. The conservation ideas that as a boy he had heard from his uncle Robert Barnwell Roosevelt, an early advocate of state fish and game laws, had certainly been an important influence on him. Working together at Sagamore Hill, he and Grinnell founded the hunter-conservationist Boone and Crockett Club for big game hunters who, like them, were interested in game protection.

Based on his long observation of animal behavior, TR even wondered about the "intellect and moral sense in animals," and he feared man's habitual disregard of animal habitats would destroy whole species. He wrote ornithologist Frank Chapman that the destruction of species had to be stopped and, despite his official commitment to the policy of conservation of natural resources for use by humans, he held preservationist and romantic attachments to nature and animals far stronger than those of the average conservationist.

---

[8]Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography,* 340.

[9]Ibid., 355.

[10]Paul Russell Cutright, *Theodore Roosevelt The Naturalist* (New York: Harpers, 1956), 73-85.

In the 1890s, TR lobbied for conservation from Sagamore Hill's library, writing letters to Congress and to fellow conservationists. He alerted the nation's leaders to the fact that America's few national parks were endangered. In an age when no federal law protected America's national parks and no organized park service existed, the Northern Pacific Railroad and concessionaires controlled much of Yellowstone Park. Geysers were rammed and closed up, vandals marred trees, hunters slaughtered animal populations, timber was cut and not replanted, and tourists littered the most visited spots. When private companies announced plans to bilk visitors to Yellowstone by charging high rates to pitch a tent or stay in a hotel, TR and the Boone and Crockett Club successfully lobbied Congress to protect the park. [11]

As president of the Boone and Crockett Club, TR urged Congress to pass the Park Protection Act of 1894, and he advocated the protection of the sequoias and Yosemite, and the establishment of Glacier National Park. During his governorship of New York, he and forester Gifford Pinchot became close personal friends and allies on behalf of conservation. Pinchot wrote Roosevelt's conservation speeches and advised the governor on how to save the Adirondack mountain wilderness and the Palisades along the Hudson River, and he helped TR build a fine record as a conservationist governor. Governor Roosevelt even applied Pinchot's ideas about scientific forest management to New York's forests.

In the 1890s TR co-founded the Bronx Zoo, where today visitors learn about animal life from the exhibits, while important animal research goes on behind the scenes (in recent times the Bronx Zoo was responsible for research vital to tracing the etiology of the West Nile Virus). Roosevelt's eventual aim was to expand bird and animal preserves across America, and he worked to achieve this as president. In 1903 he planned a well-publicized trip through Yellowstone with Burroughs and through Yosemite with John Muir to awaken the nation's interest in its parks and the natural beauty of the American landscape. Roosevelt believed almost as deeply as John Muir did in the salvation of the human spirit by the wilderness. Both thought that mankind needed more "wildness." After his trip with Muir, TR ordered the northern Sierras added to the National Forest Reserves and got Congress to fund protection of the giant sequoia trees which Muir had shown him in the Mariposa Big Tree Grove. TR was still trying to publicize these trips near the end of his life: in November 1916 he regaled Muir's biographer, William Frederic Badé, with the story of his three-day camping trip with Muir and his subsequent saving of the sequoias and Yosemite. [12]

TR's sympathy with the cause of conservation made him appealing to like-minded activists such as Pinchot, who served as head of the Division of Forestry under McKinley. When TR became president in 1901 conservationists had cause for hope that America would start taking better care of its resources. Roosevelt made Pinchot chief of the new Forest Service, founded in 1905. Together Pinchot and Roosevelt developed a national conservation policy, and Pinchot

---

[11]Material adapted from Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt*

[12]John Muir, *John Muir: His Life and Other Writings,* ed. T. Gifford (Seattle: The Moutaineers, 1996), 375.

often visited to talk conservation politics at Sagamore Hill. [13]

TR and Pinchot also liked to play tennis and chop wood together at Sagamore Hill, and the Roosevelt family welcomed Pinchot as part of their extended family on all-day picnics and family dinners. In earlier days Pinchot had served as TR's frequent companion on Rock Creek Park scrambles and afternoon rides in Washington, D.C. Their alliance shaped TR's presidency because, with Pinchot's help, TR was able to expand and protect the national parks and set aside land for protected federal forests and bird and animal preserves. When TR asked Pinchot to write the important conservation chapter of his *Autobiography,* he made it clear that much of what he had accomplished was done in partnership with his friend. Today Pinchot is recognized as the "father of American environmentalism" and TR is heralded as America's most effective conservationist president.[14]

Roosevelt's deep commitment to nature and his conservation program always had a moral agenda. He told John Burroughs that East Coast men were turning into narrow-chested, pale, "degenerated," and over-civilized creatures who had forgotten how to breed and fight well. To cure their failing vigor, America's wilderness would, he hoped, make them as hearty as Kentucky mountain men or French Canadian woodsmen. TR doubled the national parks for the same reason that he endorsed fresh-air farms for city children and workers: America had some of the most beautiful landscapes on earth and its increasingly industrial and urban people, he believed, needed reinvigoration among the hills and trees. He wanted people to understand their evolutionary kinship with animals and the special value that nature's beauty has for the human spirit, and he used his own activities and interests to gain publicity for natural history and the wilderness.

Roosevelt's long-standing love of nature and his commitment to science made him see a direct relationship between the waste of natural resources and America's failure to face its other problems in the new century. He declared, "The conservation of our natural resources and their proper use constitute the fundamental problem which underlies almost every other problem of our national life." In arguing for the preservation of the Grand Canyon, he wrote, "Leave it as it is. You cannot improve on it; not a bit. The ages have been at work on it, and men can only mar it .... What you can do is keep it for your children and your children's children, and for all who come after you."[15] If TR had one message for posterity it would be this.

---

[13]According to Edith Roosevelt's and Ethel Roosevelt Derby's diaries, Pinchot visited TR at Sagamore Hill more than 14 times after 1901.

[14]Char Miller, *Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2001), 147-176.

[15]Marybeth Lorbiecki, *Aldo Leopold: A Fierce Green Fire* (Helena and Billings, Montana: Falcon Publishing Co., 1996), 68.

In Sagamore Hill TR found his own nature refuge to provide relief from the intense political life he led. He often embraced the companionship of fellow bird-lovers in preference to that of other politicians. In letters and diaries we find many examples of TR socializing in the dining room and bringing the conversation around to birds and nature. For example, at lunch one day TR, recently returned from his African safari and European tour of 1909-1910, found he was less eager to talk politics with the Indiana politicians at the table than he was to talk birds with John Burroughs.[16] During the hectic 1912 campaign when TR ran a short-staffed office and often worked as his own advance man to arrange speeches, he faced daily attacks by newspapers and his opponents. He stopped his hectic political schedule, however, to indulge in a dinner with a group of five naturalists with whom he wanted to discuss the varied species of North American bears. During dinner TR was called away to answer a phone call in the library telling him of the latest attack by his critics, and he agreed to respond with a statement before the day was out. Frank Chapman recalled that when TR returned to the dining room he did not miss a beat of the naturalists' conversation and proved once again "his remarkable ability to focus his attention on a given matter to the exclusion of everything not akin to it." He kept up the conversation with them in the North Room, and only after the men had retired for the night did he go to his library to write the reply to his critics.[17]

TR's friends recalled how animated and single-minded he became when the subject was nature. After lunch one day, Roosevelt left his close friend and political ally Henry Cabot Lodge in the library waiting to talk politics while he bustled out to the verandah and became preoccupied with discussing protective coloration in animals with ornithologist Frank Chapman. Finally, Mrs. Roosevelt had to remind him that the senator was still waiting for him. TR replied, according to Chapman, "Excuse me for a moment while I settle the affairs of state and then I'll return to the infinitely more important subject of protective coloration."[18]

His occasional obliviousness to other people also showed up when he was passionately involved in talking about the trees of Sagamore Hill, many of which he and his sister Bamie (Anna Roosevelt Cowles), had planted. For example, TR greeted writer Julian Street and his wife, who had been invited to lunch, at the door and dragged them off to see the colors of his Japanese maple despite the cold wind of that fall day in 1915. In his enjoyment of a beautiful sight of nature, TR kept his guests out in the cold and did not notice their discomfort until it was time to take them in to lunch.[19]

---

[16]John Burroughs, *The Heart of John Burroughs Journals,* ed. Clara Barrus, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), 259.

[17] Frederick S. Wood, *Roosevelt as We Knew Him: The Personal Recollections of One Hundred and Fifty of His Friends and Associates* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co., 1927), 202.

[18] Ibid., 201.

[19] Ibid., 355-356.

A shared interest in nature was one of the bonds that made Roosevelt's second marriage especially happy. He and his wife Edith wanted to make a beautiful spot even more lovely. They expanded the original tree plantings put in by Bamie in 1885-86 and added much landscaping of their own. Edith had the gardener plant a pine grove for her first grandchild, Grace, so the child could play near the house when she was old enough to visit Sagamore Hill.[20] Edith also added wisteria and clematis, trained to climb up the outside walls of the house so that TR could see the flowering vines when he worked in the library. Edith's flower garden, rose bower, and Gracie's Grove were her most important contributions to the outdoor environment at Sagamore Hill, but she also worked with the gardener, Alfred Davis, and other farm workers to supervise the gardening and farming. Davis had to struggle to keep the Roosevelt children from eating grapes from the grape arbor and stepping on the flower beds that Edith had planned, and sometimes planted herself.[21]

Theodore and Edith were proud landowners who took frequent walks to see the progress of their gardens and the plants blooming on the grounds. They would often walk far into the woods to identify wild flowers with their childhood friend Fanny Parsons, author of well-known books on wild flowers and ferns, and in his last years TR wrote that he grew angry when people picked wild flowers. His favorites were trillium, bloodroot, and arbutus. The Roosevelts also liked to walk in nearby fields to see the daffodils planted near the Tiffanys' land.[22]

The Best of All Playgrounds

A devoted family man, Roosevelt viewed Sagamore Hill as the perfect outdoor laboratory for teaching children about nature. He took his children and grandchildren on tours to show them the animal life of Sagamore Hill, including the pigs in the old barn and the baby birds in nearby nests. He often woke up early in the morning and took the current resident of the nursery downstairs in his arms to pet the "buppies" or animal heads mounted on the walls of the first floor. He told animal stories to his own six children and later to his granddaughter Edith Derby and her brother, Richard Derby, Jr., and read to them from his hunting books.

TR also encouraged his children to study natural history, and they would bring him specimens they found on the grounds of Sagamore Hill. Birds' nests were among their favorite treasures to show Father and he taught them to identify birds' eggs. Ted recalled going bird-nesting with his father and discovering fledgling flickers nested in a hole of a tree stump.[23]

---

[20]Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *All in the Family* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1929), 14.

[21] Ibid., 15. Ethel earned a small amount of cash pulling weeds in her mother's garden.

[22]Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt,* 247.

[23] Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *All in the Family,* 59-60.

TR also enjoyed being shown the turtles the children collected in the pond next to the pig sty. He kept remnants of his own childhood "Roosevelt Museum" at Sagamore Hill, including a mink skull which fascinated Ted, and Egyptian birds mounted under a glass bell.[24]

TR wrote with fond amusement in his letters about watching his young son Kermit take his white guinea pigs out to play on the grass. Admiral Dewey, Jr. and Sr., and Fighting Bob Evans were among the guinea pigs' names.[25] When one of the guinea pigs died, the children would bury it in their sandbox, until Edith discovered this and stopped them. Afterward they got into the habit of burying their dead pets in the pet cemetery near the granite boulder and flowering shrubs close to the rose arbor, where they conducted funerals using a wheelbarrow as a hearse.[26]

The Roosevelt household included many pets, who became like family members. Ted had a dog, a Manchester terrier named Jack, who liked to sleep inside the house on chairs and eat book covers, which made the dog quite unpopular with Edith. When Ted left for boarding school at Groton she was left in charge of Jack, and Ted feared that she would discipline the dog or send him to a cold exile. What happened instead was that Jack won a fond place in Edith's heart, and when Ted came home at Christmas he found Jack ensconced on a hair-cloth chair in the library. Ever afterwards, long after Jack died, Edith referred to especially likable dogs as "Jack dogs."[27] TR could be strict about dogs, for Edith reported that he was the one who would not let a new dog upstairs until it was housebroken.

The farm life of Sagamore Hill further entertained the children, and during harvest time, TR sometimes pitched hay with Noah Seaman, the farmer who ran the agricultural side of Sagamore Hill. The Roosevelt children had the benefit of growing up on a working farm where the cows were milked daily and the chickens and pigs fed to provide food for their table.[28]

Sagamore Hill even served as a riding school for the Roosevelt children. TR taught them all to ride and many afternoons went riding with them. TR bought them Pony Grant, a Shetland pony named after the pony he and his siblings had when they were young. Later

---

[24]Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *All in the Family,* 15, 59.

[25]Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children,* Joseph Bucklin Bishop, ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), 27.

[26]Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *All in the Family,* 85.

[27]Ibid., 69.

[28]Henry James Forman, "Roosevelt the Husbandman," *American Review of Reviews,* 1910, in Subject File, TRC-HU.

Ethel's son Richard Derby, Jr., who lived at Sagamore Hill during the Great War, also rode Pony Grant and enjoyed the farm life and the gardens of his grandparents' home.

For TR, Sagamore Hill provided a perfect home for the serious hunter. He entertained his local hunter friends and sometimes took them to hunt small game or practice with their rifles in the rifle pit. The woods around his house also provided hunting grounds for outings with his sons. TR taught his eldest son, Ted, to shoot and skin birds as he himself had done as a child. TR was quite particular about how his children handled guns because of the danger involved, and one day lost his temper at Archie for being sloppy in the care of his gun. Though TR loved birds and as an adult hesitated about shooting too many of them, he did see some birds as nuisances. He paid Archie to shoot crows from the windows of the third floor Gun Room, presumably because they attacked the farm's corn crop.

Roosevelt was extremely proud of the animal heads which he had brought back from the west in the 1880s and 1890s. He had them mounted, first in the hallway and then in the North Room when it was added in 1905. After his collecting trip to Africa for the Smithsonian in 1909-1910, he mounted very large African game heads (much to Edith's disgust). Thus animal trophy heads became the dominant decorating scheme on the first floor of Sagamore Hill. After the North Room was added in 1905 the Roosevelt family moved after-dinner activities there. Visitor Philip G. Thompson recalled hearing TR describe to visitors from the Dakotas how he shot the bison whose heads were mounted on each side of the fireplace, and remembered how fond TR was of Remington's statuette "The Bronco Buster," a gift from the Rough Riders. TR also told stories of his African safari of 1909-1910, in particular how the Nandi tribesmen used spears to kill the lion whose skin covered the floor in front of the fireplace.[29]

Riflery and hunting were taken for granted as pastimes for a sporting gentleman of his era, but TR perhaps exceeded the run-of-the-mill sportsman in his enthusiasm.[30] To many people it seemed paradoxical for a man who loved animals so much and studied them so carefully to take such pleasure in chasing and shooting them, but like other aristocratic men at the time, he felt that hunting was an eminently acceptable way to study nature, and he believed strongly that it kept the wild spirit of nature alive in him—without that, he might become over-civilized like so many of his contemporaries.[31]

---

[29]Fragment of Philip G. Thompson's Description of Sagamore Hill, Subject File, 1913-1918, TRC-HU; for an overview of how parts of the house and grounds were used during TR's lifetime see David H. Wallace, *Sagamore Hill: Sagamore Hill National Historic Site,* and Regina M. Bellavia, "Cultural Landscape Report for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site," M.A. Thesis, State University of New York, Syracuse, N.Y., May 1994.

[30]Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *All in the Family,* 61; EKR to Kermit Roosevelt, n.d. [June 18, 1903], Kermit and Belle Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress.

[31]Material adapted from Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt.*

Furthermore, Roosevelt believed that the chase and the hardships of camping and hiking hardened and strengthened his body for the political fights he had to wage, and which awaited him when he returned from the woods. He was often criticized for hunting and he was aware that it had become a minor political liability, so the presidential trips to Yellowstone Park with John Burroughs and to Yosemite with John Muir were well publicized. But he had not gone on the trips merely to get good publicity—he genuinely liked both men and later encouraged Muir to try to build more public support for his fight to save the giant sequoia trees and his struggle to preserve the Hetch Hetchy valley from being dammed up to serve as a municipal water source for San Francisco (although in fact he also supported Pinchot's position, which was to let San Francisco take Hetch Hetchy). Though some of TR's stands on conservation proved to be controversial, few doubted his commitment to the cause. [32]

Later in life TR used a camera to capture animal life and wrote an acquaintance that he thought that if animal life diminished too much it might be time to substitute the camera for the rifle. [33] He criticized game butchers and wrote that photographing animals in their habitats had become a "branch of sport," and he praised nature photographers for recording the lives of animals that were in danger of extinction. He wrote, "It is to the interest of all of us to see that there is ample and real protection for our game as for our woodlands. A true democracy, really alive to its opportunities, will insist upon such game preservation, for it is to the interest of our people as a whole. More and more, as it becomes necessary to preserve game, let us hope that the camera will largely supplant therifle."[34]

In his post-presidential years when he was a full-time resident of Sagamore Hill, Roosevelt remained deeply devoted to the cause of game preservation and conservation of natural resources. In magazine articles he called his own country "perhaps the chief offender among civilized nations in permitting the destruction and pollution of nature." It troubled him that "in the United States we turn our rivers and streams into sewers and dumping-grounds, we pollute the air, we destroy forests, and exterminate fishes, birds, and mammals—not to speak of vulgarizing charming landscapes with hideous advertisements." Although he preferred a uniform federal game protection law rather than forty-eight separate ones, he agreed to do whatever he could for the campaign to stop California from destroying its game birds through the "excessive hunting which free marketing brings." He warned readers of the *Outlook* about the extinction of game and birds which Audubon Societies and refuges sought to prevent, and he called for all national forests to be turned into game preserves.

---

[32]Char Miller, *Gifford Pinchot,* 147-176.

[33]Theodore Roosevelt to Warburton Pike, Jan. 18, 1905, Morison Rejects, TRC-HU.

[34]Theodore Roosevelt, "Camera Shots at Wild Animals," *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt.* Memorial Edition, Hermann Hagadorn, ed., 24 vols., (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923-1926), 15:49.

Conservation never stopped being one of Theodore Roosevelt's central passions, and in his lifetime, as after his death, Sagamore Hill was a beacon for nature lovers. TR has remained a hero to environmentalists, including Aldo Leopold, the articulate conservationist and Forest Service guardian of animals and trees, and Stewart Udall, President Kennedy's Secretary of the Interior and a crusader for wilderness preservation. Republicans, Democrats, Independents, and a wide variety of non-partisan conservation groups, including the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Alliance, invoke TR's memory to remind current generations of his passionate championship of game and forest conservation. He has been honored in the Conservation Hall of Fame run by the National Wildlife Federation, and conservationists such as Udall, eager to honor TR's legacy, have made pilgrimages to Sagamore Hill. Again, TR's passionate love of nature and his crucial role in the history of environmentalism must not be forgotten as part of the Sagamore Hill story.[35]

The Strenuous Life

From Sagamore Hill TR built an important political and literary career while trying at the same time to renovate the American character by preaching and practicing conservation, the strenuous life, and a simple life. Biographers did not dwell much on this theme until my book *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life* argued that TR became a cultural leader who tried to teach Americans how to live more actively, vigorously, and purposefully. Social historians such as E. Anthony Rotundo have explored TR's concerns with manliness and the strenuous life, and cultural historians such as David Shi and others have mentioned TR as part of a turn-of-the-twentieth-century movement toward embracing a simple life.[36] Though social and cultural historians are quite familiar with this interpretation of TR, few political historians or textbook writers have integrated it into their stories about him. Nevertheless, a big part of TR's influence upon America lay outside of traditional politics. He was a leading cultural spokesman for specific values and ideas.

TR originally defined the strenuous life as a life of daring, adventure, action, contact with nature, and pursuit of high purpose. In his famous speech "The Strenuous Life," given at

---

[35]Lorbiecki, *Aldo Leopold*, 12. In turn, TR said he admired Leopold's work with the American Game Protective Association: see Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 184. Stewart Udall traced the history of America's conservation in the twentieth century back to TR, whom he praised as the "great educator" of the American people in matters of conservation: see Stewart Udall, "Address by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall at the White House Conference on Conservation," Washington, D.C., May 24, 1962, Udall Papers, University of Arizona Library, 4.

[36]E. Anthony Rotundo, *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era*, (New York: Basic Books, 1993) and David E. Shi, *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

the Hamilton Club in Chicago on April 10, 1899, TR urged "not the doctrine of ignoble ease, but the doctrine of the strenuous life, the life of toil and effort, of labor and strife." He warned his fellow Americans not to lose interest in what went on beyond their nation's borders or to become mired in "scrambling commercialism; heedless of the higher life, the life of aspiration, of toil and risk." Leaders who were "stern men with empires in their brains" could teach Americans to lead the "life of strenuous endeavor" at home and abroad. [37]

Of course, TR's "strenuous life" philosophy stood for more than physical vigor and national self-assertion. Sports and active outdoor hiking and bird study had helped TR put his invalidism behind him as a teen, and he often recommended the "nature cure" to sickly boys and neurasthenic men. Beyond this, even in his early years at Sagamore Hill he organized active sports among his neighbors. In October 1885, with his sister Bamie's help he gave a breakfast for the Meadowbrook Hunt Club, which met at Sagamore Hill. He rode to the hounds to fox hunt across the hilly, uneven ground of nearby farmers' fields, leading other horsemen in the galloping fever of the hunt, including the stylish banker August Belmont and the society figure Stanley Mortimer. Sagamore Hill and its fox hunt made it into the pages of *Harper's Weekly* in 1886, with TR portrayed as a defender of rough sports—polo, riding, and fox-hunting. The article "Fox-hunting near New York" described how fox-hunters gathered at TR's house and then rode vigorously behind hounds that followed not a real fox, but an anise- or herring-scented trail on a six- to eight-mile run (which went right through nearby farmers' fields). Probably because of the *Harper's* article, London's *Pall Mall Gazette* incorrectly gave TR credit for introducing fox-hunting in America. Colonial aristocrats had in fact fox-hunted in North America many years before TR and his set tried it.[38]

Fox-hunting was dangerous, as were the games of polo that TR organized among his Oyster Bay neighbors a few years later. He proudly wore his broken arm and multiple injuries as badges of courage which attested to his sporting stamina and bravery.[39] TR and Henry Cabot Lodge believed that fox-hunting was a democratic sport in the U.S. and that it should be encouraged as a means of building vigor among the wealthy, too many of whom had become ineffectual playboy types who cared for little but money and social excitement at Newport. Though his greatest anger was directed at the fops and dandies of his own class who took butlers and champagne on their camping trips, TR soon generalized the strenuous life message and urged vigorous sports on all classes of men.[40]

---

[37]Theodore Roosevelt, *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, 15:267-281, xiv-xv.

[38]"Fox-hunting near New York," *Harper's Weekly*, Mar. 13, 1886, vol. 30, no. 1525, March 13, 1886): 171 (includes an etching of Sagamore Hill, though it is not clear that it had been renamed from its Leeholm days).

[39]Theodore Roosevelt, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 8 volumes, Elting E. Morison, John Morton Blum, and Alfred Chandler, eds., (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951-1954), 1:34.

[40]Theodore Roosevelt, *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, 2:340; Theodore Roosevelt, "Cross-Country Riding in America, Riding to the Hounds on Long Island," *Century Magazine*, vol. 32, no. 3 (July 1886): 337-342.

TR and Henry Cabot Lodge were part of a large movement advocating athleticism and vigor in late nineteenth-century America.[41] When President of Harvard Charles William Eliot defined what elite men's education should mean, he argued that it should be an aristocracy which excels in manly sports, carries off the honors and prizes of the learned professions, and bears itself with distinction in all fields of intellectual labor and combat; the aristocracy which in peace stands for the public honor and renown, and in war rides first into the murderous thickets.[42]

Like Eliot, TR aimed for the renovation of his own privileged class in his emerging philosophy of the strenuous life, but he wanted to expand the message to preach athleticism and fierce endeavor to every class of Americans in order to make America a stronger and more consequential nation on the world stage. Athleticism and the belief that sports build character swept America and England in the late nineteenth century. Organized sports were not a significant part of an American boy's education before the Civil War, but by 1900 many private and later public schools started to require athletics in the belief that sports were central tools of education. These schools taught that rough manly sports such as football made men out of boys, and that all boys would be better "muscular Christians" if they disciplined their bodies and their lascivious impulses by daily rigorous sports. In England, Thomas Hughes and Charles Kingsley spoke up for these ideas, and in America Thomas Wentworth Higginson, TR, and other writers popularized them.[43]

Though TR did not invent the philosophy of athleticism, he proved to be an energetic defender of a movement that others started. He was well known as a proponent of the "great virile virtues, the virtues of courage, energy, and daring; the virtues which beseem a masterful race—a race fit to fell forests, to build roads, to found commonwealths, to conquer continents, to overthrow armed enemies!"[44] Progressive journalist Ray Stannard Baker attested to TR's influence on a generation of young men: "I was not the only youngster who believed in the 'strenuous life': there were thousands of us who had recently come from the frontier, and the farm, and the plains. Not a few of us felt that we had something to do in saving an America that

---

[42]Rotundo, *American Manhood.*

[43]Charles William Eliot, quoted in Robert J. Higgs, "Yale and the Heroic Ideal, Gotterdammerung and Palingenesis, 1865-1914," in J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, eds., *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1987), 160.

[44]Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt.*

seemed to us to be going astray."[45]

After his Hamilton Club speech in 1899, in which he called for "stern men with empires in their brains" to look outward and dare to make America a world power, TR became the national representative of the strenuous life philosophy, a major spokesman w ho argued that Americans should embrace a life of struggle and high purpose. He warned his fellow Americans who might be tempted to live the soft, comfortable, easy life of affluence and purposelessness, made possible for the middle classes by the industrial age, to strive instead to lead active lives. To lead a strenuous life meant a call to greater physical vigor and sportsmanship, to danger and exploration, to national expansion, or to war if necessary.

As the years went by, TR expanded his definition of the strenuous life to encompass broader values, including devotion to family, leading a simple life, the importance of having the kind of child-centered family life he and Edith lived at Sagamore Hill, and the value of play and playfulness in the home. In these ways TR's philosophy developed into a larger and more comprehensive program for how Americans should live in the twentieth century. He also allowed newspaper reporters to write about his life and photograph him haying and chopping wood in order to spread the word about intentionally embracing the simple outdoor country life, and he espoused his philosophy when he wrote about the life he led at Sagamore Hill in his *Autobiography* and in popular magazine articles. In his regular advice column for the *Ladies' Home Journal,* he included as part of his definition of the strenuous life:

> "striving to better civic conditions," "writing a book or a poem," and "studying Indian songs in Pueblo villages." Most of all, the strenuous life included "patient mothers" who took special care of their children's "intellectual and moral education." When he celebrated mothers as heroines of the strenuous life he tried to win them over to become followers of his moral diagnosis.[46]

Roosevelt practiced what he preached at Sagamore Hill. He urged his children to try a wide variety of sports. Outside the old barn he taught them and their cousins to play football; at the water's edge he gave them swimming instructions and shouted "Dive, Alicey, Dive" as he urged his daughter to plunge feet first into the swimming hole. He frightened Eleanor Roosevelt with his games of stagecoach and dunking. He organized handicap races at Cooper's Bluff to see which child could climb up the steep sand bank first, and he was famous for asking his guests to run down Cooper's Bluff with him. When he ran down Cooper's Bluff with his children one icy day, they fell and hurt themselves, landing "dusty, bruised, and breathless" at the base of the bluff. Yet in TR's mind the cuts were worth having as marks of fearless courage. Not so with

---

[45]Ray Stannard Baker, quoted in Rotundo, *American Manhood,* 47.

[46]Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt,* 305; "Mr. Roosevelt's Views on the Strenuous Life," *Ladies' Home Journal,*23 (May 1906): 21.

Edith. She sent him with the injured Alice to the doctor in the village and was clearly annoyed by his rough and tumble adventures with the children.[47]

TR encouraged risky and strenuous activity because he hated weakness and inactivity. He allowed Quentin and the other boys to climb trees and the ice house roof, and he taught Ted when he was nine to chop trees and ski in the nearby woods. TR led "scrambles" and "point-to-point" walks with the children all over the grounds of Sagamore Hill to teach them hardiness. "Over, under, or through" was the rule for obstacles, and so ponds had to be swum, haystacks mounted, swamps waded, and fences climbed. According to Ted, his father took only men and boys on the roughest scrambles, but included girls and women in the point-to-point walks.[48] His appetite for activity was world famous. In 1905 TR took Edith rowing on the Sound, after which he and Archie went riding and had to gallop home in the rush of a heavy rain storm, and the next day he followed these activities with vigorous tennis.[49]

Though less strenuous, the family's frequent picnics often started with a long walk or row, and were followed by sandy clams and thick ham sandwiches. On one picnic TR allowed the children to go in wading in their clothes; Edith was annoyed with her husband's permissiveness when the children returned with stained and soaking clothing. When she gave the children medicinal Jamaican ginger that night to prevent their catching cold, they protested to their father, who told them, "I don't dare interfere. I shall be fortunate if she does not give me ginger too."[50] The popular press covered the strenuous life at Sagamore Hill even before TR became president, and his preaching and example inspired other Americans to live a more active life in the new century.[51]

---

[47]Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *All in the Family,* 88; Ethel recalled that when several children played and watched tennis with TR, TR's valet James Amos brought down abundant lemonade to the courts (informal interview with Mrs. Derby, SAHI Archives). TR and Edith often rowed in their rowboat, kept at a dock reached by a path through the woods; in 1906 they watched Archie sail his little black sailboat, *Why,* from the same dock, accompanied by his dog Skip and a crew member of the presidential yacht, *Sylph.* A year later they mourned when Skip died (TR, *Letters to His Children,* 169).

[48]Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *All in the Family,* 88-89.

[49]Theodore Roosevelt to Kermit, Sept. 21, 1905, *Letters to Kermit from Theodore Roosevelt 1902-1908* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), 113.

[50]Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., op. cit., 93-94, 97-98. For the most part the children enjoyed TR's brand of strenuous child-rearing.

[51] For example see Charles H. Dorr, "Sagamore Hill; Theodore Roosevelt's Beautiful Long Island Home," *The Sunday Magazine* of the New York Sunday Press, June 12, 1898, TRC-HU; *Ladies' Home Journal, Collier's,* and other magazines did stories about Roosevelt's strenuous family life, and so did newspapers.

The Simple Life

Their busy political life did not stop the Roosevelts from practicing a simple family life at Sagamore Hill. When TR was vice president, he had more time at home to play with the children. He would visit Archie and Quentin in their shared bedroom on the second floor and before they went to bed play "tickle and 'grabble'" with them until Edith announced that he could only play "bear" with them before supper. She did not want him to get them agitated around bedtime because it made it hard to get them to sleep. [52] The children liked to stay up late to greet their father when he returned from a political trip; for example, late one evening Archie waked up to tell his father about a small turtle he had found on the Sagamore Hill grounds.[53]

When TR was president the children still viewed their father as their best playmate. On a rainy day in the summer of 1903, in honor of Ethel's birthday, he played hide-and-seek in the barn with them, while Quentin jumped down from the hay loft. TR took them camping overnight on nearby beaches and cooked chicken for them, which they loved.[54] He played tennis with them and acted as umpire during their other tennis games, offering pen knives as prizes for the winners.[55]

The Roosevelts led a simpler life than many Americans, and they did so intentionally. Despite their relative wealth they resisted new technology and adopted it later than did other wealthy families. They lived without a car until 1909, without electricity until 1918, and without a telephone until TR became president, and they acquired a record-player (Victrola) only after 1910. TR danced to "Garry Owen" and other favorite songs with his grandson, Richard Derby, in the North Room, and Quentin and Kermit entertained the family with piano and mandolin music there. But the Roosevelts continued a frugal, simple existence, using candles and keeping the heat turned down to conserve fuel—they thought modern Americans were too concerned with physical comfort. Breakfast at 8:00 (typically bacon and eggs), a locked pantry, and only ice tea decanters in the guest rooms were regulations set by Edith, who ran the house frugally on a limited budget, especially in the 1890s when TR was not making much money. Her task was not easy, as TR typically did not pay attention to the practical issues of providing meals and service for all the guests he invited.

What mattered most to the Roosevelts were their children, the natural environment, their political projects, and books. The close and affectionate relationships TR had with his children show up in letter after letter. He wrote Ted: "I love my darling children all the time,

---

[52] Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children,* 29.

[53] Ibid., 31.

[54] Ibid., 52-53.

[55] Ibid., 58.

and long to take them in my arms."[56] Sagamore Hill meant living a deliberate life with time to observe nature and enjoy watching the children grow up. Though it was TR who played raucous games with the children, both parents paid attention to their needs and read to them. In an era when many parents raised children to be seen and not heard, the Roosevelts were exceptionally modern in allowing their six children freedom to explore and enjoy nature. The Roosevelts were viewed as permissive, irresponsible parents by some family and friends, and Bamie commented more than once on what badly-brought-up children the young Roosevelts were, while Washington gossips clucked over their wild behavior in the White House.

Despite this undercurrent of criticism, journalists portrayed the Roosevelts in the early years of the twentieth century as the ideal family. For example, *Harper's Weekly* in 1901 published an article, "President Roosevelt and His Family," which highlighted the outdoors life TR encouraged his family to lead at Sagamore Hill. *Harper's* advised that the nation should "take the family, as well as its head, into its friendship" and praised the Roosevelts as a "big wholesome family that is typical of the nation itself."[57]

TR and Edith were very concerned about maintaining a normal life for the children after TR became president. They made the children walk to Cove School, and later Archie and Kermit took their bikes. But being part of a big family with demanding public duties sometimes had disadvantages for the younger children. Archie recalled that after one Cove School gathering, when TR gave presents to the local children and played Santa Claus, the rest of the family all got in the carriage, but forgot Archie. He had to walk home, and remembered that "I arrived home almost hysterical."[58] Life in a public spotlight challenged the family, but they tried hard to pay attention to the children's needs.

During the years of TR's presidency, one factor in particular made maintaining a normal life for his family especially difficult. In those years, and to a lesser extent in the post-presidential period, Sagamore Hill posed a serious security problem. How could a large landed estate with a family used to tramping and riding through the woods at any hour be guarded against would-be assassins and intruders? After President McKinley's assassination TR balked at first about the necessity of having his whole family guarded by the Treasury Department's Secret Service agents, and Bamie asked their mutual friend Bob Ferguson to stand by at large public occasions to protect the president.

Finally, TR relented and allowed Secret Service agents to station themselves around the woods of Sagamore Hill, but he often escaped their protection. The presidential couple would walk to the barn, then pass through the apple orchard to their beach on Cold Spring Harbor, where they could then go off for an afternoon alone in their rowboat. Edith's social secretary, Belle Hagner, recalled that Mrs. Roosevelt told the family at lunch one day that she

---

[56]Theodore Roosevelt to Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Sept. 5, 1890, TRC-HU.

[57]"President Roosevelt and His Family," *Harper's Weekly*, 1901, 983, in Subject File, TRC-HU. See also in the same Subject File, "White House Pets," *Star*, Aug. 23, 1908, TRC-HU.

[58]Archibald Bulloch Roosevelt, Memoirs, TRC-HU.

resented the watchful gaze of the agents when she took her afternoon nap on the second story porch. Because they were primarily concerned about unwanted intruders, the agents concentrated on the entrances to the house—the main door, the piazza, and the side door.[59]

Ethel Roosevelt Derby recalled that sightseers often hired carriages at the Oyster Bay railroad station and came up to observe the family, so that the tennis courts could not be used with any guarantee of privacy for most of the day.[60] Eventually, Edith had a chain installed to stop unwanted traffic from strangers.[61] Newspapers reported whether they walked or took a carriage to church in the village each Sunday, and a walk home in a rainstorm made news, as did the day they rode in an automobile.[62]

Defender of American Arts

As a president who was aware that the "bully pulpit" gave him exceptional influence over the American people, TR also used Sagamore Hill to showcase his love of American creativity. As a defender of the significance of American art and literature, he preached Americanism and the value of "genuine Americana" such as Indian pottery, cowboy songs, and the works of homegrown writers and artists. He collected objects which showed that American art and literature were as important as European equivalents, and wrote about his finds. His cultural nationalism and pride are evident around Sagamore Hill.

The Roosevelts' artistic tastes and collections also extended beyond American culture. As I note in *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life:*

> The Roosevelts were catholic in their artistic tastes, but they respected St. Gaudens' neo-classicism and leaned toward the romanticism of P. Marcius Simonds, whose art they collected. They were proud to own original sculpture, including Frederick Remington's "The Bronco Buster" and St. Gaudens' "The Puritan," and lovely Sargent sketches of Kermit and of the White House. Culturally, however, TR stood for what Frank Lloyd Wright called an "innovative nostalgia," an attraction to a bare bones aesthetic that honored plain living in the past. [63] When he defended the "simple life" as an antidote to the excessive materialism of his age, TR was in close sympathy with

---

[59]Isabella Hagner James, "A Cave-Dweller as Social Secretary," *The White House Historical Society,* 24, in SAHI Archives.

[60]Interview, Mrs. Derby, informal, SAHI Archives.

[61]Archibald B. Roosevelt, Jr., "The Ghost of Sagamore Hill," *American Heritage,* vol. 21, no. 3 (April 1970): 70.

[62]*New York Times,* Sept. 4, 1905, July 27, 1908, Mar. 8, 1909.

[63]TR praised the modern Ash Can School paintings of John Sloan and the hard-edged celebration of industrial scenes painted by Charles Sheeler, and said their art helped to portray modern life: J. Mellquist,

Edward Bok's crusade in the *Ladies' Home Journal* to simplify domestic architecture and interior design. Bok endorsed the Arts and Crafts Movement's belief in replacing "repellently ornate" Victorian bric-a-brac with a "just" sense of beauty embodied in natural material, simple lines, and the revival of historic craftsmanship. TR praised Charles Wagner's book *The Simple Life,* and was pleased when Roycroft craftsman Elbert Hubbard heralded him as a kindred spirit and placed him on his Great Roster of the American Academy of Immortals.[64] Arts and Crafts furniture-maker Gustav Stickley also saw in Roosevelt's Square Deal a parallel movement to his own return to hardwood essentials and masculine remodeling of the female flourishes of the Victorian parlor.[65]

"The Armory Show Thirty Years Later," *Magazine of Art* 36 (1943): 300; TR "The City in Modern Life," *Atlantic Monthly* 75 (1895) 371; see Wallace, *Sagamore Hill,* and Inventory and Appraisal of the Art, Literary and Other Personal Property Belonging to the Estate of the Late Theodore Roosevelt at Oyster Bay, Long Island, 1919, for art he owned (SAHI Archives).

[64]In his "Address of President Roosevelt before the Grand Lodge of the State of Pennsylvania upon the occasion of the Sesquicentennial Celebration of the Initiation of Brother George Washington," November 5, 1902, TRC-HU (Wagner was a friend of Mlle. Souvestre, Eleanor and Bamie's teacher); see David E. Shi, *The Simple Life,* 186; Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago, 18 73-1913* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980). TR and Edith were friends with Maria Longworth Nichols Storer, the leading woman of the Arts and Crafts Movement and founder of Rookwood, and kept one of her vases in Edith's drawing room: Wallace, *Sagamore Hill,* 109.

[65]Stickley's mission-style furniture was built by workers who enjoyed profit-sharing, and at Hull House the Arts and Crafts Movement became an avenue for immigrants to become productive Americans. Eileen Boris, *Art and Labor: Ruskin, Morris, and the Craftsman Ideal in America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 46, 162. Some of the house's most notable examples of "genuine Americana" include:

Frederick Remington's statuettes, "Bronco Buster" and "Paleolithic Man"
Remington's drawing "Head of an Indian"
Saint Gaudens' "The Puritan"
Sioux buffalo robe
Kelley's "The Rough Rider"
A.B. Frost's "Hunting Scenes"
Howard Pyle's oil painting, "George Rogers Clark on the Way to Kaskaskia"
Frederick Macmonnies' bronze statue, "Plainsman"
Also evident within the house are TR's period furniture and collection of native artifacts and his book collection filled with "genuine Americana":
Mission oak book stand and rockers, the Rookwood vase, and a few light fixtures of the Arts and Crafts period, Navajo rugs and blankets, American Indian pottery jar,
John Singer Sargent's sketches of the White House and Kermit,
an unusually rich book collection of almost 6,000 books strong in "genuine Americana," which included nineteenth-century commonplaces such as Cooper and Hawthorne,
rarities such as George Catlin, Abby Morton Diaz, Joel Spingarn, Isaac Newton Phelps Stokes, Celia Thaxter, Phillis Wheatley, and Candace Wheeler.

TR further expressed his national pride in the creative side of American life by entertaining writers and artists at Sagamore Hill. For example, Edgar Lee Masters, author of *Spoon River Anthology,* a book TR loved, recalled coming to tea at Sagamore Hill in July 1918. The two men had an intimate talk about the Great War, poetry, hunting, and outdoors life, and TR took Masters to see the corn field then growing on Sagamore Hill's farm land. They continued their talk seated in the rose arbor that in 1918 still offered a view of the bay. Writers considered TR a peer, a friend, and a fellow creative soul.[66]

Theodore Roosevelt's cultural nationalism shaped his occupancy of Sagamore Hill in other ways. When TR stated his commitment to Spelling Reform from Sagamore Hill in August 1906, announcing that he supported Andrew Carnegie"s ideas, he declared America's cultural independence from Europe. His friends Thomas Lounsbury and Brander Matthews also advocated giving up British spellings such as "labour" for "labor," and making American English simpler and more phonetic than the King's English ("thorough" became "thoro"). TR ordered the Government Printing office to use the 300 modified spellings advocated by the Simplified Spelling Board, and in doing so set off a major national controversy[67]—scarcely the first time his forward-thinking ideas, his high ideals, and his deeply felt passions were to challenge and change the American spirit.

---

[66] Frederick S. Wood, *Roosevelt as We Knew Him*, 390; Charles Lee told a visitor that TR liked to sit on a rustic bench underneath an oak, east of the apple orchard: W. H. Richardson, "A Visit to Sagamore Hill," Oct. 2, 1920, TRC-HU.

[67] Theodore Roosevelt, Letters, 5: 378; New York Times, Aug. 23, 1906.

A Working Farm

Natalie A. Naylor

It is significant that the first structure Theodore Roosevelt built at Sagamore Hill was the combined stable and lodge. He had enjoyed riding horses as a boy, and he engaged in equestrian activities during most of his life. Moreover, horses were needed not only for transportation, but to pull plows, mowers, and other farm equipment. (TR resisted automobiles for some years.) Stables were as common on country estates in the nineteenth century, and into the early years of the twentieth century, as are automobile garages for homes built since the second half of the twentieth century. Clive Aslet has observed, "It was the horse in all its many forms—carriage horse, trotting horse, hunter, polo pony, racehorse—that inspired the greatest triumphs of sporting architecture and made the deepest mark on country estates."[1]

The lodge (see Figure 7, page 104) was designed as living quarters for the farmer or superintendent (the designation varied over the years). Robert Gillespie's family lived in the lodge for the longest period, 1914-1943. Noah Seaman, who was the farmer from the 1880s until he died in 1911, did not always live on the Roosevelt estate.[2] It is significant that Noah Seaman is usually

---

[1]Clive Aslet, *The American Country House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 178. The Roosevelts had a sign stating "No Automobiles Allowed" on their private road, and cars were not permitted to go up to the house when TR was president. Roosevelt had Ted buy a car for Edith in 1909. After he returned from his African trip, a new road was constructed to their house to accommodate automobiles, and TR began to go into Manhattan by automobile rather than taking the train.

[2]Seaman's obituary in the East Norwich Enterprise (March 25, 1911) stated that he had been superintendent at Sagamore Hill "for more than thirty years." Quoted by Franklin R. McElwain, "The Search for Noah Seaman: TR's Superintendent and Friend," Freeholder (Oyster Bay Historical Society), 2 (Winter 1998): 20-22. Seaman probably was hired sometime after TR purchased the property in 1880, but

referred to as "farmer," while Robert Gillespie, who had prior experience working on estates in New Jersey and upstate New York, had the title "superintendent."

Noah Seaman and Alfred Davis

TR's first mention of Noah Seaman and Alfred Davis, his gardener, was in a letter to his sister Bamie (Anna) in 1887, while he was in Florence on his honeymoon with Edith. Because of losses he had incurred in the west, TR was trying to cut expenses. "Would Seaman do as well with the garden as Davis? If so, would not he and a boy to take care of the road be sufficient for the place?" Davis had been a groom for the Roosevelt family at Tranquility and continued as the gardener at Sagamore Hill. The caption on the photograph of Davis in a 1903 newspaper article stated that he "has been in that family's service all his life."[3]

Ted, TR's eldest son (Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.), wrote in his memoirs, "The [Sagamore Hill] garden in early days was ruled by an old negro named Davis....We must have been a 'thorn in the flesh and rankling fire' to him—tramping on his flower beds, eating his grapes and currants. His form of address to us had such a sameness that we christened him 'Old Let-It-Be.'" Davis is listed in the 1900 census when he was 71 (born 1829). He was living with his sister Betty on the Sagamore Hill estate, and was pensioned off a few years later by the family to live in "dignified retirement" in the village of Oyster Bay. He died in 1910.[4] (See Figure 8a, page 104, for a picture of Davis.)

---

the 1900 manuscript census lists him as living in a home he owned on the road from Oyster Bay to Cold Spring Harbor and thus not living on the estate. By the 1910 census, he is living in the lodge. See Appendix 5 for the census data.

[3]Theodore Roosevelt, *Letters from Theodore Roosevelt to Anna Roosevelt Cowles, 18 70-1918*, edited by Anna Roosevelt Cowles (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), 90 (Bamie married William Sheffield Cowles in 1895); David McCullough, *Mornings on Horseback* (New York: Touchstone, 1981), 231 (re Davis at Tranquility, see also TR's letter to his mother, October 31, 1880, from Tranquility where he mentions Davis, in Elting E. Morison, ed., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 8 vols. [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951-1954], 1:47); *New York Tribune*, June 7, 1903 (Illustrated Supplement), copy in the vertical files, Nassau County Museum Collection, Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University.

[4]Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. (hereafter, TR, Jr.), *All in the Family* (New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1929), 15; see Appendix 5 for the census data; Henry James Forman, "Roosevelt, The Husbandman," *American Review of Reviews*, August 1910, 177. TR addressed letters enclosing a check to "Alfred Davis, Esq.," and the census lists Davis as "Alfred." An article in the *Boston Sunday Herald*, gave his first name as "George." See TR letters dated December 24, 1897; February 5, 1898; and April 2, 1898 (Series 2, reel 315, vol. 3: 649; vol. 4: 370 and 659); and August 3, 1902, clipping in Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, microfilm.

Noah Seaman was an "ex-oysterman." He was later described by the former *Oyster Bay Pilot* newspaper editor, Albert Cheney, as an "exceptionally fine man." Cheney further said, "The President regarded him highly, treating him almost like a brother, both in public and in private." TR addressed his letters to "Noah Seaman, Esq.," and Seaman had letterheads printed with Sagamore Hill and his name. A reporter for the *Farm Journal* in 1906 wrote that "Mr. Seaman has charge of the entire farm, and I found him to be a very pleasant man and an excellent farmer." Henry James Forman in a 1910 article described Seaman as the "bucolic administrator of this domain. He lives there the year round and is devoted to his employer." (See Figure 8b, page 104, for a picture of Seaman and his staff.) In his memoirs, Ted describes collecting bits of broken china in the field, "We followed Seaman, our farmer, for all the world like birds in search of worms, as he and 'Kitty Mare,' the plough-horse, turned furrow after furrow of smooth brown earth," collecting bits of broken china. The "Biographical Index" in Roosevelt's *Letters to Kermit* (1946), however, describes Seaman as the "respected but stern protector of farm and garden against marauding children." Seaman died in March 1911 at the age of 54. His obituary in the *East Norwich Enterprise* referred to him as the "popular superintendent of Sagamore Hill," who "was greatly beloved by all the Roosevelt family, and stood high in the estimation of the entire community."[5]

The superintendent had charge of the farm and estate. When the Roosevelts were in Washington or otherwise not at home, he was in full charge of the grounds. Letters from the Roosevelts in the White House to Noah Seaman ask him to verify bills, see that repairs are made to the property, open up the main house, and take care of other tasks. Some of the correspondence was through TR's secretary, William Loeb, and sometimes with Edith. At times, Seaman's wife, Ida, would assist with work in the house. Noah Seaman wrote Mrs. Roosevelt in 1902, "Mrs. Seaman can put the room to rights. Could you let me know how many horses you intend to bring on with you then I can make calculation about how much hay and straw to keep for our own use."[6]

---

[5]Albert Cheney, *Personal Memoirs of the Home Life of the Late Theodore Roosevelt*, 2d ed. (Washington, DC: Cheney Publishing, 1919), 59 (Cheney's daughter Amy was TR's secretary at Sagamore Hill when TR was governor and vice president); Walter E. Andrews, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Farmer," *Farm Journal* 30 (December 1906): 431; Henry James Forman, "Roosevelt, The Husbandman," *American Review of Reviews*. August 1910, 177; TR, Jr., *All in the Family*, 57-58; Theodore Roosevelt, *Letters to Kermit from Theodore Roosevelt, 1902-1908*, edited by Will Irwin (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946), 291; McElwain,"Search for Noah Seaman," 22 (quoting March 25 obituary).

[6]February 13, 1902, Series 2, vol. 105, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress microfilm. Some sixty letters to or from Noah Seaman are listed in the index to Roosevelt correspondence, spanning the years from 1897 to 1909. No correspondence with the second superintendent, Robert Gillespie, is indexed; letters were unnecessary since the Roosevelts were living at Sagamore Hill year-round after March 1910.

The Old Barn

A barn was the one structure on the property when TR purchased the land. Ted described the old barn as a "weatherbeaten gray building that had stood on the hilltop time out of mind. The massive beams that supported its shingled roof were hand-hewn. It had a patriarchal, colonial air about it. Memories of the past, when Oyster Bay was a little self-dependent village clung to its rough unpainted sides." In November 1903, TR wrote Ted, "The old barn, I am sorry to say, seems to be giving way at one end."[7]

The grain and hay grown on the estate provided food and fodder for the animals. The hay in the barn also was a favorite spot where the children played. TR wrote to Emily Carow (Edith's sister) in August 1903: "The barn is filled with hay, and of course meets every requirement for the most active species of hide-and-seek and the like." Ten days later he again was romping with the children in the old barn and wrote Emily, "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." In his *Autobiography* TR described these experiences:

> One of the stand-bys for enjoyment, especially in rainy weather, was the old barn. This had been built nearly a century previously, and was as delightful as only the pleasantest kind of old barn can be. It stood at the meeting-spot of three fences. A favorite amusement used to be an obstacle race when the barn was full of hay. The contestants were timed and were started successively from outside the door. They rushed inside, clambered over or burrowed through the hay, as suited them best, dropped out of a place where a loose board had come off, got over, through or under the three fences, and raced back to the starting-point. When they were little, their respective fathers were expected also to take part in the obstacle race, and when with the advance of years the fathers finally refused to be contestants, there was a general feeling of pained regret among the children at such a decline in the sporting spirit.

TR, Jr. wrote in his memoirs that if a "haystack was in the way" on one of the "point-to-point" walks, "we either climbed over it or burrowed through it." When playing hide-and-seek in the barn, "We tunneled the hay until it was like a rabbit warren. These burrows gave us a great advantage over the older members of the family, because the grown-ups on account of their size got stuck if they tried to use them."[8]

---

[7]TR, Jr., *All in the Family,* 89; Theodore Roosevelt, *Letters to His Children,* edited by James Bucklin Bishop (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), 73. TR's *Letters to His Children* has been reprinted in *A Bully Father,* with a Biographical Essay and Notes by Joan Paterson Kerr (New York: Random House, 1995)

[8]August 6 and 16, 1903, in Roosevelt, *Letters to His Children,* 52, 54; Roosevelt, *Autobiography,* 343; TR, Jr., *All in the Family,* 88, 89-90.

After the old barn collapsed in 1904, Edith corresponded from the White House with Seaman about a new barn. The first plans were too elaborate and would be too expensive. She did not want a cellar or concrete floor. She explained:

> I have gone carefully over the plans of the barn since I saw you, and have decided that I do not care to build anything so elaborate. I hope to be able to keep Sagamore all my life, and as long as I have a stable, such a barn would be more than we need.

I want a barn like the old barn without any cellar, for I know all that concrete must be what adds the expense, and the cows can be put on the same floor as the hay, with a couple of stalls for the farm horses besides them if there is room. After all, as you know, we never intend or expect to have a real farm, and when we come back to Oyster Bay to live, the carriage horses will have to serve for both purposes, just as they used to do.

Edith thought the old barn could be duplicated for $1,200-$1,400. (The Roosevelt's 1883 stable had a basement and cost $5,160 in 1883, but that figure included the adjoining lodge.) A new barn was not constructed until 1907; it was painted gray and green.[9] The new barn was used for hay and storage of farm equipment; the animals were never kept there in Robert Gillespie's memory. Cows were in the basement of the carriage house or stable.

"Roosevelt the Husbandman"

While TR was president, many articles about him and Sagamore Hill appeared in the newspapers and magazines. A few of these centered on the farm aspects of the estate and provide first-hand contemporary accounts. In June 1903 a number of newspapers ran similar articles describing TR's farm in Oyster Bay. The one in the *Oyster Bay Pilot* stated, "The estate of Sagamore Hill comprises about ninety acres, forty of which this season are under cultivation, the farming operations being superintended by Noah Seaman. Seaman is proud of his potatoes. 'This is one of the best potato farms about here,' he said the other day."[10] The most extensive information about the farm was in a one-page article, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Farmer,"

---

[9]Edith Roosevelt to Noah Seaman, October 3, 1904, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 2, 1902-1904, Letterbook, v. 106, p. 447, Library of Congress, microfilm. This letter is also quoted in Francis Wilshin, *Historic Resource Study,* 50. The color of the barn is mentioned by Charles Somerville, who reported that TR had chosen the colors and it was being painted when he visited. See Charles Somerville, "How Roosevelt Rests," *Broadway Magazine* 18 (September 1907): 664-65.

[10] "President Roosevelt at Home," *Oyster Bay Pilot,* June 20, 1903, clipping in Roosevelt scrapbooks (Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, microfilm). Several similar articles appeared in other newspapers including "The President's Farm and Stories Suggested by Coming [250th Anniversary]

which appeared in the *Farm Journal* in December 1906. The author, Walter E. Andrews, visited Sagamore Hill in October when the Roosevelts were in Washington, so Noah Seaman and his wife hosted him. Andrews was impressed that "there was no gate, no guardian fences. Just a plain farm driveway, winding up a wooded slope." Seaman reported that "about forty-seven acres" were cultivated, including pasture, with the rest woodland. He used their own stable manure for fertilizer and grew hay and straw for their animals. They kept "about five horses, six cows, eight pigs, and a flock of Barred Plymouth Rock chickens. Some turkeys, too."

Photographs accompanying the article (see Figure 9, page 105) include Seaman's house, the entrance to gardens, rail fence and stile, four cows, path to the president's house, and the new summer-house. Andrews approvingly described the "rustic entrance to the flower, fruit, and vegetable gardens. . . . [with] graceful festoons of clematis paniculata, moonflower and crimson rambler." The attractive flower garden had "Mrs. Roosevelt's favorite roses and many other very beautiful [but unnamed] flowers." (See Figure 10, page 106.) The fruits included strawberries, grapes, raspberries, currants and gooseberries, peach, pear, and apple trees. Although it was too late in the season to see vegetables in the garden, Andrews noted many lima bean poles and abundant asparagus plants. Seaman told the reporter that he had asked the president to help "get in the hay" one day the previous July, and described how TR had enthusiastically pitched in the work.[11]

James Amos, Roosevelt's valet, wrote, "Mr. Roosevelt loved to put in a day's work on his place with the men—particularly at haying time. At such times he went to work in the morning and worked through the day, knocking off at sunset and at lunch time with the others. He joked and talked with his fellow workers, drank from the same bucket and dipper and always insisted on Seaman, his gardener, putting his name on the pay-roll and paying him for his day's work."[12]

A 1910 article by Henry James Forman was entitled "Roosevelt the Husbandman." Because of previous articles in the press about TR and haying, some newspapermen joked about "our own Cincinnatus," and implied he did it for the benefit of photographers. In fact, TR had written his daughter Alice in 1908 about one of her friends he had just seen, "When he came out I had just stopt haying, and I besought him to tell you this fact so as to refute your cruel

---

Celebration at Oyster Bay," *Boston Journal*, June 21, 1903; and "The President's Farm," *New York Tribune* (?), June 7 (?), 1903 (the newspaper and date are not fully identified on the clipping). The latter article also comments on the growth in the village of Oyster Bay: "The town has grown wonderfully in the last two years. Five business blocks of brick have gone up, and one is building....It is impossible to rent or buy a house in Oyster Bay at this time, unless one is burning money and doesn't care what he pays." The article also noted that the gravel and sand sidewalk in front of the town hall had been replaced with cement; the town hall was built in 1901.

[11]Walter E. Andrews, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Farmer," *Farm Journal*, December 1906, 431.

[12]James E. Amos, *Theodore Roosevelt: Hero to his Valet* (New York: John Day, 1927), 84-85. Hereafter cited as *Hero to his Valet*.

suspicions that I had hitherto hayed with a view to my political future." Forman said that TR "enjoyed pitching hay and he has gone right on pitching hay, regardless of whether anybody saw him and smiled or not." He quoted TR saying, "We were unable to get an extra hired man this year, so I had to help bring in the hay. We have just brought in the last load." Forman observed that "to work two afternoons in the hayfield under a baking sun, side by side with his own farm laborers, scarcely sounds like an attempt at a Cincinnatus pose." Forman described the farm operations:

> Aside from the hay, the little farm produces rye and oats and corn, wholly for private consumption. All this has to be mown and garnered, and to this work, too, Mr. Roosevelt sometimes lends a hand. The grain is mostly for the Sagamore Hill stock. Of the hay Mr. Roosevelt frequently sells a part to neighbors, but the rest of the farm produce and vegetables remain on the hill. There are only five horses and three cows on the place, so they are amply provided for with fodder throughout the year. A whole population of chickens enlivens the barnyard and these also are maintained on home produce. Altogether Sagamore Hill presents a lively picture of a small American farm.[13]

The children had their own sections of the garden and sometimes had their own animals. In fact, Edith wrote TR from Sagamore Hill in 1900, "I went to church where Kermit was so naughty that I told him if he could not behave I would not allow him to keep chickens."[14]

In his 1910 article, Forman wrote that one of his "keen-minded" friends predicted that "fifty years hence, when Sagamore Hill will be a national preserve, the curator will point out the carefully-guarded 'last hayrick that Theodore Roosevelt helped to make.'" Sagamore Hill was opened to the public in 1953 by the Roosevelt Memorial Association (now the Theodore Roosevelt Association) and became part of the National Park Service in 1963, so the prediction of it being a national preserve in fifty years came true. However, TR's "last hayrick" was not preserved and at the present time (2005) there is no hay at all on the grounds (see Figures 11, 12, and 13 on pages 106-107).[15]

---

[13]Henry James Forman, "Roosevelt the Husbandman," *American Review of Reviews,* August 1910, 174, 176, 177; TR to Alice Roosevelt, June 29, 1908, in Series 2, 1908, Letterbook, 82, quoted by Francis Wilshin, *Historic Resource Study,* 125. In a brief typed recommendation on July 24, 1907, TR had dictated "Harold Webb has been working for me during haying time this year." TR inserted by hand "and with" at the marked point, clearly indicating that he participated in the haying. Copy of letter in the Theodore Roosevelt vertical file in the library of the Huntington (N.Y.) Historical Society (209 Main Street); a copy of this letter has been deposited in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files.

[14]October 14, 1900, correspondence in Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard University.

[15]Forman, "Roosevelt the Husbandman," 174. The photograph of TR watching hay being loaded was featured on the cover of the Oyster Bay Historical Society's *Freeholder* 4, no. 1 (Summer 1999): 1. The

As noted above ("A Sense of Place: Sagamore Hill, Oyster Bay, and the North Shore of Long Island" in the section "Long Island Agriculture and Farming"), Edward Swan in the 1860s expected his yellow locust and red cedar trees on Cove Neck to be valuable. Trees on Sagamore Hill yielded cord word for the fireplaces. Contemporary articles identify the trees at Sagamore Hill as oak, chestnut, birch, locust, hickory, and an "avenue of maples planted by Mr. Roosevelt himself," c. 1885. There are many references in correspondence, memoirs, and biographies to TR chopping down trees. TR wrote his eldest son in 1901: "I am chopping vigorously in the trees—my course having met with the hearty approval of Seaman which I think did much to convert mother, who had previously looked upon my course with suspicion." TR enjoyed the exercise and it provided firewood for the house. His military aide, Archie Butt, when visiting Sagamore Hill, wrote, "I think Mr. Roosevelt cuts down trees merely for the pleasure of hearing them fall." Butt also recorded an amusing incident when TR cut down trees which carried the telephone wires. He blamed Edith, "as forester of this establishment," for not having marked the trees he was to cut down.[16]

Noah Seaman was quoted in a magazine article: "The President is very fond of chopping. Nearly every day when he is here, he takes his axe, chops down a tree, and then cuts it up into firewood or fence material." James Amos, TR's valet and "head man," wrote "I am sure he was never so happy as when he was out in the grounds of his estate with an axe in his hands chopping down a tree or building a fence." In 1907, TR wrote his son Kermit, "Besides my usual axe work, I have taken to the scythe so as to mow out the bushes, weeds and poison ivy in the grove beyond Mother's summerhouse. I have my leg bound up, at the moment because my axe once slipped!" (Seaman convinced TR to go home and have Edith take care of the wound.) Henry James Forman wrote in 1910, "He is a famous axe-man. Trees keep dying and firewood is constantly necessary, and this gives Mr. Roosevelt work for many an afternoon throughout the year....Most of the firewood used at Sagamore Hill is chopped by the owner's hands." Robert Gillespie, son of the second superintendent, remembered going with TR into the woods when he was cutting down trees. "He just would fell them. He didn't trim them. My father would have to go in afterwards and clear out the woods." Gillespie also recalled that TR had seven axes by his front door. TR would use a different one every day, and once a week the superintendent would sharpen all the axes.[17]

---

photograph of the haystacks is photograph no. 1137 in the Sagamore Hill files; a photograph of TR watching haying is reproduced in Sagamore Hill, *Sagamore Hill National Historic Site: Home of Theodore Roosevelt* (Lawrence, IN: R.L. Ruchwein, 2000), 7.

[16]Ibid., 174; April 9, 1901, letter quoted by Wilshin, *Historic Resource Study* (Series 2, April 8-May 31, 1901, Letterbook 28, Part Two, 477), 19; Archibald W. Butt, *The Letters of Archie Butt, Personal Military Aide to President Roosevelt,* edited by Lawrence F. Abbot (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1924), 88; Archibald W. Butt, *Taft and Roosevelt, The Intimate Letters of Archie Butt, Military Aide,* 2 vols. (Garden City: Doubleday, Dorn & Company, 1930), 2:832.

[17]Andrews, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Farmer," 431; Amos, *Hero to His Valet,* 81, see also 83-84, 96; Roosevelt, *Letters to Kermit,* 206; Cheney, *Personal Memoirs,* 60-61; Forman, "Roosevelt, The

Some of TR's haying and wood chopping were a result of Edith's prodding. She "conspired with Seaman" when she felt her husband needed more exercise. Seaman "would report that the farm crew was short-handed, and Roosevelt would spend the day chopping down trees, pitching hay, or helping with the chores."[18]

Robert Gillespie

A 1907 article refers to Amos Jackson as "manager of the Roosevelt farm," though this was during the time that Seaman was in charge. There apparently is no record of a full-time farmer or superintendent at Sagamore Hill from the time of Seaman's death in 1911 until Robert Gillespie was hired as superintendent in 1913-1914. James Amos and/or Charles Lee may have been in charge. Amos left his position on the estate in 1913.[19]

Gillespie was the superintendent at Sagamore Hill from 1914 to 1943. He had worked for TR's sister's family, the Robinsons, at their country home in upstate Herkimer County, New York. When he was hired as superintendent, Gillespie and his family moved into the

---

Husbandman," 178; Robert Gillespie was taped at Sagamore Hill in 1973. [The summary or transcript was missing from the files, but I transcribed the tape and deposited the typescript of the transcription and computer disk in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files.] Subsequent references to this interview are cited as "Gillespie interview."

[18]*Sagamore Hill National Historic Site: Home of Theodore Roosevelt* (Lawrenceburg, Ind.: Creative Company, R.L. Ruehwein, 2000), 7 (this is a pamphlet prepared by the Sagamore Hill National Historic Site staff and distributed for sale by Eastern National). The pamphlet, which includes a section on "A Working Farm" with photographs of the stable and lodge, farmhands, the vegetable garden, and a haying photograph, is available at the Sagamore Hill Visitor Center.

[19]Somerville, "How Roosevelt Rests," 666. It is possible that the reporter got the name wrong, but Jackson is identified as 60 years old and Seaman would have been about 50. James Amos was only 29 years old in 1907, so it is unlikely that the reference was to him. A typescript biography of Charles H. Lee in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files indicates that Lee, who was a groom for the Roosevelts in the White House, had asked Ethel Roosevelt when she was visiting in Washington in 1909 if there might be a job for him at Sagamore Hill (Ethel Roosevelt Derby interview, May 8, 1975). Lee was retired with a pension and free life tenure at the cottage on the estate in June 1934. When he died in 1936, the Roosevelts paid for a gravestone and plot in St. John's cemetery in Laurel Hollow (Steven R. Saunders, May 1975 typescript biography of Lee in the Sagamore Hill files). James Amos left Sagamore Hill in 1913, but returned when TR was in his final illness and was with him in his bedroom when he died. He lived in Brooklyn and was also called upon to accompany TR on trips (see, for example, TR to J.E. Amos, May 7, 1918, and September 20, 1918, in Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, Series 3A, reel 403, microfilm).

James Amos's wife, Annie, and Charles Lee's wife, Clara, at times worked as maids in the main house. The Amoses and Lees were African Americans (see Census Data, Appendix 5). The typescript on Lee in the curatorial files errs in stating that "Sagamore Hill was left in charge of the new farmer, Gillespie, and Lee, until the family returned [from Africa and Europe] in 1910." Robert Gillespie did not begin his service as superintendent until 1914 (or possibly late 1913; he was on site for a time before his family joined him); Gillespie interview.

lodge, which had a kitchen, living room, and dining room on the first floor and four bedrooms on the second floor. (See Figures 14a and 14b, page 108, for the layout of the Superintendent's house.) As indicated earlier, the other part of the building was the stable. There was no direct inside connection to the stable. The basement of the stable originally had six cows, the two farm horses (in contrast to the saddle horses ridden by members of the family), and storage of grain and hay. On entering the stable, the hay was on the right, and the cows and two farm horses on the other side. The saddle horses were taken up to the second story on a ramp. The third story was storage. TR's daughter, Ethel Derby, later referred to this building as the "stable and farm house," describing the stable as: "a carriage room, stalls for five horses, a storage closet and a harness room."[20] (See Figure 15, page 108, for illustrations of saddlesand carriages from a 1903 newspaper article.)

TR, Jr., also described the stable in his 1929 memoir:

> Behind the house is the stable, a disjointed, rambling building full of musty corners and promising mysteries. Old harness, saddles, eel spears, and a hundred other oddments are piled in the dark under its eaves.
>
> In the rear are the cow-sheds where we used to gather with our silver mugs to drink the milk warm from the cows—a most unsanitary performance according to modern standards.[21]

A hired man who usually boarded with the Gillespies slept in an upstairs room in the stable. Other hired hands came in from the neighborhood as needed to help with the farm work. There was quite a turnover of the hired farm help, especially those who came by the day. Those who boarded usually stayed a year and some for several years.[22]

---

[20]Isabelle Gillespie Wildt interview; and Ethel Derby quoted by Alexis D'Elia, in "Recycling Foundations: Preserving the Legacy of the Stable and Lodge at Sagamore Hill," *Freeholder* (Oyster Bay Historical Society) 5 (Winter 2001): 18. Isabelle Wildt is the daughter of Robert Gillespie who was superintendent of the estate from 1914-1943. I spoke with her on September 21 and October 28, 2002, and deposited a summary of the conversation, which she reviewed, in the Sagamore Hill curator's research files (typescript and file on computer disk).

Several photographs of the exterior of the stable are in the Sagamore Hill collection (e.g. nos. 1112 and 1115). See also the sketches of the interior of the stables by Robert Gillespie, 1973, in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files. A 1906 magazine article described the stable as a "neat but unpretentious frame structure," and noted that it also housed some of the wagons: Waldon Fawcett, "President Roosevelt's Country Home," *Indoors and Out* 1 (August 1906): 231-33.

Aslet explained that the usual practice was to "keep carriage horses in stalls and saddle horses, which are more high spirited, in loose boxes, in which they could move freely" (*County Houses,* 180).

[21]TR, Jr., *All in the Family,* 15.

[22]Wildt interview. Aslet pointed out that it was important for someone to "sleep on the premises to hear when a horse was taken ill" (*American Country House,* 180).

According to Robert Gillespie's daughter, Isabelle Wildt, the vegetables that were raised on the farm included lima beans, potatoes, lettuce, a little (sweet) corn, tomatoes, carrots, asparagus, squash, and beans. Nancy Roosevelt Jackson (born 1923) recalled that the children in her generation called the superintendent "Gallapesky." Like his predecessor Seaman, Gillespie was protective of the garden and did not like to have the children going in it.

Apples were the main fruit cultivated at Sagamore Hill, but there were also peaches, pears, grapes, watermelons, currents, gooseberries, cherries, and quince. Robert Gillespie, son of the superintendent, remembered there being maybe six pigs on the estate (he said six to eight at one point, but later, "usually not more than six"). Mrs. Wildt said there were always pigs, though she didn't mention a number. Robert identified some of the apples as russets and said they would take some to the village to be made into cider. He also indicated that there were two grape arbors.[23]

Robert Gillespie also remembered when the field in front of the big house was a grain field.[24] The hay was used for fodder for the cattle for winter. When the hogs were slaughtered in the fall, they would hang in the garage (carriage shed) to be cleaned. Mrs. Gillespie, the superintendent's wife, made sausage (Sagamore Hill has a sausage grinder in its collections that she probably used). The pig sty or hog shed was near the wood pile (the concrete pad was still there when Robert Gillespie was interviewed in 1973). He described it as a lean-to with three sides and a roof that was fenced in. The trough for feeding was along the edge on the south side. A smoke house which had been made from an outhouse was next to the tool shed. The Roosevelts roasted one of their "home-reared pigs" for Christmas dinner in 1917. TR wrote Ted, "We don't buy pork," in accord with the recommendations of Herbert Hoover's Relief Commission, "but we feel at liberty to eat what we raise"'[25]

Theodore Roosevelt wrote Ted in October 1917 about taking his grandchildren to the pig-pen. "I trundled Sonny in his baby carriage. . . . We fed the pigs with elderly apples; then we came to a small rick of hay down which I had to slide each in turn, until I finally rebelled, then halted so each could have a drink of water."[26]

Both the Gillespie son and daughter stated that their father would go up to the "big house"

---

[23]Wildt interview, September 2002; Gillespie interview, 1973.

[24]This is *not* the west lawn (between the porch and current entry road), but the area where the old barn was located, northeast of the main house. A 1907 article refers to a "hill-slope of meadows" where the trees had been cleared and hay was grown. Somerville, "How Roosevelt Rests," 666.

[25]Gillespie interview; TR to TR, Jr., December 25, 1917, in Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace collection, quoted by Sylvia Jukes Morris in *Edith Kermit Roosevelt: Portrait of a First Lady* (New York: Coward, McCann, and Geoghegan, 1980), 418.

[26]TR to TR, Jr, Oct. 27, 1917, quoted by Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., in *Day Before Yesterday* (New York: Doubleday, 1959), 91.

to consult with Mrs. Roosevelt, who was in charge. Robert Gillespie recounted:

> If they [TR and Edith] were going in the summertime, for example, down to the beach, [and] men would be working in the garden. He [TR] would stop and talk to one of the men. Edith would come along, stop and say, "Run along, Theodore. I'll take care of it." Mrs. Roosevelt ran the estate. He had nothing to do with operating the estate. It was entirely her.[27]

Indeed, Edith kept all the accounts for the farm as well as the household. Her granddaughter, Nancy Roosevelt Jackson, later recalled, "She kept a small farm going and supervised the care of thirty acres of farm and woodland. She conferred with her steward every day, discussing with authority why Bessie's milk might be drying up, and how many eggs the hens were laying."[28]

Superintendent Gillespie's health declined in the late 1930s. His kidney was removed in 1937. His son said that when he came out of the hospital, Mrs. Roosevelt said to him, "I know you aren't able to work again, but you have a home here as long as you want." His health continued to decline, but he stayed at Sagamore Hill until 1943. Years earlier, he had built a house in Syosset for retirement, which he and his wife rented out. The Gillespies eventually left Sagamore Hill for health reasons, hoping he might improve in his own home in Syosset, but he died after only about a year.[29]

"Simply My Home"

The manuscript schedules for the agriculture census have unfortunately not survived beyond the 1880 federal census, making it impossible to know the yields from the Sagamore Hill farm. Like most of the estate farms, as indicated earlier, Sagamore Hill was not a commercial

---

[27]Robert Gillespie interview, 1973.

[28]Born in 1923, Nancy was the daughter of Grace Lockwood and Archibald [Archie] Roosevelt, Sr. She spent a good deal of time when she was growing up at Sagamore Hill with her grandmother. Nancy Roosevelt Jackson, "A Sense of Style: Remembering Edith Kermit Roosevelt," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 23, no. 3 (1999): 4; and telephone interview of Mrs. Jackson, February 3, 2003. Edith's careful accounts for the farm and stable include entries and amounts for hay, boarding Bamie's ponies, potatoes, apples, calves, butter, eggs, milk, and the purchase and sale of specific horses. The accounts are in the Theodore Roosevelt Collection at Harvard University.

[29]Gillespie and Wildt interviews.

[30]The New York State Library in Albany has unpublished Census of Agricultural schedules for 1850-1880, but not beyond. Searches for manuscript returns for later years at the Regional Archives in New York City, the New York Public Library, and the National Archives were unsuccessful. Reference librarians at Cornell University confirmed that the manuscript census schedules for agriculture are not available for the years TR owned

operation, but designed to sustain the family and those living on the property, as well as to provide a wholesome environment for the children.

TR himself realized that the farm was not economically productive. Loren Palmer wrote Roosevelt that the editor of *Farm and Fireside* "had heard that your place at Oyster Bay, unlike many country estates, was self supporting." They wanted to do a "short article about the way the work is carried on at Sagamore Hill" in order to show "that it is possible for large country places to do their part [during the war] in food and fodder production." TR responded to Palmer on July 15, 1918:

> Alas, alas you have been misinformed and I have no such feat to my credit! Sagamore Hill is simply my home. My business which I need hardly tell you is varied in character and very exacting in its demands, absorbs too much of my time for me to be able to pay much attention to the farm. We try to make the place partially (sometimes very partially) self-supporting. We raise vegetables, fruits, chickens, eggs, milk and pork for our own use; and hay and corn for the cows and horses. We sometimes sell hay, corn, potatoes or apples, but that is very nearly all.
>
> With regret, *Sincerely yours*[31]

No other evidence has been located of their selling vegetables, but there are two or three references to the sale of hay. The Roosevelts had to purchase meats and vegetables from village shops to supplement what they produced on their farm. Sometimes, fresh fruits and vegetables would be sent to the Roosevelts when they were living in the White House and later to Edith when she spent time in the home she purchased in Connecticut. The Roosevelt children who lived in the area as adults also received some of the produce from the gardens.[32]

The estate inventory taken after TR's death in 1919 includes a pair of gray horses (valued at $300), a Holstein cow ($150), two Guernsey cows ($200 and $175), a one-year-old Guernsey heifer ($75), and Guernsey calf ($40). Listed in the "chicken yard" were about 75 chickens (White Leghorns and Rhode Island Reds, valued at $50) and about 100 small chicks ($25). No pigs were

---

Sagamore Hill. The New York State Census also collected farm data in its censuses, but its individual farm schedules also are not available for these years. In response to the federal census question, whether a home or farm (in 1900, 1910, 1930), the answer for Sagamore Hill was "home." See Appendix 5.

[31]Palmer to Roosevelt, July 8, 1918 (Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Microfilm, Library of Congress, Series 1, reel 283); TR to Palmer, July 15, 1918, in Morison, *Letters,* 8:6, 352. See also Edith Roosevelt's statement in 1904 quoted earlier, "we never intend or expect to have a *real farm*" (emphasis added). Palmer was the managing editor of *Popular Science Monthly* and previously had been editor of *Every Week,* where he had written about TR in his "What They Think of Him in His Home Town" series and had visited TR at Sagamore Hill in December 1917.

[32]Wildt interview, September 21, 2002. A number of letters from Edith to Noah Seaman thank him for sending vegetables to the White House (Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, microfilms).

listed. Perhaps because the pig sty was at a distance from the barn and stable complex, the pigs were overlooked in the inventory. Only fourteen months earlier, as noted above, TR had taken his grandchildren to see the pigs.[33]

It is interesting that no saddle horses are mentioned in the inventory, though both Theodore and Edith were very fond of riding. Although none of the letters or biographies mentions that they had stopped riding, advancing years and health problems may have meant that they had given their saddle horses to one or another of their children or sold them before 1919.[34]

Fewer horses meant less need for hay and other grains raised for food and fodder. Robert Gillespie, son of the superintendent, thought the farm operations declined after World War I, though there were always animals. His sister, Isabelle Wildt, remembers some decline in the number of cows and chickens. She lived at Sagamore Hill until 1943; Robert left when he married in 1931, though he came back to visit his family.[35]

Nancy Roosevelt Jackson remembers cows and chickens at Sagamore Hill, and perhaps a pig. Her cousin, Sarah Derby, kept her horse there (the Derbys lived in Oyster Bay village). Elizabeth Roosevelt, who grew up on Cove Neck and still lives there, remembers only "one old horse" at Sagamore Hill in the early 1940s. The tradition of the Roosevelts sharing their produce continued, as she recalls taking butter from her family's dairy cows to Edith Roosevelt during World War II and getting vegetables from the garden of her grandfather (W. Emlen Roosevelt) on Cove Neck.[36]

The 1883 stable and lodge was destroyed by fire in the early morning of July 5, 1944. Valenty Mazur was the superintendent at that time and the structure was referred to in the newspaper as a barn and four-car garage. Bellavia and Curry in the *Cultural Landscape Report* indicate that the "foundation of the stable and lodge remained intact and was covered with soil." Little is known about Valenty Mazur, the third superintendent on the estate, who is mentioned in newspaper accounts when the stable and lodge burned down. After the fire, he moved into the new barn, which was converted to living quarters and a three car garage.[37]

---

[33]Copy of Inventory, 1919, in Sagamore Hill curatorial files.

[34]James Amos stated that TR "never sold a horse." They would be retired on the estate when too old for service and TR often visited them. Amos, *Hero to His Valet*, 93. Nancy Roosevelt Jackson remembered her grandmother as being an excellent horsewoman who always rode sidesaddle (Jackson interview).

[35]Gillespie and Wildt interviews.

[36]Jackson interview; and telephone conversation with Elizabeth Roosevelt, January 30, 2003 (she is the daughter of John Kean Roosevelt).

[37]*Oyster Bay Guardian*, July 7, 1944; the 1944 date was also mentioned by Robert Gillespie and Isabelle Gillespie Wildt in their interviews, although the Gillespie family was no longer living at Sagamore Hill at that time; Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 112 (the *Cultural Landscape Report* erroneously dates the fire to 1947). The new barn currently (2005) is used for staff housing.

"No Healthier and Pleasanter Place"

Henry Beach Needham in a 1905 article entitled "Theodore Roosevelt as a Country Gentleman" explained why TR deserved that designation:

> By birth President Roosevelt is of the very best blood. Since his new home **is** in the country, and, furthermore, in the Long Island territory noted for its magnificent country places, he may be properly termed a country gentleman—and let no one imagine that the President does not fully deserve the title. He is a country gentleman to the manner born. He belongs to the land. And he is more. He is an enthusiastic devotee of manly outdoor sports. He is a true nature lover.[38]

Theodore Roosevelt reveled in the out-of-doors and his role as a country gentleman at Sagamore Hill. His life there was made possible by Edith, who managed their home, gardens, and farm. In his *Autobiography* TR summarized the attractions: "At Sagamore Hill we loved a great many things—birds and trees and books, and all things beautiful, and horses and rifles and children and hard work and the joy of life." He believed that "the country is a place for children" and there could be "no healthier and pleasanter place in which to bring up children." At Sagamore Hill, the Roosevelts' children were "friends with the cows, chickens, pigs, and other livestock." Describing the different seasons, he wrote of the farm, "We love...the rush of growing things and the blossom-spray of spring; the yellow grain, the ripening fruits and tasseled corn."[39]

Sagamore Hill is most important as the home of President Theodore Roosevelt, and the "big house" has been faithfully restored and interpreted. TR and his family spent much of the time in Oyster Bay outdoors. They enjoyed the farm and woods, playing tennis and other sports on the lawn, swimming and rowing on the nearby waters, and reading and watching sunsets while rocking on the porch. Their Sagamore Hill property also reflects an important era and lifestyle of the country house. This historic home enables visitors to gain a clearer understanding of Theodore Roosevelt, his family, and the American society of their day.

---

[38]Henry Beach Needham, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Country Gentleman," *Country Calendar,* October 1905, 531.

[39]*Autobiography,* 318, 319, 329, 337, 341.



Figure 7. Photograph of Superintendent's House, rear view (no date). In Sagamore Hill NHS Archives. (Alignment of photograph is adjusted from original.)



Figure 8a. [Alfred] Davis, Gardener. Original in *New-York Tribune Illustrated* Supplement, June 7, 1903



Figure 8b. Noah Seaman and Staff, 1903. Original in *New-York Tribune Illustrated* Supplement, June 7, 1903



THEODORE ROOSEVELT
AS A FARMER

All About the President's Country Home at Oyster Bay—How He Pitches Hay, Chops Wood and Improves His Farm

SOME folks do not know that President Roosevelt is something of a farmer as well as a nation-guider. On the northern shore of Long Island, N. Y.—overlooking Oyster Bay, Center Island, and the blue, open sound beyond,—he owns about ninety-seven acres of high, rolling, fertile ground.

FARMER ROOSEVELT'S HOUSE

It's on a rural free delivery route, three miles from the town of Oyster Bay. Yes, and it has a name,—as a good farmer's place should. Turning into the President's private driveway which opens on to the public road, I looked up and saw an unpretentious white board nailed to a tree at the entrance, with the wording, "Sagamore Hill," in modest small black letters.

There was no gate, no guardian fences, no fuss, no gilded style. Just a plain farm driveway, winding up a wooded slope. I felt at home, instantly.

Presently the house came into view,—a rambling, comfortable-looking old-fashioned structure, with gables, porches and chimneys galore. I thought of open fires, blazing logs, and homey, country good cheer!—and felt still more at home.

Noah Seaman and his good wife acted as host and hostess, for the Roosevelt family were, at the time of my October visit, in Washington. Mr. Seaman has charge of the entire farm, and I found him to be a very pleasant man and an excellent farmer—just the kind we like to have among Our Folks. I spent a very instructive afternoon walking over the place, asking questions of everybody, taking photographs, and admiring the grand water view northward.

"How many acres under cultivation?" I asked.

"About forty-seven acres, counting pasture; the remainder is in woodland. The President is very fond of chopping. Nearly every day when he is here, he takes his axe, chops down a tree, and then cuts it up into firewood or fence material."

"I see that your soil here is a sandy-loam," I remarked. "What fertilizers do you use?"

"None,—except stable manure. We use all we can get of that. We keep, usually, about five horses, six cows, eight pigs and a flock of Barred Plymouth Rock chickens. Some turkeys, too. All the hay and straw needed for our stock are grown on the place."

I was much interested in the water and gas systems in use on this farm. Gas is made by an automatic machine, from gasoline stored in a covered underground place away from the house,—and thus the President's house, Noah Seaman's house, the barn, etc., are all well lighted throughout with gas. And in a snug little fireproof building about a hundred feet from the house, I found a gasoline engine, pumping water from a tubular well 190 feet deep. I thought of the President's growing children, of his soft-eyed Jersey cows and his faithful horses, and wrote in my note book: "No darkness on *this* farm. No impure water; no typhoid; no tainted milk for the youngsters to drink. Of course not!—the President's big stick is after just such evils. And why shouldn't his ideas begin at home?"

FOUR "SAGAMORE HILL" COWS

The water from the tubular well is pumped into a tank in the attic of the President's house; and the overflow goes to a large fireproof outdoor tank, and from there to the barn and to Superintendent Seaman's house.

When I saw the rustic entrance to the flower, fruit and vegetable gardens, I wished that Paul Plowshare could see it, too. He would have said, right off: "The owner of this rustic affair is the kind of a man we want in our Saturday Morning Fix-up-the-farm Club. Look at those graceful festoons of clematis paniculata, nasturtium and crimson rambler; and notice those cozy seats at the sides beneath, and the straight, well-kept walk into the garden beyond. Surely here are some good suggestions for our brother farm-adorners!"

The flower garden is very attractive, and in season contains some of the choicest varieties of bloom, including Mrs. Roosevelt's favorite roses and many other very beautiful flowers.

Adjoining the flower garden is the fruit and vegetable garden, and Superintendent Seaman, with his several assistants, keeps the latter well supplied with fresh products during summer and early fall. I saw a nice bed of strawberries, rows of grapes, raspberries, currants and gooseberries; peach, pear and apple trees; and all the evidences of a last summer's carefully tended vegetable crop. Lima bean poles and asparagus plants are in such abundant supply that I'm inclined to suspect the same one in the President's family is especially fond of succotash and asparagus.

PATH TO THE PRESIDENT'S HOUSE

At the north end of the farm I saw shown recently-constructed rustic summer-house, commands a magnificent view of bay and sound, and on a clear day the distant shores of Connecticut can be plainly seen. When Father Time has had a fair chance to drape moss vines around this summer house, it will please even my artistic friend Paul.

One July day last summer, Superintendent Seaman said to the President: "Mr. President, can you help us get in the hay?"

"Certainly. At what time?"

"After awhile."

"All right. I will be on hand."

But it began to look like rain, and so Noah Seaman called the President before the appointed time. He cheerfully responded and was quickly in the field, pitchfork in hand. He sprang into the work enthusiastically, pitching up great bunches of hay on to the wagon. "'Tis a great honor to stack hay with the President," said the man on the wagon.

But the President only laughed and pitched the harder. When the wagon was filled, the President followed it to the barn, and, going up into the mow, received the hay and stowed it away, trampling it down vigorously.

The Roosevelt estate has been in the possession of the family for many years. Theodore played there as a boy; he grew up to love it and now, in the prime of his manhood, it joyously looks forward each year to a few months' sojourn amid the quiet peace and sturdy rural pleasures of Sagamore Hill farm. It isn't a pretentious place; quite the contrary. Around Philadelphia we have hundreds of country estates that are far more costly and elegant than the President's summer nest. But he is content. And the chips fly mightily as the axe rings true.—WALTER E. ANDREWS.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT'S COUNTRY HOME

HAY FORK AND RIDE

ENTRANCE TO GARDENS

THE NEW SUMMER-HOUSE

Figure 9. Pictures of the Farm, 1906. From Walter E. Andrews, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Farmer, " *Farm Journal* 30 (December 1906): 43

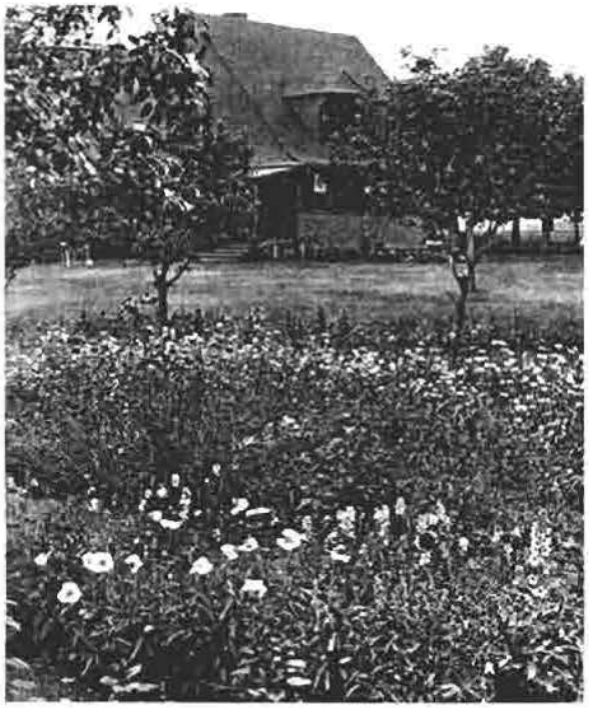


Figure 10. Flower Garden with Lodge in the Background, 1905. From Henry Beach Needham, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Country Gentleman," *Country Calendar,* Oct. 1905, 535. A copy is also in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files, from Saint-Gaudens National Historical Site.



Figure 11. Haystacks at Sagamore Hill. Photograph no. 1137 in the Sagamore Hill NHS Archives.

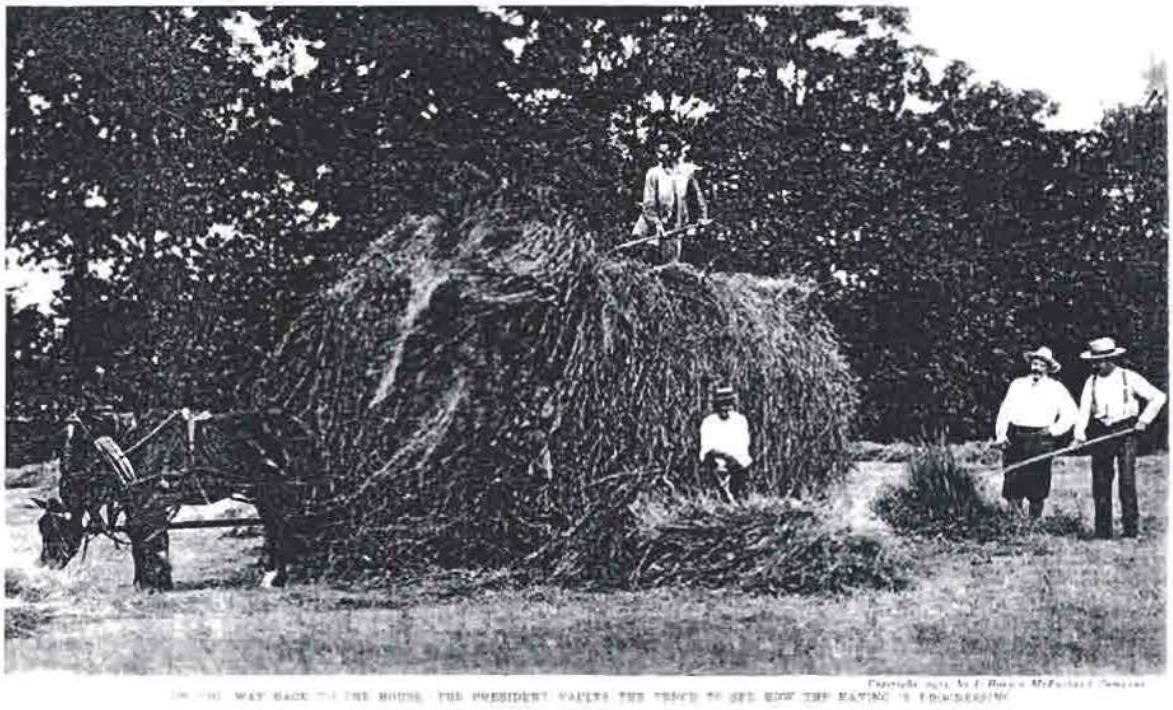
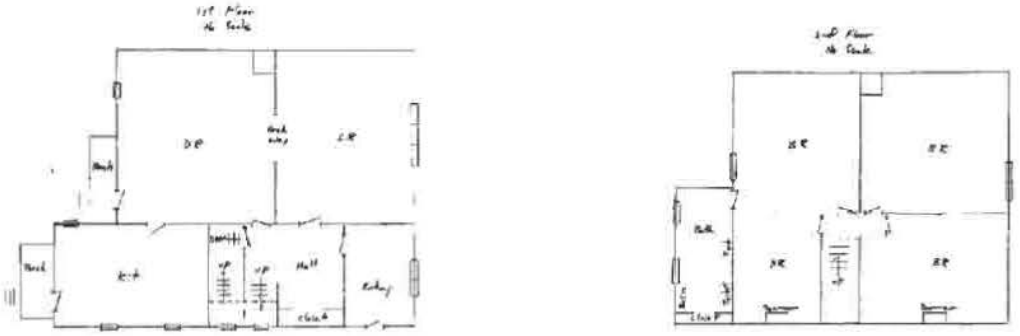


Figure12. Theodore Roosevelt Watching Haying at Sagamore Hill,1905. From Henry Beach Needham, "Theodore Roosevelt as a Country Gentleman," *The Country Calendar*, October 1905, 535. McFarland Co. photograph by O.P. Beckley. A similar McFarland photograph appeared in Charles Somerville, "How Roosevelt Rests," *Broadway Magazine* 18 (September 1907), 661.



Figure 13. "Harvest-Time on President Roosevelt's Farm in Which He Always Takes Part." From Charles Somerville, "How Roosevelt Rests," *Broadway Magazine* 18 (Sept. 1907), 665.



14a 14b

Figures 14 a and b. (a) Floor Plan/Interior Layout of Superintendent's House/Lodge; (b) 2d floor. Based on information from Isabelle Gillespie Wildt, who lived in the house from 1914-1943; drawn by her son, George Wildt, November 2002.

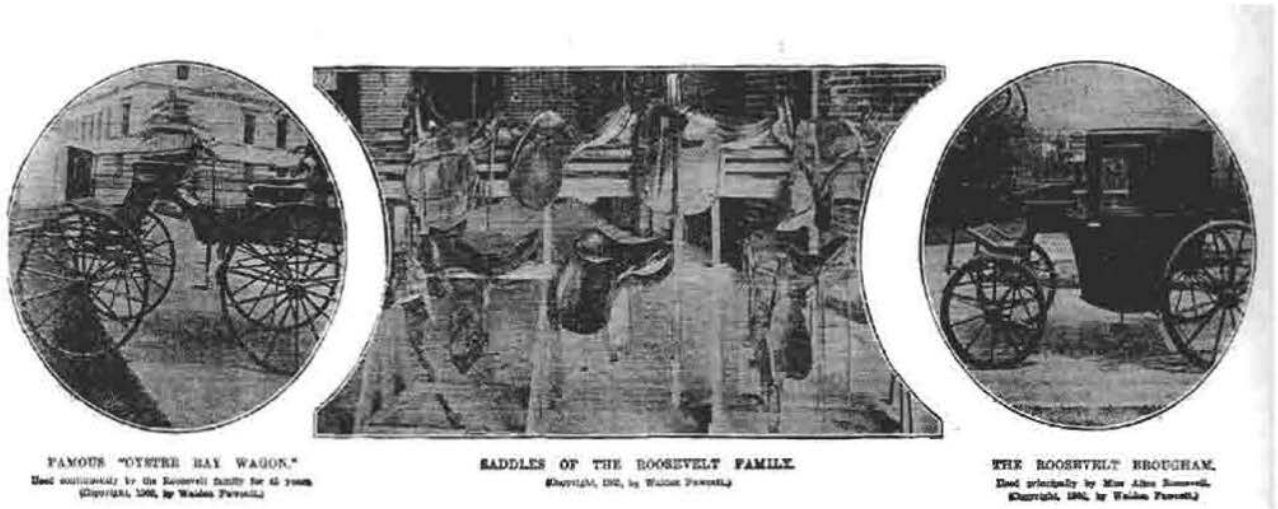


Figure 15. Roosevelt Saddles and Carriages, 1903. *New York Tribune Illustrated Supplement,* July 19, 1903.

The People of Sagamore Hill

Kathleen Dalton

Even beyond its political and artistic history and its connection with one of America's most famous presidents, Sagamore Hill holds great significance for its social history. A turn-of-the-twentieth-century upper-class family lived there in close dependence with a large staff of servants, governesses, secretaries, day laborers, and farmers, a group mixed by race, class, and ethnicity. Recovering the history of the people of Sagamore Hill can illuminate the larger story of how upper-class families such as the Roosevelts lived their lives in relation to servants and staff. With further research on the servants, the extended household story will be an important addition to placing Sagamore Hill within the context of the social history of its time.

Servants at Sagamore Hill were not very different from servants elsewhere in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. Historians of domestic service characterize informal "help"—doing day work for pay—as distinct from the more formal categories of being a servant, which often entailed a live-in and disciplined form of work requiring regular supervision by the lady of the house. By the end of the nineteenth century, domestic service was becoming more common and in Long Island's affluent great homes, servants were essential to keeping the house running.

It was difficult for women in service to live with their employer's family and still remain attached to their own families. For this reason it became common for single girls (as were most of the Roosevelts' maids and cooks) and widows to fill the domestic jobs. Immigrants, especially young Irish women, often took available serving jobs as their native-born peers moved on to

---

[1] Faye E. Dudden, *Serving Women: Household Service in Nineteenth-Century America* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), 6-7.

marriage or to shop or secretarial positions. In both England and America, employment opportunities for these young women had long been restricted by "No Irish need apply" signs, but by the time the Roosevelts staffed Sagamore Hill such prejudices were becoming less common. The Irish servants were usually Catholic—Mame Ledwith, Edith's nurse since childhood, was extremely devout and attended Mass often. The census described the household servants as literate in English, though the few surviving letters written by them show they were not well educated.[2]

During the years that historians call the nadir of black history in this country—when lynching, Jim Crow laws, segregation, and violence were used to keep blacks out of good wage-earning positions—some employers refused to hire blacks as domestic servants. The Roosevelts, however, had hired black servants off and on since their days at Tranquility, the summer home that TR's parents rented in Oyster Bay. Nonetheless, at the White House Mrs. Roosevelt insisted on having a white steward.[3] Hiring servants posed a problem for the Roosevelts. Not all agencies could be trusted. TR's father had been in the habit of going to the labor bureau at Castle Garden (the precursor to Ellis Island) and picking out a few newly arrived servants. This effort was, however, not practical for Edith Roosevelt. Unlike TR's mother, Edith handled all the domestic management.[4] She usually consulted her sister-in-law Bamie (Anna Roosevelt Cowles), who either sent her one of her own servants or advised her on worthy servants whom she knew or had heard about. Charitable work often put upper-class women in contact with the poor and with unemployed workers. Bamie, who worked on behalf of the Orthopaedic Hospital, the day nurseries, and other projects connected with the Women's Building of the 1893 World's Fair, as well as with the Red Cross, had more contact with prospective servants than did Edith.[5]

In addition, Bamie had a much larger social network than Edith enjoyed, which helped with finding servants.[6] The Oyster Bay Roosevelts could not afford the likes of Bamie's august

---

[2]Mame Ledwith, Oct. 3, 1902, and Aug. 14, 1904, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard University (hereafter TRC-HU), in folder labeled "To EKR from servants & governess: Hall, Mame, footman Reeve & Miss Young."

[3]Pamela Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), 39; Edith Kermit Roosevelt to Anna Roosevelt Cowles, Sept. 8, 1901, TRC-HU; Edith seems to have been less interested in assimilating her maids to Protestantism than many employers; see Diane M. Hotten-Somers, "Relinquishing and Reclaiming Independence: Irish Domestic Servants, American Middle-Class Mistresses, and Assimilation, 1850-1920," *Eire-Ireland* 36, no. 1-2 (2001): 185-201.

[4]Theodore Roosevelt Senior Letterbooks, TRC-HU

[5] For Anna Roosevelt Cowles see Betty Caroli, *The Roosevelt Women* (New York: Basic Books, 1998) and Lilian Rixey, *Bamie: Theodore Roosevelt's Remarkable Sister* (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1963).

[6]The best sources of information on domestic issues at Sagamore Hill are EKR to Anna Roosevelt Cowles and EKR to Emily Carow letters and other family correspondence at TRC-HU, and in Kermit Roosevelt and TRJR Papers at the Library of Congress.

butler, Chamberlain, or her expert cook, and Oyster Bay's isolation and limited recreational opportunities were a disadvantage in attracting servants. Also, Mame Ledwith was an irritable fixture in the family, and until her retirement to Manhattan in 1908 she made it difficult to keep good servants at Sagamore Hill.[7]

In the mid-nineteenth century many of the Roosevelts' friends and social acquaintances joined the Society for the Encouragement of Faithful Domestic Servants. This group had been organized to discourage servants from shopping around for better wages, as they often did; upper class families were in the habit of stealing each other's servants for higher pay. The society members' assumption was that loyalty to the family should come before a servant's desire to earn more elsewhere.[8] There is little or no evidence of servants leaving the Roosevelts specifically for higher pay, except in the case of James Amos, and he did so with TR's support. Mame's temperament may have been a factor in some departures. Conflict and anger were evidently an occasional part of Edith's relationship with her maids and cooks. A few servants seem to have been fired for drink, surliness, or neglect of duty. There is some evidence that, like many employers, Mrs. Roosevelt fired a servant because of failing health. In her day, there was no legal obligation for employers to pay for medical costs, sick days, or retirement for servants, but documentation exists that the Roosevelts did provide health care and pensions for TR's childhood nurse Dora, Mame, and Charles Lee.[9]

David Wallace's study [10]shows that maids and cooks worked six-day weeks and very long hours at Sagamore Hill. Evidently Mrs. Roosevelt was a demanding but polite supervisor, and TR's valet, James Amos, praised her for being "as considerate of the feelings of those who worked for her as she was of the feelings of any great personage."[11] Her insistence upon regular meal times made it easier for the staff to serve once and go on with their other duties. She often had to ask them to stretch available food because TR habitually did not tell her how many people he had invited to lunch or dinner, so it was difficult to plan ahead. She and TR urged the children to be

---

[7]To compare upper class life in the Roosevelt's household, biographies of Astors, Vanderbilts, Roots, Stimson and others of their associates would be illuminating. Also see P.A.M. Taylor, "Routines of Upper-class Life in Boston, 1887-1919: Two Women Diarists," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 1996, 108: 123-152.

[8]Dudden, *Serving Women,* 53.

[9]On firings for ill health see Dudden, *Serving Women,* 194-95; for household details see Kathleen Dalton, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), and Sylvia Jukes Morris, *Edith Kermit Roosevelt: Portrait of a First Lady* (New York: Coward, McCann and Geohagan, 1980); Mrs. Roosevelt's Sagamore Hill Account Book 1889-1917 provides useful details about when trees were added, the servants' wages, etc.; Peter Steele's interview with Alice Roosevelt Longworth in 1974 is not as useful as the one Mrs. Longworth did with the Columbia Oral History Project, SAHI NHS Archives.

[10]David H. Wallace, *Sagamore Hill: Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Oyster Bay, New York.* Harpers Ferry, NY: National Park Service, 1991.

[11]James Amos, Theodore Roosevelt: Hero to His Valet (New York: The John Day Company, 1927), 35.

considerate, too. Yet the servant-master relationship at Sagamore Hill was never close to being an egalitarian relationship. Ethel recalled that as an employer Edith sometimes noticed forgetfulness in the servants. James Amos had been assigned to dust parts of the house each week, but when he forgot to do the job Mrs. Roosevelt would write his name in the dust. Amos found this quiet reprimand embarrassing.[12]

The servants respected Mrs. Roosevelt's authority so much that they did not question her instructions. She liked to pick flowers from her extensive gardens and send them to neighbors via Charles Lee. Mr. Lee got tired of the flower-delivery business, but he did not want to refuse Mrs. Roosevelt, so he never spoke to her about how much he disliked the job.[13]

All the available evidence points to the Roosevelts being good employers, relative to their times. Not only did servants from the White House vie to follow them to Sagamore Hill in 1909, but they were willing to take lower wages to stay with them. Charles Lee earned $65 a month as a White House groom/coachman by 1909, and his pay dropped sharply (though we do not know by exactly how much) when he joined the Sagamore Hill staff that year.[14]Charles Lee and James Amos started out as White House servants and both clearly liked working for the Roosevelts. Lee called the Roosevelts "Quality folk" and said they treated the servants like family.[15] Edith had friends who belonged to the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, a voluntary association in Boston that, among other matters, investigated employers' refusal to pay their servants the wages they had earned. Yet Edith was too private a person to join such groups working to provide better conditions for servants. She worried a lot about expenses and complained that the ban on immigration during World War I had driven up servants' wages.[16]

The social distance and deference that regulated the relationships between the Roosevelts and their servants were not far from the usual pattern of the era: employers were treated as

---

[12]Mrs. Derby also recalled, for the acoustiguide interview, that Amos said after one such incident that he should be taken out and beaten for neglect of duty and she commented that it had been an era when blacks were more likely to be "subservient." Then she reconsidered and asked to have the beating and subservient comments struck from the record. Servant: James Amos-Vertical File Drawer #1-SAHI NHS Archives; a less reliable and undocumented source is "Personal Memoirs of the Home Life of the Late TR," by Albert Loren Cheney (Washington, D.C.: Cheney Publishing Co., 1919) in Servant: Mame Ledwith-Vertical File Drawer no.1-SAHI NHS Archives.

[13]Servant: Hall, Franklyn-Vertical File Drawer no.-SAHI NHS Archives.

[14]From White House hostelers payroll, in Servant: Charles Lee-Vertical File Drawer no.1-SAHI NHS Archives.

[15]Biography of Charles H. Lee, SAHI NHS Archives.

[16]Dudden, Serving Women, 91; Ethel Roosevelt Derby to Richard Derby, Apr. 22, 1919, TRC-HU.

social betters whose words and needs carried more weight than those of the servants. Very few comments from family and friends about the servants survive. After a visit to Farmington from Edith, Bamie commented, "Edith is well & delightful though I should think it would drive me mad to trust ones children to Mollie & to have one spoiled so carefully by Maggie however she probably feels the same toward Ida."[17] Because he did not supervise them directly, TR rarely commented about the household servants.

By far the best-documented servant who worked at Sagamore Hill and the White House was James Amos, who was most involved in caring for TR in his last years. He published a series of articles about working for TR and then a book, *Theodore Roosevelt: Hero to His Valet.*

Amos began working for the Roosevelts in their early months in the White House (TR had asked Amos's father, a policeman, if he had a reliable youngster at home). His job at first was to watch over Archie and Quentin. Later he was made second butler and sometimes traveled with the president. Amos observed TR and decided he liked his boss. He saw that "by nature Roosevelt liked people. No matter how hectic his presidential duties became he always said good-bye to his staff person by person, and he found time to get down on all fours for a pillow fight and tickle game with his children."[18]

Throughout the years, Amos handled the Roosevelts' household needs with tact and loyalty.[19] In the post-presidential period, he went in and out of the Roosevelts' employment until TR's death. In 1909 TR arranged for him to get a job in the Customs House in New York, but for reasons unknown, after about a year Amos came back to work and live at Sagamore Hill as the "head man." When he decided around 1913 that he should seek a higher-paying job in another line of work, TR wrote him a strong letter of recommendation commending his professionalism. Amos then worked as a detective for the William J. Burns agency, but returned again to Sagamore Hill and was with TR when he died. Afterward, he worked for the Bureau of Investigation (later the F.B.I.)[19]

We know only a little about the servants' opinions about public issues or the social dynamics of Sagamore Hill. Though he wrote appreciatively about his service with the Roosevelts, James Amos sometimes saw political issues differently from his employers. For example, Amos expressed the viewpoint that many black people did not respect Booker T. Washington as much as TR did, judging it to be hypocritical that Washington recommended education for manual labor for African Americans as a general rule and then sent his own

---

[17]Anna Roosevelt Cowles to Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, Oct. 2, 1900, TRC-HU.

[18] James E. Amos, *Theodore Roosevelt: Hero to His Valet* (New York: John Day, 1927), 8, 10, 129.

[19]Charles Reed [Reeve?] to EKR, Oct. 14, 1908, folder labeled "To EKR from servants & governess: Hall, Mame, footman Reeve & Miss Young", TRC-HU.

[20]Amos, *Theodore Roosevelt,* "About the Author."

children to liberal arts prep schools and colleges. [21]TR, in contrast, endorsed Washington without qualification, at least in public.

For the Roosevelts, the servants who stayed with the family for years became important people and valued personal bonds were formed. Though it displeased Mame, the Roosevelt children named their pet pig after her.[22] The day before he was shot down in airplane combat, Quentin wrote one letter to his father and one letter to their maid, Mary Sweeney, who, TR wrote, "mourns him as if she" had been in the family.[23]

When Amos left the Roosevelts' employ in 1913 he stayed in touch with them. TR considered him a friend, and when the ex-president was ill in the last year of his life he asked Amos to travel with him. TR was also friendly toward his employees' children. He taught the farm manager's son, Robert Gillespie, to use a Winchester rifle and invited the little Gillespies to Christmas celebrations at what they called "the big house."[24]

TR wrote his daughter-in-law Belle that he took presents to the Gillespie children at Christmas in 1917 and "as usual I, as the local great man, gave the Cove School Xmas tree & distributed the presents, & made the little speech at the Sunday School on Christmas Eve."[25]

Charles Lee was especially important to Ethel. Originally, Lee looked after her horses and gave her riding lessons when he was a coachman/stableman at the White House. He showed a lot of patience working with her when she was a teenager, and later she was eager to have him remain in the family's service. She recorded that the affection was mutual: "Lee adores us all"[26]

When TR was president, Lee was refused the right to ride in a freight car to look after

---

[21]James E. Amos with James T. Flynn, "The Beloved Boss," *Collier's Weekly*, July 24, 31, and Aug. 7, 1926, TRC-HU includes photos of James Amos; also useful for details of family life is Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *All in the Family* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1929); Alice Roosevelt Longworth, *Crowded Hours: Reminiscences of Alice Roosevelt Longworth* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933 (orig. 1932); Michael Teague, *Mrs. L: Conversations with Alice Roosevelt Longworth* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1981). Though it is full of confused facts, see Archie Roosevelt, *For Lust of Knowing: Memoirs of an Intelligence Officer* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1988), 3-10.

[22]Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography*, 355.

[23]Theodore Roosevelt to TR, Jr., and EBAR, Aug. 15, 1918, Theodore Roosevelt Jr. Papers, Library of Congress.

[24]Robert Gillespie interview, July 7, 1973, SAHI NHS Archives.

[25]TR to Belle Willard Roosevelt, Dec. 25, 1917, TRC-HU.

[26]Ethel Roosevelt Derby Diary, Aug. 13, 1912, TRC-HU. TR had made a point of putting Fitzhugh Lee, General Robert E. Lee's grand-nephew, on his staff when he was president and he recommended Charles Lee to TR. Charles Lee was the son of a Lynchburg, Virginia, slave named Henry Lee, formerly a body servant to Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Ethel later wrote in her diary that Mr. Lee's father had been Robert E. Lee's body servant when he surrendered at Appomattox and that the General had given him a sword, two mules, and a house with 100 acres in Lynchburg, Virginia.

the president's horse. As a result, TR complained to the Pennsylvania railroad at its unwillingness to compromise its Jim Crow practices.[27] Though Lee initially stayed at the White House after the Roosevelts left, he soon asked Ethel if he could work for them at Sagamore Hill and her parents agreed to hire him to look after their horses. Eventually he learned to drive and became the family chauffeur. He and his wife, Clara, shared Grey Cottage with James and Annie Amos. White servants lived on the third floor of Sagamore Hill close to the family, but black servants inhabited Grey Cottage, which was not far from the building which housed the farmer. (See Figures 17a and 17b, page 117, for pictures of Grey Cottage.)

When TR was running for president in 1912, Ethel's diaries record her riding with Lee and his complimenting her on her skill.[28] In the year after her father died, Ethel was often sad and Lee comforted her when he found her crying.[29] In the period when Ethel lived at Sagamore Hill while her husband, Richard Derby, was in training and then at war, Charles and Clara Lee became special friends to Ethel's children, Richard Derby, Jr., and Edith Derby (later Mrs. Andrew Murray Williams, Jr.). After the war Mr. Lee continued as Mrs. Roosevelt's chauffeur and Clara continued as her maid.[30]

A member of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Oyster Bay, Mr. Lee organized a band for black children in the town. After his retirement he continued to live at Grey Cottage until his death in June 1934. Mrs. Derby remained friendly with the Lees and visited him in his last illness, and remembered him as the "perfection of dignity and courtesy."[31]

For Edith, Mame Ledwith, her childhood nurse, had become so much like a loyal family retainer that her irritability and complaining had to be tolerated. She was fond of Mame, but had to make many accommodations for her, and in Mame's later years there was never quite the feeling approaching friendship that characterized Ethel and TR's bonds with other servants. In her years of widowhood Edith became quite attached to Clara Lee, Bridget Tubridy, and Mary Sweeney.[32]

TR and Edith taught their children to be considerate and polite toward the servants,[33] although TR favored less formal relations with servants than did Edith. Once he had overheard

---

[27]Theodore Roosevelt to W.A. Patton, Mar. 6, 1908, Morison Rejects, TRC-HU; Hermann Hagedorn also interviewed Lee, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace.

[28]Ethel Roosevelt Derby Diary, Aug. 13, 1912, TRC-HU.

[29]Ibid., Aug. 12, 1919, TRC-HU.

[30]Ethel Roosevelt Derby to Richard Derby, Feb. 2, 1918, TRC-HU. [Clara Lee continued in service as personal maid to Edith Roosevelt throughout her life. She was active in local Republican politics and president of the Clara Lee Women's Republican Club of Oyster Bay. She died in her 72nd year on August 31, 1947. *Oyster Bay Guardian*, September 5, 1947.--SH-NHS]

[31]Biography of Charles H. Lee, SAHI NHS Archives; see also references to Lee in TR, *Letters*, 8:964, 1420.

[32]Ethel Roosevelt Derby to Edith Derby Williams, Sept. 22, 1946, TRC-HU.

[33]Theodore Roosevelt to M. Charles Wagner, June 13, 1904, Morison Rejects, TRC-HU.

the White House ushers talking about him and it pleased him to hear that they and the Secret Service felt they were "part of my regiment."[34] TR considered it disrespectful to call servants by their first names, so he referred to them as Miss Rose or Miss Mary—though Lee was always just Lee.[35] He accepted the necessity of hiring servants to run big houses, but he did prefer that they be treated graciously. He once told the reformer Frances Kellor that he wished they could be called "hired help" instead of servants.[36]

Many of the Roosevelt's friends, such as the Reids, had huge household staffs, but the Roosevelts could not afford a large staff. TR once remarked that even though they recognized that different levels of affluence existed among their friends, they felt unembarrassed that they had no butler, only a maid to answer the door.[37]

---

[34] Theodore Roosevelt to Ethel Roosevelt Derby, June 13, 1906, TRC-HU.

[35] Interviews: Mrs. Derby, informal, Feb. 29, 1964, SAHI NHS Archives.

[36] Theodore Roosevelt to Frances A. Kellor, July 4, 1906, Morison Rejects, TRC-HU.

[37] Theodore Roosevelt to Whitelaw Reid, Nov. 13, 1905, Morison Rejects, TRC-HU; Servants also posed a political issue for some of the Roosevelts. Politically, TR endorsed Frances Kellor's attempts to investigate and stop New York's employment bureaus from advertising for servants but then trapping or enticing young girls into prostitution.



Figure 16a. Grey Cottage in 1950. In Files of the Cultural Landscape Report, Sagamore Hill NHS Archives.



Figure 16b. Grey Cottage in 1990. In Files of the Cultural Landscape Report, Sagamore Hill NHS Archives.

From Country Estates to Suburbs

Natalie A. Naylor

The tradition of country homes in America dates from colonial times, when they were prized as an escape from summer heat or epidemics in the cities. Most early New York country homes were relatively close to the city, in northern Manhattan (Harlem) or western Queens County. However, English governors Thomas Dongan and George Clarke had their country homes in what is now New Hyde Park on Long Island. Country houses in the mid-nineteenth century, as depicted in Andrew Jackson Downing's *Architecture of Country Homes,* were modest cottages, farm houses, or the larger and "more refined" villas. Downing criticized men of wealth for beginning to indulge in country-seats of "great size and cost," which he thought was "contrary to the spirit of republican institutions." The houses he recommended ranged in cost from $400 to $2,000 for a working man's cottage and from $1,200-$5,000 for farm houses. For a "simple country house of the first class," which he felt would be "suitable as the abode of a gentleman," his estimated costs ranged from $3,000 to $14,000.[1]

Resorts catering to the well-to-do with leisure time began to flourish in the nineteenth century. Boarding houses and hotels usually preceded summer homes. Newport had its first hotel in the 1830s and attracted many southerners in the summer. In the Gilded Age, men with newly acquired wealth spent lavishly for country houses. The era of opulent "cottages" in Newport began in the 1870s with Richard Morris Hunt enlarging "Château-sur-Mer," and peaked with William Kissam Vanderbilt's $11 million "Marble House," designed by Hunt and completed in 1892. ("The Breakers," which Hunt designed that same year for Cornelius Vanderbilt II, was even

---

[1]A.J. Downing, *The Architecture of Country Houses,* 1850 (Reprint; New York: Dover Publications, 1969),266-67 and 330. Downing includes descriptions of homes in different styles in each category and estimatedcosts, 78-362 passim. In 1884, Theodore Roosevelt would pay $17,000 to construct his Sagamore Hill home and $5,160 for the lodge and stable; prices increased about 25 percent from 1850 to 1884.

larger, with seventy rooms, but it cost "only" $5 million.) Though the Newport houses were large, the property on which they were set was relatively small. Most of Newport's summer cottages were situated on property of 12 acres or less. New Yorkers predominated when Newport was the "Queen of American Resorts."[2]

The summer colony at Bar Harbor on Mount Desert Island in Maine began in the mid-1840s with the arrival of Thomas Cole and other artists. Their paintings of the scenery attracted others, initially primarily from Boston and Philadelphia. The first hotel opened in 1855, with more luxurious hotels built in the 1870s. Most of the accommodations in Maine, however, were more rustic than in Newport. Cottages began to be built in the 1880s, and the heyday of the construction of summer homes in Bar Harbor was from 1890 through World War I.[3]

George William Sheldon in his *Artistic Country-Seats: Types of Recent American Villa and Cottage Architecture with Instances of Country Club-Houses* (1886-87) includes more than 90 residences built in the 1880s, the same period as Sagamore Hill. Sheldon described the styles of most of the houses as "eclectic," and he is critical only of the Queen Anne style, which he felt was obsolete. Although Theodore Roosevelt's home is not included and only two of the houses are on Long Island, Roosevelt's architects, Lamb & Rich, are represented by four houses. Furthermore, Sheldon's photographs provide an excellent survey of country homes in the period when Sagamore Hill was built.[4]

In some respects, American country homes were modeled on or inspired by English country houses. However, the money which supported English country homes came from the land. That usually was not true in America. It was the city, as Richard Guy Wilson states, "which not only provided the wealth to support" the country house, "but an umbilical cord in the form of transportation."[5]

As Clive Aslet has pointed out, "Most owners wanted either to be within striking distance of a major city or to establish themselves in an area already known for its country houses, where

---

[2]Clive Aslet, *The American Country House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 245-51; Cleveland Amory, *The Last Resorts* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952), 263-326; and Preservation Society of Newport, *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions* (Newport: Preservation Society of Newport, 1984).

[3]Ibid, 245-51; Amory, *Last Resorts,* 276-77, 287. TR spent time in the Maine woods hunting as a boy and adult; he visited his fiancée, Alice Lee, at Bar Harbor in the summer of 1880. See Elting E. Morison, ed., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt,* 8 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 1:45.

[4]Arnold Lewis, *American Country Houses of the Gilded Age (Sheldon's "Artistic Country-Seats"),* (New York: Dover, 1982), xiii-xiv. Lewis reproduces all of the photographs in Sheldon's portfolio of designs, but with new text for each plate (sometimes quoting from Sheldon). Lewis also provides an extensive introduction.

[5] Aslet, *American Country House,* vi; Richard Guy Wilson, "Picturesque Ambiguities: The Country House Tradition in America," in *The Long Island Country House, 18 70-1930,* exhibition catalog (Southampton: Parrish Art Museum, 1988), 19.

there would be no shortage of congenial company." Country homes were located outside most cities. Aslet noted that the most desirable locations in the early twentieth century included New York's Hudson Valley and Long Island, Wilmington's Brandywine Valley, "Boston's North Shore, Philadelphia's Main Line, Pittsburgh's Sewickley Heights, Cleveland's Chagren Valley, and Chicago's Lake Forest and Lake Geneva." The Berkshires in western Massachusetts and "camps" in the Adirondacks in upstate New York were further from the cities, but also were popular (and fashionable) locales for country homes.[6]

Since New York was the largest city, it had the greatest number of country houses around it. Many were built on the shores of the Hudson River, including the Ogden Mills Mansion (1832, enlarged in 1895), and Frederick William Vanderbilt's 1898 Mansion (National Historic Site) in Hyde Park. (These opulent homes are now museums.) The largest number of country homes, however, was on Long Island (see the section below, "The Country House and Estate Movement on the North Shore of Long Island"). Thorstein Veblen in his *Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) argues that the key feature differentiating the grand estates from earlier country houses was that the land was "for leisure pursuits, for the pride of possessing a piece of natural beauty, or for the symbolic effect of social status," in short, for conspicuous consumption. Barr Feree in his 1904 book *American Estates and Gardens* described these homes:

> The great country house as it is now understood is a new type of dwelling, a sumptuous house, built at large expense, often palatial in its dimensions, furnished in the richest manner and placed on an estate, perhaps large enough to admit of independent farming operations, and in most cases with a garden which is an integral part of the architectural scheme.[7]

Of course, most country houses were not as large and luxurious as many of the sumptuous mansions which have survived as museums. The typical country house in America, however, was "out of sight of other houses, possessing at least the appearance of an independent, possibly self-sufficient, landed life."[8]

Mark Alan Hewitt has differentiated between the aristocratic model of a stately home (which flourished in the 1890s and early 1900s) and the "pastoral-genteel" country place which arose in reaction to the grand estates (1900-World War I), providing a useful distinction of two types of country houses. Sagamore Hill is closer to the pastoral-genteel type, though built in an

---

[6]Aslet, *American Country House*, 20, 22.

[7]Veblen's views are summarized by Mark Alan Hewitt, *The Architect & The American Country House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 12; Feree is quoted in Aslet, *American Country House*, 5-6.

[8]Aslet, *American Country House*, 6.

earlier period (mid-1880s). Hewitt has summarized the "defining characteristics" of the American country house:

> Most country houses were built to sustain facets of country life passed down from the Anglo-Saxon tradition: gentlemanly farming, breeding horses and livestock, gardening, equestrian pursuits, hunting and fishing, perhaps sailing and yachting, and the "modern" sports of tennis and golf. Cultivation of these domestic pursuits (with varying degrees of seriousness) was seen as salubrious, morally uplifting, and socially correct.[9]

In his study of American country houses, Clive Aslet, editor of the British *Country Life* magazine and author of *The Last [English] Country Houses* (1982), concludes that "beyond the gratuitous display of wealth" the "motive forces behind the creation of so many costly houses" lie "largely in sport and the desire for a wholesome rural life, symbolized by the farm group."[10] While Sagamore Hill was not a "display of wealth," the latter two motives—sport and rural life—accurately describe Theodore Roosevelt's desire for establishing his country home in Oyster Bay.

In contrast to English country homes, the American estates rarely proved to be profitable. "But," as Aslet observes in his chapter on farm complexes, "ample justification was thought to lie in the pleasures of land ownership and the opportunity to enjoy active, outdoor pursuits." Farms promised fresh, healthy meat, produce, and milk. Furthermore, "A farm was thought to be wholesome for the children; it suggested a point of contact with the nation's agrarian past; and above all it rounded out the image of country life created by the house and dependencies." Moreover, America had its own tradition of valuing land and its agrarian roots which Thomas Jefferson had articulated. As the United States became more urbanized, these agrarian ideals flourished in a back to-nature movement which TR himself helped popularize.[11]

---

[9]Hewitt, *Architect & The American Country House,* 12.

[10]Aslet, *American Country House,* 6.

[11]Ibid., 135, 137. TR appointed a Country Life Commission in 1908 to examine rural problems. Liberty Hyde Bailey, who chaired the Commission, was the editor of *Country Life in America,* Doubleday's magazine for gentlemen farmers and owners of country houses, which was published in Garden City, Long Island. On agrarian ideals, see, for example, Morton and Lucia White, *The Intellectual Versus the City: From Thomas Jefferson to Frank Lloyd Wright* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press and M.I.T. Press, 1962); Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford, 1964); and Peter J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

The Country House and Estate Movement on the North Shore of Long Island

The proximity of Long Island to Manhattan means it has been popular for country homes from colonial times to the present. In the nineteenth century, newspaper editor and poet William Cullen Bryant was among the earliest New Yorkers to commute weekends to his country retreat on the North Shore. In the 1840s, Bryant remodeled a farmhouse into his county estate, "Cedarmere," located in the community of Roslyn Harbor. He traveled to and from New York City by steamboat.

Long Island was an attractive site for country houses and estates because of its closeness to New York City, its easy access by water or railroad, the natural beauty of the landscape, and the moderate and relatively predictable climate. It was less ostentatious than Newport or Saratoga Springs. Moreover, the topography was suitable for leisure sports of the wealthy—fox (or drag) hunting, polo, riding, racing, yachting, hunting and fowling, angling, golf, and tennis. Many of the wealthy tried to emulate the English gentry and their country manors and, as noted above, in the heyday of the Gilded Age some estates were "conspicuous consumption." When Theodore Roosevelt purchased land in Oyster Bay in 1880, "Long Island had been relatively unknown as a watering spot," as Robert B. MacKay has noted, "unmentioned in the guidebooks that extolled the merits of such nationally known resorts as the Jersey Shore, Newport, and the Adirondacks."[12]

However, Oyster Bay had become a popular summer locale as early as the 1860s. Steamboats made day-excursion trips from New York City to picnic groves and hotels in Oyster Bay and Cold Spring Harbor. At least two small hotels operated on Main Street in Oyster Bay, the Octagon Hotel (dating from c. 1860) and Solomon Townsend's Simcoe (later Bay View) House (circa 1850). Further east, overlooking Cold Spring Harbor in what is now Laurel Hollow, was the larger and more elegant Laurelton Hall.[13] The presence of the Roosevelts from the 1870s and others renting or building country houses is also evidence of the earlier beginnings of Oyster Bay's summer community. The protected waters of Oyster Bay Harbor attracted New Yorkers who enjoyed sailing and racing. The Seawanhaka Yacht Club was organized in Oyster Bay in 1871 and was headquartered there, though it would be two decades before it built its impressive clubhouse on nearby Centre Island. The extension of the Long Island Railroad's branch lines

---

[12]Robert B. MacKay, "Introduction," in *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects, 1860-1940* (hereafter cited as *LI Country Houses)*, edited by Robert B. MacKay, Anthony Baker, and Carol A. Traynor (New York: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities [SPLIA]/W.W. Norton, 1997),19, 32-33.

[13]*A Walking Tour of Oyster Bay* (Oyster Bay: Oyster Bay Historical Society, 1996), 18; Dean F. Failey and Zachary N. Studenroth, *Edward Lange's Long Island* (Setauket: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1979), 16; Terry Walton, *Cold Spring Harbor: Rediscovering History in Streets and Shores* (Cold Spring Harbor: Whaling Museum Society, 1999), 30, 32. These sources include illustrations of each of the hotels.

increased the summer population. By the 1890s Long Island was becoming a favored location for wealthy New Yorkers and Oyster Bay was among the earliest of its summer resort areas. A "fast train" would take about an hour to reach Oyster Bay.

Recreational sports and "pleasure clubs" were an important impetus for New Yorkers to purchase Long Island farmland for country home estates. The Queens County Hounds (in Garden City), Rockaway Hunt (in Cedarhurst) and the Meadow Brook Hounds (headquartered in Westbury) were organized for fox hunting in 1877, 1878, and 1881 respectively. TR was a member of the Meadow Brook Club and his brother, Elliot Roosevelt, was a master. TR invited the Meadow Brook Hunt to Sagamore Hill in the 1880s. He was also a member of the Oyster Bay Polo Club (circa 1887-1894) and played in tournaments in 1892 and 1894, with a handicap rating of 1. (Most of the Oyster Bay players were novices, rated at 0 on a scale that went up to 10.) Many New Yorkers, including members of the Union League Club, were attracted to Glen Cove, Manhasset, and Oyster Bay on the North Shore for yachting. The Seawanhaka Corinthian Yacht Club opened its station on Centre Island in 1892. Golf and country clubs, as well as hunting and fishing clubs, were attractions in other areas. A "Country Lanes Committee" was organized in 1912, which "preserved and maintained hundreds of miles of equestrian trails across the North Shore." An article in *Country Life* the following year declared Long Island a "paradise for equestrians" and stated, "Everyone rode, hunted, or played polo and fairly lived out of doors." A 1916 directory, *Prominent Residents of Long Island and Their Clubs,* included 71 "Pleasure Clubs, whose members participate in Fox Hunting, Polo, Racing, Golf, Tennis, Aviation, Yachting, Fishing, Hunting, etc." Long Island had become a "pleasure island" for the wealthy.[14]

---

[14]Merri McIntyre Ferrell, "Fox Hunting on Long Island," *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 56 (2001): 3-5; George Henry Payne, "Theodore Roosevelt, Fox Hunter," *Long Island Forum* 2 (December 1939): 5-6; Dennis J. Amato, "Teddy Roosevelt and Oyster Bay Polo," *Long Island Forum* 49 (August 1986): 156-58; Theodore Roosevelt, "Cross-Country Riding in America," *Century Magazine* 32 (July 1886): 335; and MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Estates,* 18, 24, 26.

TR wrote about his polo playing in his *Autobiography,* 1913 (Reprinted; New York: Charles Scribner's, 1920), 39; and in a letter to his sister Corinne in 1887 (in Corinne Roosevelt Robinson, *My Brother Theodore Roosevelt* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920], 130). TR's October 25, 1885, letter to Henry Cabot Lodge describes the hunt when he broke his arm (*Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918,* ed. Henry Cabot Lodge, 2 vols. [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925], 1:34). Hermann Hagedorn states that TR rode the hunt seven or eight times in 1885 (Hagedorn, *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill* [New York: Macmillan, 1954], 12-13; see also 37 on polo).

After TR became more involved in a political career, he did not participate in polo. Clive Aslet has indicated that the Duke of Windsor was surprised on his visit to Long Island in the 1920s that in the United States, "the term 'polo player' was used in the press with almost the same opprobrious connotations as 'playboy.'" TR also avoided playing golf for its elitist connotations. Edith probably also discouraged his polo playing; neither she nor TR was comfortable with what they referred to as the "Meadowbrook crowd." Aslet, *American Country House,* 180; TR to Anna Roosevelt Cowles, July 28, 1911, in Morison, *Letters,* 7:315; John E. Hammond, Oyster Bay Historian, talk on "Theodore Roosevelt and Oyster Bay," at the Doubleday Babcock Senior Center in Oyster Bay, November 7, 2002, sponsored by the Theodore Roosevelt Association and Friends of Sagamore Hill.

The estates definitely had an impact on the local economy. Farmers received more for their land when it was sold for estates than it was worth as farms. Isaac Hicks wrote to a friend in 1900 about selling land to Clarence Mackay for his Harbor Hill estate: "We, my brother Samuel and I, had 16 acres of woodland there and we sold $441.00 pr. acre. Worth perhaps $75. pr. acre old time." Prices of farmland bought for estates were not related to agricultural productivity. An article in the *East Norwich Enterprise* in 1912 observed that "there still remain, in this locality, a few farms unsold":

> And we all know that good soil, a fine growth of timber and near-by good roads do not now enhance the value of farms at all. We also well know that land, however infertile the soil, dwarfed the growth of timber and wretched the bad dirt roads that adjoin them may be, that when any would-be purchaser *fancies* them they are disposed of very quickly. The price of land in this vicinity has no fixed rating. It is simply that a man *fancies* the property that a good price is obtained, and not for any other conceivable reason, unless it be that there are relatives or congenial friends who have established homes in the neighborhood.

The paper reminded its readers that prices for farms had fallen in the 1870s and urged owners to lower their prices, warning that the "present high prices of land on Long Island" would not be maintained indefinitely. Some of the farmers left Long Island (Hicks said three-quarters of his fellow Quakers had "gone").[15] Other farmers and farm laborers secured better-paying jobs on Long Island estates.

Baymen also found their livelihoods in jeopardy as estate owners restricted their access to waters. On Centre Island, clammers protested by cutting through private docks that hindered them. (The owners subsequently hinged their docks so they could be raised for the baymen.) Noah Seaman, who was Roosevelt's first superintendent, was formerly a local bayman. Many who worked on the estates were immigrants. (The years from 1880 to 1920 were years of peak immigration.) Although studies of the staff on the estates are limited, most apparently enjoyed the opportunities that working on an estate offered.[16]

The estates helped the local economy by bringing an infusion of money into communities. Local services from builders and contractors to food markets and nurseries relied on business from the estates. Such improvements as electricity and telephones often came initially to the estates and then became available to others. (Theodore Roosevelt, however, resisted having a phone at Sagamore Hill until he became president.) Some of the wealthy estate owners were generous

---

[15]Hicks quoted in MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses*, 29; "Long Island Farms," *East Norwich Enterprise*, December 15, 1912. In recent years, a similar situation has occurred on the South Fork of Eastern Long Island, as farmland is purchased for summer homes. Suffolk County has implemented a program of purchasing development rights to ensure the continuance of farmland.

[16]MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses*, 30; Elly Shodell, *In the Service: Workers on the Grand Estates of Long Island, 1890s-1940s* (Port Washington: Port Washington Library, 1991).

philanthropists to local causes. The Vanderbilts, Whitneys, and Belmonts were among those who helped finance hospitals on Long Island.

The *New York Herald* reported in 1902, "Long Island is rapidly being divided up into estates of immense acreage...beyond all precedent of American country life.... Nowhere else, certainly in America, possibly the world, are to be found so many great landed estates in any similar area." What differentiated Long Island, and particularly the North Shore, from other areas of country estates was the concentration and density of homes. (The "North Shore" is defined here as from the Nassau-Queens border east to Centerport and south to Westbury). The extensive study of Long Island country houses by the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA) documented nearly 1,000 estates created between the Civil War and World War II. More than half were built in the years from 1890 to 1918, and less than three percent of the Long Island country houses identified by SPLIA were built before 1880.[17]

Convenient access to Long Island was an important factor in the increasing number of estates. Many North Shore communities, including Oyster Bay, developed on good harbors, which made them accessible by water. Sloops, schooners, and later steamboats plied Long Island Sound. The Long Island Railroad reached Oyster Bay in 1889. Branch lines served other North Shore communities. Glen Cove was reached in 1867. The railroad completed a branch line to Port Washington in 1898 and electrified it by 1912. When the railroad opened its East River tunnels in 1910, it expedited the trip, permitting a direct route to Manhattan and eliminating the need for a ferry ride. The Queensboro 59th Street Bridge opened in 1909 and facilitated automobile access to the city from the North Shore, as did William K. Vanderbilt, Jr.'s Long Island Motor Parkway, built from Queens to Lake Ronkonkoma between 1908 and 1911.

A characteristic feature of the estate houses was that they were designed by architects, rather than by builders using pattern books. Prominent architects and firms that each designed 10 or more North Shore country houses included: Roger Bullard; Carrere & Hastings; Delano & Aldrich; Bradley Delehanty; C.P.H. Gilbert; Lamb & Rich; Harrie T. Lindeberg; McKim, Mead & White; James W. O'Connor; Peabody, Wilson & Brown; Charles A. Platt; John Russell Pope; and Walker & Gillette. The houses varied greatly in architectural style, depending on current fashions and the proclivities of the owners and architects. Many of the owners engaged prominent landscape architects. Marian C. Coffin, Beatrix Farrand, Olmsted Brothers, Ellen Shipman, and Vitale & Geiffert each designed landscapes on 10 or more North Shore estates.[18]

---

[17]*New York Herald* article quoted in MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 19, 33. Of 975 houses included in the SPLIA study,"8 were built in the 1860s, 15 in the 1870s, 37 in the 1880s, and 131 in the 1890s." Four hundred were built in the peak years, 1900-1918, and 304 from 1919-1929 (ibid., 33). The SPLIA study (and these numbers) include houses on the South Shore and Eastern Long Island built between 1860 and 1940, as well as those on the North Shore. About two-thirds of the 975 houses were on the North Shore.

[18]MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 32, 470-77. There is no evidence that TR had a landscape architect design his grounds or garden.

The size of the estates covered a wide range: some were quite small, consisting of only five or ten acres, while a few had more than 1,000 acres. One in four North Shore estates in 1920 was larger than 100 acres. The majority comprised between 50 and 100 acres. Such large properties were available only outside the established villages. The average size of the estates tended to decline over time as less land was available and existing estates were divided among children. The main house was usually located in the center of the property, enhancing privacy and permitting an impressive entrance drive. Like Sagamore Hill, many were built on top of a hill to achieve an eminence and secure the best views. On property with shore front, the house might be sited closer to the water. Other estate buildings (e.g., servants' cottages, and stables or garages) usually were located around the main house (with the exception, of course, of gate houses). The number of rooms in the houses also varied a great deal. The majority probably had fewer than 50 rooms. Otto Kahn's "Oheka" in Cold Spring Hills was the largest on Long Island with more than 100 rooms (when it was built in 1915-19 it was the second largest residence in the country). Most country homes were designed to be used seasonally (spring and fall, or during the summer, depending on the owner and the number and location of the family's other homes). It has been estimated that an estate of 100 acres might average between 25 and 50 employees.[19]

Planning an estate was often a complex operation. Architect Thomas Hastings recommended to clients that they allocate half their money for the outbuildings or, as he colorfully described it, "one half for the pudding [main house], the other for the sauce."[20] The facilities on the estate varied; some had golf courses, polo fields, formal gardens, orchards, greenhouses, casinos, indoor tennis courts, swimming pools, boathouses, and docks for yachts.

The decade of the 1920s is usually regarded as the heyday of the Gold Coast on Long Island. It is also the era immortalized by F. Scott Fitzgerald, who began writing his novel *The Great Gatsby* while renting a house in Great Neck. The novel has so inspired Fitzgerald devotees that they come to Long Island seeking to see Jay Gatsby's house on West Egg (Great Neck) and Daisy Buchanan's house in East Egg (Sands Point).The North Shore retained its attractions for the wealthy for many decades. In 1946 it was called the "most socially desirable residential area in the U.S." *Life* magazine explained, "Nowhere else in such costly profusion can be found

---

[19]MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 32; Dennis P. Sobin, *Dynamics of Community Change: The Case of Long Island's Declining "Gold Coast"* (Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1968), 40, 45-47, 58; and Robert B. King, *Raising a Fallen Treasure: The Otto H. Kahn Home, Huntington, Long Island* (Privately printed, 1985), 135.

At the turn of the century, Kahn had built a country home in Morristown, New Jersey, the "inland Newport"; he also had a "camp" in the Adirondacks. After Kahn was ostracized by his Morristown neighbors because he was Jewish, he purchased 443 acres on Long Island to build Oheka (King, *Raising a Fallen Treasure,* 21-24, 27-28, 49-86). Oheka was second in size only to George W. Vanderbilt's "Biltmore" in Asheville, North Carolina (built 1888-95), though accounts vary on the number of rooms in Oheka; cf. MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 13, 138.

[20]Quoted in MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 27.

such great, handsome and such scrupulously tended estates as those on the North Shore. While more ostentatious centers like Newport and Saratoga have passed their prime, the North Shore continues to flourish."[21]

The Roosevelts' Neighbors

Unfortunately, only limited information is available on the smaller Long Island estates comparable to Sagamore Hill, and rarely are farming aspects noted. A 1902 article in the *Boston Sunday Herald* mentioned several of TR's neighbors and pictured some of their residences, including George T. Maxwell, Commodore William L. Swan, Frederick R. Coudert, Mrs. Rogers Maxwell, W.E. Roosevelt, W.B. Youngs, and Miss Beekman.[22] "Miss Beekman" probably lived in "The Cliffs," built by James W. Beekman west of the village of Oyster Bay in 1863-1865. The architect Henry C. Harrison designed this "show place" house in the Gothic Revival style, influenced by Alexander Jackson Downing. It has been called Long Island's "first sophisticated country house." The 37-acre estate included a carriage house and caretaker's cottage. The house still stands on West Shore Road in today's village of Mill Neck.[23]

Most of the land immediately adjacent to Sagamore Hill on Cove Neck was owned by Roosevelt relatives. James Alfred Roosevelt's "Yellowbanks" was designed by architect Bruce Price in the Shingle Style in 1881. (James Alfred Roosevelt was TR's uncle, an older brother of TR's father.) His 38-acre property fronted on Oyster Bay Harbor. At the same time Sagamore Hill was being constructed, James K. Gracie was having McKim, Mead and White design a house on the Cove Neck land his wife had purchased from TR. (Aunt Anna [Bullock] Gracie was the eldest sister of TR's mother.) The Gracie home was also built in the then-popular Shingle Style. Their 32-acre "Gracewood" property extended from Oyster Bay Harbor on the west to Cold Spring Harbor on the east. TR's cousin, Dr. J. West Roosevelt, owned four acres adjacent to Yellowbanks, fronting on Oyster Bay Harbor; his house was "Waldeck." Another cousin, W. Emlen Roosevelt (son of James Alfred Roosevelt), owned 79 acres of property to the north of Sagamore Hill, fronting on Cold Spring Harbor. By 1906 Emlen had acquired Gracewood, and by 1914 he was the largest landowner on Cove Neck. Emlen's four children were close in age to

---

[21] "The North Shore: A Small Patch of Long Island Houses the Rich and Great of New York," Life, July 22, 1946, 73.

[22] August 3, 1902; clipping in Roosevelt scrapbook in Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, microfilm.

[23] Robert B. MacKay, "Turmoil Begat 'Tranquility,'" in Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American, edited by Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable (Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992), 47-48; MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, LI Country Houses, 207, 484 (includes photograph); Robert B. MacKay, "Of Grand Hotels, Great Estates, Polo, and Princes," in Between Ocean and Empire: An Illustrated History of Long Island, edited by Robert B. MacKay, Geoffrey L. Rossano, and Carol Traynor (Northridge, CA: Windsor, 1985), 115.

their Sagamore Hill cousins and, together with West's children, they all freely roamed the Roosevelt properties. Emlen moved into Yellowbanks and his son, John K. Roosevelt, lived there until he died in 1974. Yellowbanks is extant; it is privately owned and has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1979. (See Figures 2 and 3 on page 135 [repeated from page 25] and Figure 17 on page 136 for maps showing nearby Roosevelt properties in 1884, 1906, and 1914.)[24]

Edward H. Swan's name and houses appear on the 1873 map (Figure 1, page 24) along the southwest shore of the Cove Neck peninsula. His "Evergreens," designed by John W. Ritch in the French Second Empire style, was built of masonry in 1859 after a fire destroyed another house Ritch had just completed for Swan. That earlier house had a barn and outbuildings, which may have survived the fire. Benjamin L. Swan, Edward's brother, had an "Italianate villa" on adjacent property which was destroyed in 1909.[25] The 1914 map (Figure 17, page 138) identifies the extensive property stretching across the peninsula as the "Edward Swan Estate." J.W.T. Nichols owned a large plot of land north of TR and Emlen Roosevelt's properties near Cooper's Bluff. Minerva Nichols designed "The Kettles" for her cousin in a stuccoed, modified Dutch Colonial Revival style in1903.[26]

Several large estates on Centre Island, across the harbor from Cove Neck, were developed in the 1890s. Colgate Hoyt's 173-acre "Eastover" estate covered more than one-fourth of the island. The main house, designed by William Russell, no longer survives, but the 1914 map indicates locations of a coach stable, garage, second stable, and greenhouses. To the north, "Applegarth" was the residence of Charles W. Wetmore, built in 1892 in an Elizabethan style designed by architects Renwick, Aspinwall & Owen. George Bullock, a friend of Hoyt and Wetmore, had much less acreage, but had the same firm design "The Folly" in Elizabethan style in 1899, south of the other estates.[27]

Charles Louis Tiffany's "Laurelton Hall," on the southern portion of Cove Neck, was probably the most distinctive nearby estate. Tiffany's estate totaled almost 600 acres. He demolished the resort hotel, also called Laurelton Hall, which had been on the site, but

---

[24]Other maps of Cove Neck properties in 1883, 1894, and 1928 are in Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report,* 20, 22, and 110. Information on estates is in MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI County Estates,* 274-275, 368-69, 499, 521 (includes illustrations of houses) and Peter Shaver, *The National Register of Historic Places in New York State* (New York: Rizzoli, 1993), 89; additional information from John A. Gable.

[25]MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Estates,* 378-79; an illustration of Edward Swan's home is on 526. See also the description of Swan's farms above, in the chapter "A Sense of Place: Sagamore Hill, Oyster Bay, and the North Shore of Long Island" under the section on Long Island Agriculture and Farming. TR, Jr., rented a house belonging to William Swan before building Old Orchard (Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report,* 108).

[26]Ibid., 307, 514. The house still stands and is privately owned.

[27]Ibid., 376, 504. None of these Centre Island houses survives.

remodeled an existing mid-nineteenth-century house to be the gatehouse. Tiffany designed the main house in Art Nouveau style; it was built between 1902 and 1905. Arthur Hopkins, who specialized in farm group design, planned the stables and farm complex, which included living accommodations for the superintendent and a dormitory for the hired hands. Edith Roosevelt recorded in her diary in 1904, "Walked to Laurelton to see Mr. Tiffany's new house." Laurelton Hall has been well documented, but was destroyed by fire in 1957. Parts of the farm complex survive. The stables had been remodeled by the Tiffany Foundation, beginning about 1918, to accommodate students in the art school. In recent decades much of the estate has been subdivided and developed.[28]

Three well-documented estates on the North Shore which were built or developed after TR's presidential years are described in Appendix 6: William Robertson Coe's "Planting Fields," Marshall Field's "Caumsett" on Lloyd Neck, and the Gould-Guggenheim complex in Sands Point. Each was much larger than Sagamore Hill and reflects greater wealth. Coe's Planting Fields had elaborately landscaped grounds; the Caumsett and the Gould-Guggenheim estates each included extensive farm complexes. Daniel Guggenheim gave a portion of his estate to his son, as Edith Roosevelt eventually did for TR, Jr. These grand mansions, which are accessible to the public, provide an interesting contrast with Sagamore Hill.

In the Oyster Bay area there was still plenty of wealth in the mid-1920s, documented by Henry Isham Hazelton:

> Within a radius of five miles from the town hall of Oyster Bay village, a greater aggregation of wealthy men is said to inhabit than can be found in any equal area in the country. Some of the largest estates are assessed upon the town roll at from $100,000 to $600,000. Many of the owners are among the leaders in American finance and the possessors of millions of dollars. Some of the largest follow:
>
> Oyster Bay village: Mortimer L. Schiff; Gerald Beekman, est. [estate, i.e. deceased]; William R. Coe; William R. Peters; Elizabeth F. Sanderson; Elizabeth J. Shonnard; Marion S. Work, Oyster Bay Cove: Louis C. Tiffany; W. Emlen Roosevelt; Van S. Merle-Smith; and Walter Farwell.[29]

---

[28]MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI County Estates,* 216-17, 397-400 (includes photographs and architectural drawings); Edith's diary, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard University.

[29]Henry Isham Hazelton *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens Counties of Nassau and Suffolk, Long Island, New York, 1609-1924,* 6 vols. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1925), 2:923. Oyster Bay was still a summer resort area. Hazelton indicated that the summer population was "about 8,000, with a loss of 1,500 in the winter." Oystering flourished with 100,000 gallons shipped annually (923).

Old Orchard

Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. (Ted), the eldest son of the Roosevelts, was supposed to inherit Sagamore Hill. Edith had refused to turn the house over to the Roosevelt Memorial Association in 1920 because she wanted to keep it for Ted. After 27 years of marriage, however, Ted decided in 1937 that he was "tired of living here and there in rented houses." Moreover, he and his wife Eleanor realized that Sagamore "had been built at a time when domestic help was no problem, and it was not made for easy housekeeping." They decided to build their own house and Edith Roosevelt gave them four acres of land in Sagamore Hill's apple orchard in 1938. They turned to their architect son-in-law, William McMillan (husband of their daughter Grace), to design their house. (Information on McMillan is in Appendix 8.) "Old Orchard," a neo-Georgian brick house was, according to Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., "so well suited to our needs that we have never wished anything changed." The 19-room house included a service wing.[30] The Old Orchard property also included a foreman's cottage and a six-car garage with storage area. These also were built in 1938. Above the garage was an apartment for Peter Cucci, who was the assistant groundskeeper from 1938 to 1942.[31]

Unfortunately, Ted only lived in the house for three years before he re-entered the army and died in service in 1944. (During World War II, Eleanor moved into the service wing "for the duration.")

Old Orchard was designed by an architect in the then-popular Georgian-revival style. Its separate service wing reflected the usual pattern in large country houses by the twentieth century, whereas in Sagamore Hill the inside servants lived on the third floor. Old Orchard was designed for year-round use. The E.W. Howell Company, which constructed the house, built many other country homes on Long Island.

Old Orchard was constructed at the end of the country house/estate movement on Long Island. Because of the Depression, relatively few country houses were built in the 1930s. Only eight percent (or 80) of the 975 Long Island country houses which SPLIA identified as having been built between 1860 and 1940 date from the 1930s.[32] No doubt some of them probably had been planned and begun in the more prosperous late 1920s.

Many estate owners subdivided their estates for their children. The four acres that TR, Jr., received was a relatively small portion, but the trend over time had been to smaller houses and property. When Old Orchard was built, Ted and Eleanor's children were already adults

---

[30]Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *Day Before Yesterday* (New York: Doubleday, 1959), 390. She describes the interior of the house on 404-410. Unfortunately the Sagamore Hill curatorial files have very limited information on Old Orchard.

[31]The Park Service converted the garage to house maintenance vehicles. The foreman's cottage and apartment above the garage are now used for staff housing. Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report,* 112, 173.

[32] MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 33.

and most were not living at home. Nineteen rooms provided sufficient space for a family that was not trying to be ostentatious and was not as wealthy as many estate owners. By comparison, Harry Guggenheim received 90 acres of land from his father (slightly more than the entire Sagamore Hill estate), but of course Daniel Guggenheim's estate of 800 acres in Sands Point was also much larger.

The Theodore Roosevelt Association bought Old Orchard in 1963 after the death of Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., and in that year donated it to the National Park Service at the same time as the Sagamore Hill property.

Suburbanization and the Decline of the Gold Coast

Suburbanization boomed in Nassau County in the 1920s as a result of a prosperous economy and improved transportation. The population more than doubled, with much of the growth in the Town of Hempstead and the western part of the county, which was closer to New York City. The population of the town of Oyster Bay increased 82 percent during the 1920s. De-agriculturalization proceeded as well, with a continuing decline in the number and acreage of farms. Some estates began to be sub-divided and developed. Much of the 200-acre William Walker estate, for example, just west of Oyster Bay in Bayville, was divided into 50 x 150-foot lots for modest middle-class homes.

Income and inheritance taxes, immigration restrictions and the difficulty of securing servants, and changes in lifestyle doomed many of the large estates. In the 1930s, some estates that went on the market did not find buyers or were sold at bargain prices. Otto Kahn's mansion in Cold Spring Hills, which was built in the late 1910s for $4 million, was sold for only $100,000 in 1939, to be used as a country vacation site by New York City sanitation workers.[32] After World War II, pressures for development of estate properties increased. Many mansions were demolished and estates divided for suburban development. By the 1950s and 1960s, some of the larger mansions had become white elephants. The high cost of maintenance and changing styles of leisure among the wealthy because of jet plane travel contributed to the razing of many of the larger mansions; fire claimed others. Some developers saved the main house on reduced acreage and divided the balance of the property, usually with rather large plots. Many of the estate villages increased zoning requirements to minimum two- or five-acre plots to control development.

A sampling of newspaper headlines tells the story: "Old Estate Glitter Is Fading in Oyster Bay" (1953); "A Vanishing Frontier: Housing Developments Whittle Big L.I. Estates" (1955); "The Vanishing L.I. Estates" (1963); "LI 'Gold Coast' Upzones as Insurance for the Future" (1964); "Our Crumbling Gold Coast: Stables, Gardens of Golden Era" (1967); "'Gold Coast' on

---

[32]Sobin, *Dynamics of Community Change*, 53. The Kahn mansion later housed the Eastern Military Academy. As of this writing, it is in private ownership, though announced plans for condominiums have not been realized. It is occasionally the site of boutiques, designer showcases, and other special events and thus sometimes is open to the public, though it has not been fully renovated or restored. See King, *Raising a Fallen Treasure*.

Long Island Still Eroding" (1971); "Golden Retirement for Great Estates" (1977); "The Fabled Past: Glitter and Gold" (1979); "LI's Estates—Going, Going . . . Nearly Gone" (1984); "Playgrounds of the Past" (1988); and "Where Have All the Mansions Gone?" (1990).[33]

Some estates became country clubs, others became schools or colleges or housed religious groups, and still others became corporate headquarters. Such adaptive reuse saved quite a number of the mansions. A few mansions have been preserved as historic house museums, most of which are owned and operated under government auspices (see Appendix 7). The rate of loss declined as people became more aware of the importance of these houses. In 1977, the Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA) published *Saving Large Estates: Conservation, Historic Preservation, Adaptive Re-Use.* A decade later, SPLIA estimated that 58 percent of the 975 Long Island country houses it had identified that were built between 1860 and 1940 survived into the late 1980s. Of these, 424 were still residences and 84 had found adaptive reuse. (The largest remaining estate in Nassau County in 2003 is John Hay Whitney's 400-acre "Greentree" in Manhasset, now owned by the Greentree Foundation.)[34]

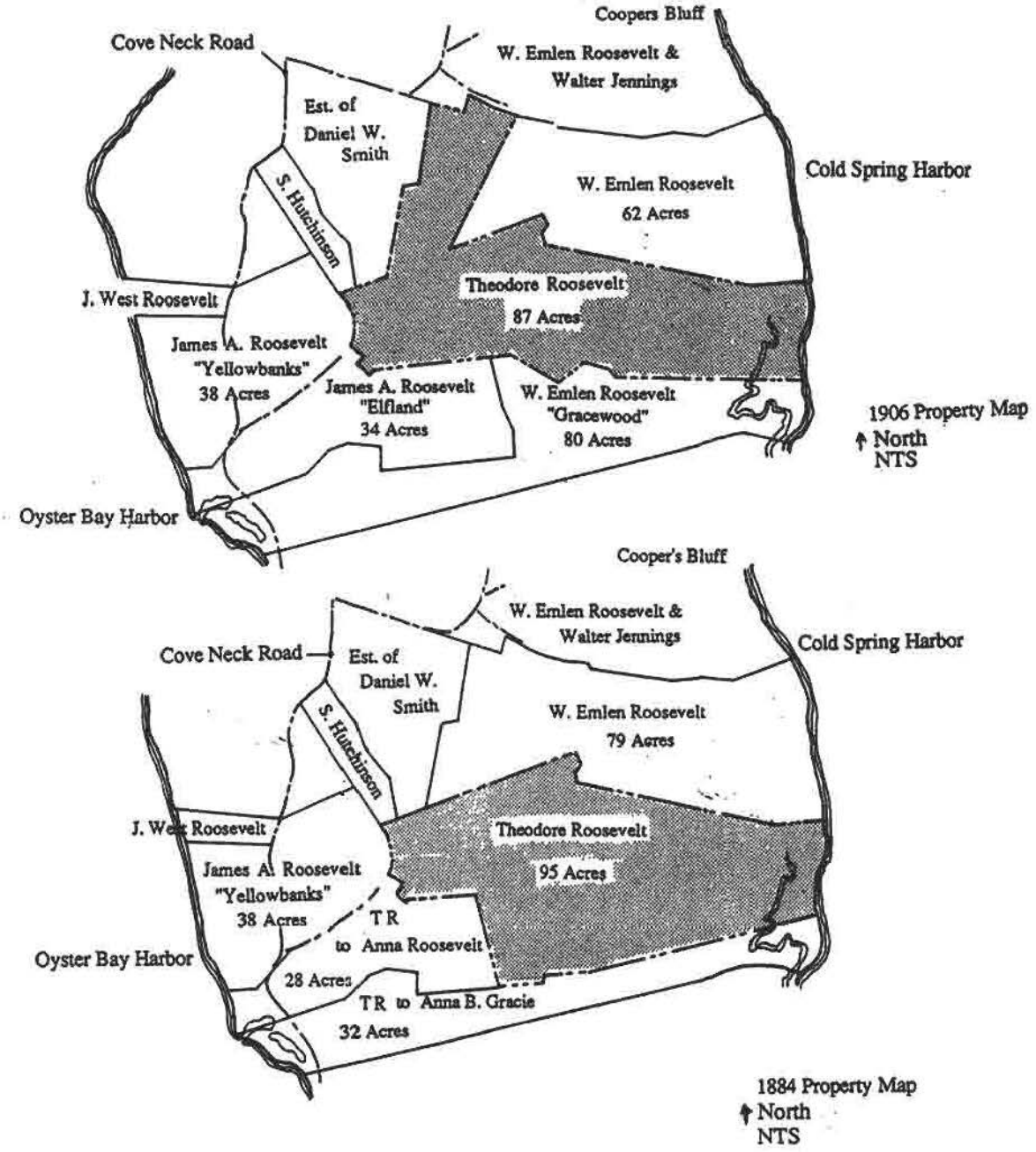
Post-World War II suburban development on Long Island included tract housing such as Levittown and other "automobile suburbs." In recent decades, on Long Island and elsewhere, there has been a revival of country houses, albeit on a more modest scale than in their heyday in the early decades of the twentieth century. Not only is commuting to Manhattan more convenient today, but many people are employed on Long Island. A country home or primary home in the country on two or five or 10 acres retains its appeal. Farms have almost disappeared in Nassau and western Suffolk Counties, but gardens flourish. Estates have been divided with single-family houses on relatively large lots or townhouse condominiums, often as gated communities. In some instances, the original house has been retained, though on less acreage. Cove Neck is still not developed, but neighboring Oyster Bay Cove and Laurel Hollow reflect post-war development of upper and upper-middle class residential communities with country houses (compare current population and density figures of these villages in Appendix 2). The legacy of the Gold Coast is not only the surviving historic house museums, including Sagamore Hill, but the large tracts of land that the estates preserved, some of which are now parks and preserves. In the midst of all these pressures, the community of Oyster

---

[33]The headlines are from articles in the "Gold Coast" vertical file of the Nassau County Museum Collection in the Long Island Studies Institute at Hofstra University. The authors (when there is a byline), newspapers, and specific dates are: *Long Island Daily Press,* July 21, 1955; Robert Ryan, *New York Herald Tribune,* December 1, 1963; *Long Island Press,* April 5, 1964; *Long Island Press,* October 3, 1967; Carter B. Horsley, *New York Times,* October 31, 1971; Harry V. Forgeron, *New York Times,* October 9, 1977; *Locust Valley Leader,* May 24, 1979; Larry Light, *Newsday,* July 27, 1984; Ridgely Ochs, *Newsday,* May 12, 1988; and George Wallace, *Glen Cove Record-Pilot,* August 9, 1990.

[34]MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses,* 33; Larry Light, *Newsday,* July 27, 1984. Monica Randall includes a number of now-demolished houses in her *Mansions of Long Island's Gold Coast,* 1979, rev. ed. (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), which has extensive color and archival photographs.

Bay and the village of Cove Neck have retained much of the ambience of their earlier years into the twenty-first century. Edith Roosevelt's longevity and the purchase of the Sagamore Hill estate by the Roosevelt Memorial Association after her death (as well as the Theodore Roosevelt Association's later purchase of Old Orchard) preserved most of the Sagamore Hill estate fairly intact. The challenge now is to restore the grounds so that visitors will recognize that while the Roosevelts lived there Sagamore Hill was a working farm as well as a home.



Figures 2 and 3. (Also on page 25 above.) Property Owned by Theodore Roosevelt and Neighboring Property, 1884 and 1906. Maps from Bellavia and Curry, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 21, 23.

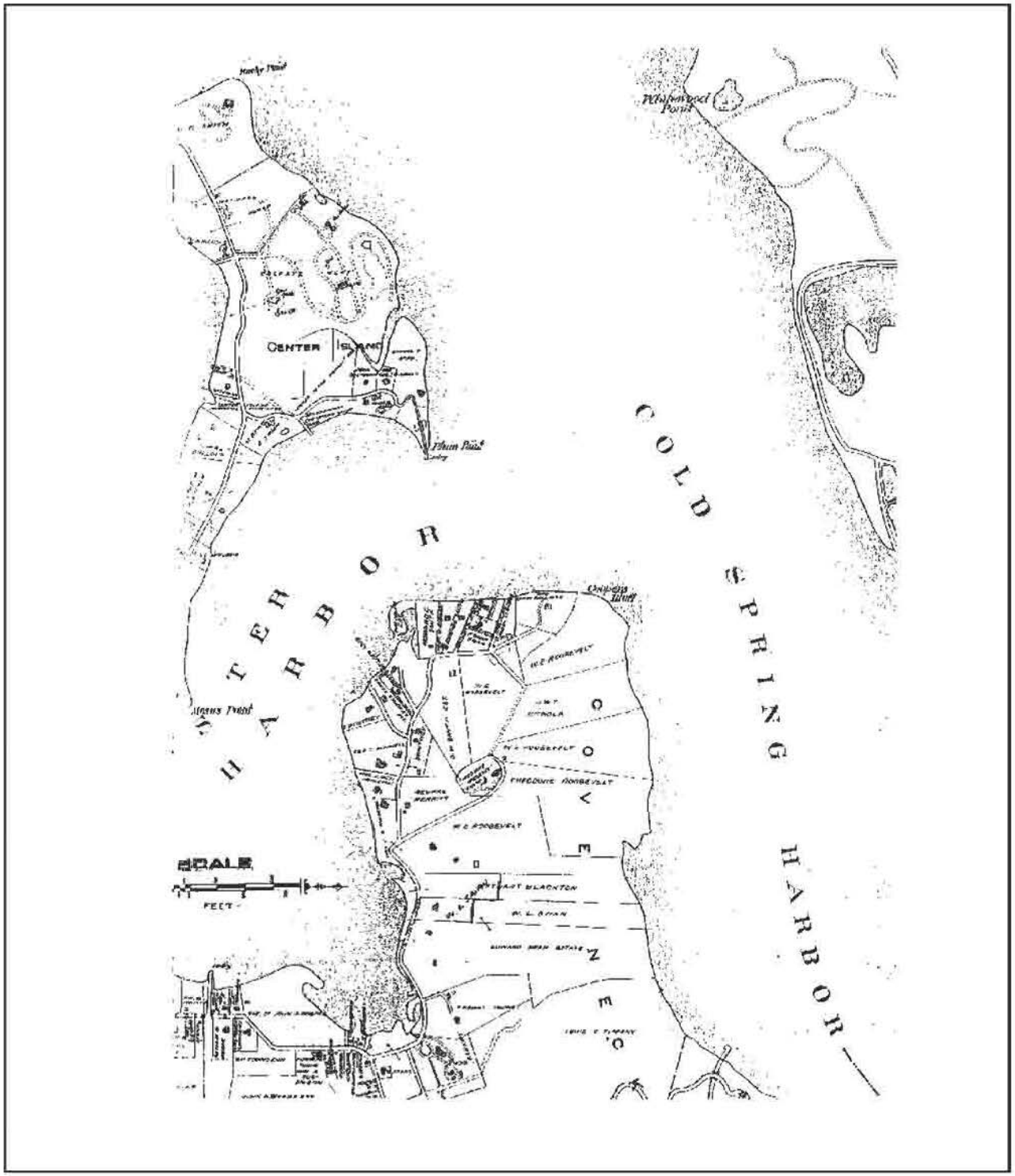


Figure 17. Map of Cove Neck, 1914. *Atlas of Nassau County, Long Island, N.Y.* (Brooklyn/New York: E. Belcher-Hyde, 1914), 2.

Appendices

Natalie A. Naylor

Appendix 1: The Name "Sagamore Hill"

Oyster Bay historian John Hammond has pointed out that the name "Sagamore Hill" had been "used as a local place name for more than two centuries prior to Theodore Roosevelt's purchase of land at Cove Neck." The town records have several references to Sagamore Hill (variously spelled Sagemore, Saaggomore, and Sagomore) in the 1660s and 1680s. This location, however, was near Beaver Swamp Creek, "east of the Mill Neck railroad station" and west of the hamlet of Oyster Bay. Thus it was not in the same location as TR's property. [1]

Theodore Roosevelt explained the name "Sagamore Hill" in his *Autobiography*: "Sagamore Hill takes its name from the old Sagamore Mohannis, who, as chief of his little tribe, signed away his rights to the land two centuries and a half ago." [2]

TR explained the name more fully in a letter to William Wallace Tooker for inclusion in his *Indian Place-Names on Long Island*. Tooker indicated that "Colonel Roosevelt" wrote:

---

[1] John E. Hammond, *Oyster Bay Remembered* (Huntington: Maple Hill Press, 2002), 347, citing a 1929 article by Morton Pennypacker in the *Oyster Bay Guardian*. References to Sagamore Hill in the early town records are in *Oyster Bay Town Records*, Volume 1, 1653 -1690 (New York: Tobias A. Wright, 1916), 5, 6, 28, 267, 368.

[2] Theodore Roosevelt, *Autobiography*, 1913 (Reprinted; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), 318.

> *Sagamore Hill* is, in a sense, my own bestowal, or, more properly, revival. There was an old Indian named, as tradition asserts, *Mohannis*, who lived in the cove here, and who was sometimes spoken of as "*Chief*" or "*Sagamore*," and among the traditions is that both the cove and this high promontory were called sometimes Mohannis Cove" and "*Mohannis Hill*," and sometimes "*Sagamore Cove*" and "*Sagamore Hill*." When I was young this was told me by an old Bay-man, Jake Valentine."

Tooker added, "The term *Sagamore* is seldom used by the Long Island Indians; when it is used it generally proceeds from the mouth of a Montauk as follows: '*Assawkin* the Sagamore of Oyster Bay."[3]

Appendix 2: The Population of Oyster Bay, Town 1850-2000, and Selected Villages, 1930-2000

						O.B.	Laurel
Year	**Town**	**Year**	**Town**	**Oyster Bay**	**Cove Neck**	**Cove**	**Hollow**
1850	6,900	1930	36,869	n.a.	276	n.a.	n.a.
1860	9,168	1940	42,594	4,981	130	466	110
1870	10,595	1950	66,930	5,215	200	561	169
1880	11,923	1960	290,055	6,096	299	988	839*
1890	13,870*	1970	333,342	6,822	344	1,320	1,401
1900	16,334	1980	305,750	6,497	331	1,799	1,527
1910	21,802	1990	292,657	6,687	332	2,109	1,812
1920	20,296	2000	293,925	6,826	300	2,262	1,980

***Boundary changes: Lloyd Harbor was part of the Town of Oyster Bay until 1881; Laurel Hollow expanded its boundaries in the 1950s.**

[3] Tooker further indicates that "*Sagamore* has been corrupted from Abnaki sangman, "chief," or from the corresponding term seen in Passamaquoddy *sogmo*." The source of Tooker's quotation on Assawkin is *Smithtown Records* (1866), 16. William Wallace Tooker, *Indian Place-Names on Long Island*, 1911 (Reprint; Port Washington, N.Y. Ira J. Friedman, 1962), 220-21.

Source: 1850-1980, Long Island Regional Planning Board, *Historical Population of Long Island Communities, 1790-1980* (Hauppauge: Long Island Regional Planning Board, 1982), 15, 19, 24, 28; 1990-2000, *Newsday*, March 16, 2001, E-8, E-10 (villages); 1990-2000, <www.census.gov>town.

Note: The census reported that the population of Oyster Bay ("village") was 889 in 1870. Richard Bayles estimated it as 1,255 in 1885, and Peter Ross estimated a population of 2,320, c. 1900. Henry Hazelton estimated it as 8,000 in the summer and 6,500 in the winter in 1925.[4] The boundaries for these early estimates, however, are uncertain since the Oyster Bay community is an unincorporated area within the Town of Oyster Bay; they may include the environs. The decline of population in the town from 1970 to 1990 reflected the maturing of the suburbs.

Cove Neck has the lowest population density of virtually any locality in Nassau County (230 per square mile in 2000). For comparison, Oyster Bay Cove's density is 538, Laurel Hollow is 683, the village of Oyster Bay is 5,688, and the county of Nassau, 4,653.

Appendix 3: The Roosevelt Clan on the South Shore of Long Island

Theodore Roosevelt's uncle, Robert Barnwell Roosevelt[5] (1829-1906), bought a farm in Sayville in the town of Islip in 1873 for his country house. Robert probably influenced TR's interest in natural history and conservation; he lived next door to the Roosevelts on East 20th Street in New York City. TR might have read his uncle's book, *Five Acres Too Much: A Truthful Elucidation of the Attractions of the Country, and a Careful Consideration of the Question of Profit and Loss as Involved in Amateur Farming with much Valuable Advice and Instruction to Those about Purchasing Large or Small*

---

[4] Richard M. Bayles, *Bayles' Long Island Handbook* (Babylon: Privately printed, Budget Steam Print, 1885), 45; Peter Ross, *A History of Long Island From its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time* (New York: Lewis Publishing, 1902), 934; Henry Isham Hazelton *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens Counties of Nassau and Suffolk, Long Island, New York, 1609-1924*, 6 vols. (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1925), 2:923.

[5] On Robert Barnwell Roosevelt, see Richard P. Harmond and Donald Weinhardt, "Robert Barnwell Roosevelt on the Great South Bay," *Long Island Forum* 50 (August/September 1987): 164-171; Richard P. Harmond, "Robert Barnwell Roosevelt and the Early Conservation Movement," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 14 (Summer 1988): 1-11; John A. Gable, "Robert B. Roosevelt," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal* 14 (Summer 1988): 11; Richard P. Harmond, "Lost and Found" (review of *Love and Luck*), *Long Island Historical Journal* 7 (Fall 1994): 125-129; and Bill Bleyer, "The Forgotten Roosevelt," *Newsday Magazine*, October 6, 1985, 10-12, 25. On John Ellis Roosevelt, see Richard P. Harmond and Donald H. Weinhardt, "John Ellis Roosevelt of Meadow Croft," *Long Island Forum* 51 (Fall 1988): 76-82.

Henry W. Havemeyer has a chapter on the Roosevelt family on the South Shore in *East on the Great South Bay: From Oakdale to Babylon, The Story of a Summer Spa, 1840 to 1940* (Mattituck: Amereon House, 1996).

Places in the Rural Districts (1869). This was a satirical response to Edmund Morris's *Ten Acres Enough: A Practical Experience Showing How a Very Small Farmer May Be Made to Keep a Very Large Family with Extensive and Profitable Experience in the Cultivation of the Smaller Fruits* (1864). Robert also wrote a novel describing the attractions of the South Shore, *Love and Luck: The Story of a Summer's Loitering on the Great South Bay* (1886). The South Side Sportsman's Club, organized in 1866 in Oakdale, was the impetus for many wealthy New Yorkers to build summer homes on Long Island's South Shore. The site is now Connetquot River State Park. Tours of the main clubhouse, which has exhibits, are available on Sundays.

Robert Barnwell Roosevelt's son, John Ellis Roosevelt (1853-1939), purchased 75 acres in West Sayville, where he built a home, "Meadow Croft," designed by Isaac H. Green, Jr., who connected and expanded two existing farmhouses in 1890-1891. TR, Ted (TR, Jr.), and Ted's two cousins, George and Philip (sons of Emlen), visited Robert and John Roosevelt in July 1903. They rode 35 miles on horseback across the island in a two-day outing. Meadow Croft is now owned by Suffolk County, which has restored the house. It is open Sundays during the summer months.

Appendix 4: Lamb & Rich, Architects

The Lamb & Rich architectural firm, which designed Sagamore Hill and its stable and lodge for TR in 1884, had its offices at 265 Broadway in New York City. Hugo Lamb (1849-1903) and Charles Alonzo Rich (1855-1943) designed numerous apartment buildings and row houses on the Upper West Side of New York City, as well as country homes in the New York suburbs. They were the architects for a number of educational institutions, including Berkeley Preparatory School and Barnard College; and other public buildings in Manhattan, including Harlem Club, Harlem Free Library, Mechanics & Traders Bank, and the Washington Heights Baptist Church. Rich designed many buildings for Dartmouth College (his alma mater) into the 1920s. Today Lamb & Rich are probably best known for their country homes.

In 1882 *The American Architect and Building News* featured many of Lamb & Rich's houses in New Jersey, primarily in Short Hills and the Oranges, where the partners lived. Their first commissions on Long Island followed, beginning in 1883. They designed five houses for Samuel P. Hinckley on Ocean Avenue in Lawrence in the southwest area of the Town of Hempstead. "Sunset Hall," Hinckley's own residence, in the Shingle Style, was included in George William Sheldon's *Artistic Country-Seats* (1886- 1887), as well as two Lamb & Rich homes in Connecticut and one in Short Hills, New Jersey (designed for Rich's parents). McKim, Mead & White had designed the largest number of homes (16) which appeared in Sheldon's book, Bruce Price had done eight, and Peabody & Steams, five; these three were the only architects who surpassed Lamb & Rich in the number of houses included in Sheldon's important survey book.

Thirty firms were represented by only one house; a dozen had two or three. [6] Thus, Lamb & Rich had early achieved recognition as leading architects of country houses. Charles Pratt, Sr., a founder of Standard Oil and partner of John D. Rockefeller, commissioned Lamb & Rich to design the model Astral Apartments (1886) for his workers, and Pratt Institute (1887) in Brooklyn.[7] The firm designed and later enlarged Pratt's residence in Park Slope, Brooklyn (1887, 1896). Pratt also engaged Lamb & Rich in 1890 for alterations to his country house and to design a house ("Seamore") for his son, Charles Millard Pratt, both of which would become part of the Pratt compound, "Dosoris," in Glen Cove. Other Long Island commissions of Lamb & Rich, in addition to Roosevelt's Sagamore Hill, included houses for Frank L. Babbott in Glen Cove (1890; his wife was Charles Pratt, Sr.'s daughter); Henry C. Tinker in Setauket (c. 1890); Charles Benner in Setauket (c. 1892); Talbot Taylor in Cedarhurst (c. 1895); S.A. Jennings in Glen Cove (c. 1902); and Charles O. Gates in Locust Valley ("Peacock Point," 1902). The firm also designed the Ellen E. Ward Memorial Clock Tower in Roslyn (1895), and Rich converted a farm in Bellport for his own summer home (1889). After Lamb died of typhoid fever in 1903, Rich took on Frederick Mathesius as a partner and continued to practice until he retired in 1933.

Vincent Scully, in his now classic work *The Shingle Style*, credited Lamb & Rich as being "innovator practitioners of the 'mature' Shingle Style." Some of their "most significant works" were on Long Island, where the architectural style of their houses varied, ranging from Shingle Style and Colonial Revival8 to Jacobean and Tudor Revival.[8] Sagamore Hill, a "picturesque" shingled house, echoes some aspects of Lamb

---

[6] Arnold Lewis, "Sheldon and *Artistic Country-Seats*," in *American Country Houses of the Gilded Age* (Sheldon's "*Artistic Country-Seats*"), (New York: Dover, 1982), ix. This book reproduces all of Sheldon's photographs and plans, which were originally published in 1886-1887 (the full citation of the original is George William Sheldon, *Artistic Country-Seats: Types of Recent American Villas and Cottage Architecture with Instances of Country Club-Houses*). Lewis updated the text, including captions, and wrote an introduction. Hinckley's "Sunset Hall" is plate no. 32 therein and in part 2 of the original.

[7] The six-story, full block Astral Apartments in Greenpoint (Brooklyn) are an Officially Designated New York City Landmark, as is the Main Building of Pratt Institute; the latter is also on the National Register of Historic Places. Many of Lamb & Rich's other buildings are in Historic Districts and quite a few have been deemed to be a "notable example" of a particular architectural style. See Elliot Willensky and Korval White, *AIA Guide to New York City*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1988), xvi, 299, 423- 24, 433, 443, 634, 635, 640, 647. The *AIA Guide* includes more than two dozen entries on Lamb & Rich buildings and three additional by Rich (including photographs of some).

[8] Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style: Architectural Theory and Design from Richardson to the Origins of Wright* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 101-103; Leland M. Roth and Bret Morgan, *Shingle Styles: Innovation and Tradition in American Architecture, 1874 to 1982* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999), 65; Gavin Townsend, "Lamb & Rich (1881-c. 1899)," in *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects, 1860-1940*, edited by Robert B. MacKay, Anthony Baker, and Carol A. Traynor (New York: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA)/W.W. Norton, 1997), 242-45. Townsend's essay is the source of most of this information on Lamb & Rich. It cites the

& Rich's Hinckley house in Lawrence. None of the accounts of Lamb & Rich in architectural books, however, mentions the lodge and stable they designed at Sagamore Hill. The firm was active early in the country home era, and while not as prolific, "fashionable," or well known as McKim, Mead & White or Delano & Aldrich architectural firms, they were important architects who designed a number of significant houses, apartments, and educational buildings.

Appendix 5: Census Data on Sagamore Hill Residents and Employees, 1900-1930

Comments on the Census Data

Questions varied on each of the censuses. Information may not always be accurate because the person responding may not have known the facts or the census taker may have recorded incorrectly. (In 1910, for example, TR's mother is listed as being born in Connecticut, though she had been born in Georgia.) The federal 1890 manuscript census is not available due to a fire; the 1930 manuscript census was released in 2002. The numbers on the Sagamore Hill staff varied over the years, depending on the family circumstances, including ages of the children. The peak numbers were in 1910 (with 11 on staff); in 1920 and 1930 only five to six were employed on the estate.

Not surprisingly, most of the domestic servants in the house are Irish immigrant women. Most were in their 20s and 30s and single. Nora Bat, the cook in 1910, was an exception since she was a 48-year-old widow who had been born in Germany. Gertrude Young, the 37-year-old governess in 1900, was born in England. The turnover among domestic servants was quite high. Mary Sweeney is the exception; her name is on the census returns from 1910-1930 (in 1910, each of her parents is listed as "Ireland & England"). Irish-born Mary (Mame) Ledwith had a long tenure earlier, but she appears here only on the 1900 census returns when she was 60 years old. There were two pairs of sisters, Mary and Rosie McKenny in 1910 and Bridget and Kitty Tubridy in 1925, all born in Ireland. In 1925, Kermit Roosevelt and his family was living at Sagamore Hill. With four young children between the ages of six months and eight years old, they had a 30-year-old Italian-born nurse, Henretta Perrushon, and a 31-year-old native born nurse, Frances Allrain. (Edith in this census return is described as "Grandmother.")

The first farmer/superintendent, Noah Seaman, and his wife Ida had both been born in New York State. In 1900, they were living in a home they owned on Cove Road;

New York Times obituary of Rich for a statement that Rich was a friend of TR and he and his wife visited the Roosevelts in the White House on a number of occasions.

There is a short entry on the firm in the *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, edited by Adolf K. Placzek (New York: Free Press, 1982), 2:605. Lawrence Wodehouse, in *American Architects from the Civil War to the First World War: A Guide to Information Sources* (Detroit: Gale Research, 1976), includes them in a section, "Significant Architects About Whom Little Has Been Written," and indicates that the Avery Architectural Library at Columbia University has three sheets on Barnard College buildings and the designs of the architects' T.R. Williams house in Cedarhurst (271).

in 1910, they are living on the Sagamore Hill estate (probably in the lodge). Robert Gillespie, superintendent from 1914 to 1943, was born in (Northern) Ireland and became a naturalized citizen in 1891. His wife had been born in England and came to the U.S. with her family in the 1890s. The superintendent usually had one or two boarders who slept in the stable. All were single men and because of the turnover among boarders, none appears on more than one census. Their ethnic background and ages varied. In the 1910 census, William Gardner (33 years old) was born in English Canada and Frank ?ingman (44 years old) was born in New York; both are listed as "laborers" doing "odd jobs." In 1915, Thomas Mahew, listed as a "lodger" and "Gardener," had been born in Ireland and lived in the U.S. for two and one-half years. Fifty-three-year-old Patrick Murphy in 1920 had been born in Ireland and emigrated to the U.S. in 1880; he is listed as a "Boarder" and "Laborer." In 1925, Frank Frouskie (sp?), who boarded with the Gillespies, had been born in Poland, was 42 years old, and a citizen since 1917. He was listed as a farmer. In 1930, Norwegian-born Martin K. Dahl was the boarder and gardener.

The Roosevelts were unusual among estate owners in Oyster Bay in having African Americans on their staff. Alfred Davis, the gardener in 1900, had worked for the family for many years; he lived with his sister Julia on the estate until he was pensioned off c. 1903. Charles Lee and James Amos came to Sagamore Hill after working at the White House. What is known today as Grey Cottage was built for Charles Lee and James Amos (see page 117 above for photographs of Grey Cottage). (The Cultural Landscape Report indicates it was built in 1910 [p. 27], but since Lee and Amos each married in 1909, it is possible that it was built in 1909 to accommodate their wives.) In the 1910 census, Annie Amos is listed as a maid and Clara Lee as a chamber maid. In later censuses, Clara Lee is listed as doing "housework," which meant she was not working outside her own home. James and Annie Amos left Sagamore Hill in 1913 and lived in Brooklyn, though James sometimes accompanied TR on trips. In her interview, Mrs. Wildt recalled that Grey Cottage was changed from a two-family to a one-family house (probably after James and Annie Amos left). Other African Americans at Sagamore Hill included: Arthur Williams in 1910, an 18-year-old born in New Jersey who was the butler (it is uncertain where he stayed); and Howard Brooks in 1915, who lodged with the Lees. Brooks, who was 33 years old, is listed as "2nd man."

Names or descriptions of other servants and employees, in addition to those listed below on the estate in the manuscript census, are sometimes scattered in records. Files in the Sagamore Hill curatorial records are primarily for household staff. In a letter to his sister Anna (Bamie) Roosevelt Cowles, July 28, 1911, TR referred to the "two black men in the house and the two black men in the stable, that is James [Amos] and [Charles] Lee and their respective understudies," as well as the "gardener and his temporary and permanent assistants, and Arthur Merriam, the chauffeur," who were "all native [-born, white] Americans" (emphasis added).

---

[9] Elting E. Morison, ed., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 8 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 7:316.

John Hammond, Oyster Bay historian, reported that his grandfather, Edgar Martling (b. 1854) worked on the estate as a gardener, c. 1898-1905. A 1907 article refers to TR's "half-dozen farm hands," "three stablemen," the "long-headed coachman and the six house servants"; a photograph in the same article identifies "'Joe' Washington driving TR's carriage."[10] Franklyn Hall (father of Leonard Hall) is the better known of TR's coachmen; he had worked for William Youngs before working for TR, and he followed TR to Washington, where he became a government clerk and White House librarian.[11] Delia Rafferty was a waitress in 1916-1917; a picture of her and a facsimile copy of Edith Roosevelt's letter of recommendation for her is in Elly Shodell's *In the Service.*[12] Isabelle Gillespie Wildt remembered a German-born hired man, Rudolph Steffens, who boarded with the Gillespies. Steffens left the estate to work in a defense plant during World War II.[13]

Census Data

1900 Sup. Dist. no. 2, EN no.723; Roll no. 1079, no. 20 T623; p. 177; Roosevelt's house is no. 290, family no. 301.

Roosevelt, Theodore - Head, male, b. Oct. 1858, 41 yrs old; married 17 yrs, born in New York [state], mother born, Georgia; Governor; owned home, free of mortgage, home [not farm]

_____, Edith C.-Wife, female, b. Aug 1861, 38 yrs old; m. 17 yrs, 6 children, b. NY, parents b. NY

_____,Alice - Daughter, b. Feb. 1884, 16 yrs old, b. NY, parents born NY [ditto for other children]; at school 10 months

_____, Theodore - Son, b. Dec. 1887, 12 yrs old; at school, 10 months

_____, Kermith [sic] - Son, b. Oct. 1889, 10 yrs old; at school, 10 months

_____, Ethel - Daughter, b Aug. 1891, 8 yrs old; at school, 10 months

_____, Archie - Son, b. Apl 1894, 6 yrs old; at school, 10 months

_____, Quentin - Son, b. Nov. 1897, 2 yrs old [blank re school]

Leadwith [Ledwith], Mary - Servant, b. June 1839, 60 yrs old, she and both parents born in Ireland; Nurse

McConley, Margaret - Servant, b. July 1864, 35 yrs old, b. Ireland (both parents also b. in Ireland); Nurse

---

[10] Charles Somerville, "How Roosevelt Rests." *Broadway Magazine* 18 (September 1907): 660, 670.

[11] John E. Hammond, Talk on "Theodore Roosevelt and Oyster Bay" at the Doubleday Babcock Senior Center in Oyster Bay, November 7, 2002.

[12] Elly Shodell, *In the Service: Workers on the Grand Estates of Long Island, 1890s-1940s* (Port Washington: Port Washington Library, 1991), 34.

[13] Isabelle Wildt interview, October 2002.

McKenna, Mary - Servant, b. June 1874, 25 yrs old, b. Ireland (both parents b. in Ireland); Maid Parlor

McKenna, Rosie - Servant, b. Nov. 1875, 24 yrs old, b. Ireland (both parents b. in Ireland); Maid Table

O'Rouke, Anna - Servant, b. March 1870, 30 yrs old, b. Ireland (both parents b. in Ireland); Cook

McNammara [sp?], Theresa - Servant, b. April 1879, 21 yrs old, b. Ireland (both parents b. in Ireland); Maid, House

Young, Gertrude - Servant, b. Oct. 1862, 37 yrs. old; b. in England (both parents b. in England); Governess

Davis, Alfred - Head, Black, male, b. July 1829; 70 yrs old; born in Connecticut; parents born in New York; Gardner; rent home - nos. 291/302

_____, Julia [?], - Sister, Black, female, b. April 1860, 40 yrs old; she and parents born in New York; Cook [unclear if for brother, or on other estate?]

Listed on Road from Oyster Bay to Cold Spring, nos. 25/25 (i.e., did not live on Sagamore Hill estate):

Seaman, Noah - Head, white, b. March 1856, 44 yrs old, m. 20 yrs, b. NY (also parents); Farm Laborer; he and family all literate; O [owned home], Mortgage, Home (rather than farm)

_____, Ida - Wife, b. June 1858, 41 yrs old, 1 child, b. NY (also parents) [re occupation – blank]

_____, Mary E. - Daughter, b. Sept 1881, 18 yrs old, single, b. NY (also parents); [occupation blank]

1910 ED 1135; E.N. 1135; S.D. 2; Sheet no. 19; p. 122 [Supplemental]

Roosevelt, Theodore - Head, 51 yrs old, married 24 years, father born in New York, mother born in Conn. [sic.], Editor, Magazine; owned home, free of mortgage; h_____ome [rather than "farm"]

_____, Edith Kermit - wife, 48, 6 children, 6 living, b. Conn., father b. New York, mother b. Penn.; trade or profession - None [also for Kermit and Ethel re occupation]

_____, Kermit - son, 20 yrs old, b. New York, father b. NY, mother b. Conn. [other children] same information re parents' birthplace], had not attended school since Sept. 1, 1909

_____, Ethel - daughter, 18, had not attended school since Sept. 1, 1909

_____, Archibald - son, 16, yrs, had attended school since Sept. 1, 1909

_____, Quentin - son, 12, born in D.C., yes, had attended school since Sept. 1, 1909 Amos,

James - Servant, Black, 32 years old, married 1 year; born in D.C.; "Messenger" for Private Family [he and all servants below worked for Private Family and could speak English and read and write]

_____, Annie - Servant, Black, 27 years old, married 1 year, no children; she and both parents were born in New Jersey; maid

Lee, Charles - Servant, Black, 36 yrs old, married 1 yr; he and both parents were born in D.C. [cf. Virginia in 1930]; Messenger
_____, Clara - Servant, Black, 35 yrs old, married 1 yr, no children; b. in New York, both parents b. in NJ; Chamber maid
Sweeney, Mary -Servant, 22 yrs old, single, b. Ireland; parents born in Ireland & England; immigrated to U.S. in 1841; Housemaid
Bat, Neta, 48 yr old widow, had 1 child, she and both parents b. Germany; immigrated 1890; Cook
Daley, Catherine, 35 yr. old, single, b. Ireland, both parents born "Ireland English"' immigrated 1895; Waitress
Williams, Arthur - Black, 18 yrs old, he and both parents born in NJ; Butler; had not attended school since Sept. 1, 1909
[The census taker did not differentiate the households or families above.]

Noah Seaman is listed on Cove Neck Road with wife, daughter, and two boarders, a number of pages before the Roosevelt family and others above (317/361, 15A, p. 100)
Seaman, Noah - 54 years old, married 30 years, he and parents born in New York; Supt. for Private Family; literate; rented home
_____, Ida - 54 yrs old, she and both parents born in NY; 1 child; trade "None"
_____, Mary E. - 28 year old single daughter, she and both parents born in NY; trade "None"
Gardner, William - Boarder, 33 years old, single white male; he and both parents born in Can. Eng., immigrated to U.S. in 1907; Laborer, Odd jobs
?ingman, Frank - Boarder, 44 yrs old, single white male, he and both parents born in NY; Laborer, Odd jobs

1915 - NY State Census - Town of Oyster Bay, Asmby Dist 1, E.D. 5, p. 40, lines 23-40
Roosevelt, Theodore - Head - 56 yrs old - born U.S. - Writer - worked during year
_____, Edith - Wife - 53 years old, born U.S., citizen - Housework
_____, Archibald B. - son, 21 years old, born U.S. - Student
_____, Quentin - son, 17 years old, born U.S. - Student
McComb, Margaret - servant, white, 50 yrs old, born in Ireland, 33 yrs in U.S., alien; cook
Sweeny, Mary - servant, white, female, 25 yrs old, born in Ireland, 8 yrs in U.S., alien; maid (C [*])
McCauff [sp?], Mary - servant, white, female, 22 yrs old, born in Ireland, 5 yrs in U.S., alien, waitress
McNamara, Sarah J. - servant, white, female, 21 yrs. old, b. Ireland, 3 yrs in U.S., alien, maid (P*)

Reuddem [sp?], Ollie - servant, white, female, 27 yrs old, b. Ireland, 1/2 yr in U.S., alien; Maid (K*)
[*Initials following occupations for maids probably: C= Chamber; P=Parlor; K=Kitchen]

Lee, Charles - Head, black, male, 39 yrs old, born U.S., citizen, chauffeur
_____, Clara L -Wife, black, 38 yrs old, b. U.S. , citizen, Housework [i.e., didn't work outside own home]
Brooks, Howard - lodger, black, male, 33 yrs old, b. U.S., citizen, 2nd man

Gillespie, Robert W. - Head, 42 yrs old, born Ireland, 24 yrs in US, citizen, Gardener
_____, Annie - Wife, 36 yrs old, born in England, in US 13 yrs, citizen, Housework [in own home]
_____, Robert W., Jr.- son, 7 yrs old, b. U.S., citizen, [Occupation/work:] School
_____, Annie [Nancy] E. - daughter, 7 yrs old, b. U.S., citizen, School
_____, Isabelle - daughter, 3 yrs old, b. U.S., citizen, no occupation
Mahew, Thos. - lodger, white, male, 32 yrs old, b. Ireland, 2-1/2 yrs in U.S., Alien; Gardener

1920 Census - Roll T625-1129, p. 20A-20B, E.D. 70, p. 115
Roosevelt, Edith - Head, 58 years old; Occupation-none; Employer
Doran, Catherine - Maid, 28 yrs old, to U.S. in 1913; alien; b. Ireland; House Maid, Private House; worked for wages
Sweeney, Mary-Maid; 26 years old [cf. age in 1910, 1915, and 1925],immigrated in 1898, alien; b. Ireland. House servant; Private House, wages.
Reilly, Mary - Maid; 40 years old single, to U.S. in 1898; alien; b. Ireland; Cook; Priv. House; Wages
Gillespie, Robert - Head; 48 years old; to U.S. 1891; naturalized 1896; b. Ireland; Superintendent, Private Estate; Employer - 9 [no. of farm schedule (?), but not retained]
_____, Annie - Wife; 42 yrs old; to U.S. 1902; naturalized 1906; b. Ireland; occupation: none
_____, Robert - Son; 12 yrs old; attended school; b. New Jersey
_____, Nancy - Daughter; 12 yrs old; attended school; b. New Jersey
_____, Isabelle - Daughter; 8 yrs old; did not attend school; b. New York
_____, John - Son; 3 years old; born New York
Murphy, Patrick - Boarder; 53 yrs old single male, immigrated 1880, alien; b. Ireland; Laborer; Garden

Lee, Charles - Head, 43 yrs old, Black; b. Virginia; Chauffeur, Private estate; Wages
_____, Clara - Wife, 45 yrs. old; Black; b. Virginia; occupation: none

1925 New York State Census Oyster Bay, A.D. 2. ED 10, p. 9
Henretta Perrushon - maid, 30 years old, born in Italy, 13 years in U.S., citizen since 1924; nurse
Mary Sweeney - maid, 38 yrs. old, born in Ireland, in U.S. 14 years, alien, Ladies [?] maid Edith K. Roosevelt - Grandmother 65 years old
Bridget Tubridy - maid, 27 years old, born in Ireland, 10 years in US., alien, cook Kitty Tubridy - maid, 21 years old, born in Ireland, 6 mos. in U.S., alien, kitchen maid. Marie Grady - maid, 37 years old, born in Ireland, 3 [?] years in U.S., alien, waitress Josephine Cavangh - maid, 20 years old, born in Ireland, 2 yrs in U.S., alien, parlor-maid Frances Allrain - maid, 31 years old, born in U.S., nurse
Kermit Roosevelt - Husband, 33 years old, Steamship Co. Owner [Living at Sagamore Hill]
Belle Roosevelt - wife, 32 years old
Kermit Roosevelt, Jr. - son, 8 years old
Willard Roosevelt - son, 6 years old
Belle Roosevelt - daughter, 5 years old
Dirk Roosevelt - son, 6 mos. [?]

Robert Gillespie - Husband, 53 years old, born in Ireland, 34 years in U.S., naturalized in 1891 in Newark, Supt (estate)
Annie Gillespie - wife, 46 years old, born in England, 33 years in U.S., citizen by marriage; Household
Robert Gillespie - son, 17 years old
Nancy Gillespie - daughter, 17 years old
Isabelle Gillespie - daughter, 13 years old
Jack Gillespie - son, 8 years old
Frank Frouskie [sp?] - 42 yrs old, born in Poland, in U.S. 18 years, citizen since 1917 (naturalized in White Plains), Farmer (labor)

Charles Lee - husband, 49 yrs old, Black, b. U.S., citizen. Chauffeur, worked [p. 11]
Clara Lee - wife, 49 yrs old, Black, b. U.S., citizen, Household.

1930 Roll #6, ED 30-183, Sup. Dist 36, p. 183, 2A
In response to census query, "Does this family live on a farm?" answer is "No" for all
Roosevelt, Edith K. - Head - Owns house - Value of home, $200,000 - 68 yrs old; widow - born Ct.
Sweeney, Mary E. - servant - single female, 42 yrs old; b. in Irish Free State - literate (can read & write); housekeeper
Tubridy, Brigid - servant - single, 28 yrs old, b. in Irish Free State - literate; cook

Lee, Charles H. - Head; rents, $30 per month; has radio set; Negro 50 yrs old; born in Virginia; chauffeur

———, Clara - wife - Negro - 50 yrs old. married at 25; born in Virginia

Gillespie, Robert W. - Head; rents, $40 per month; has radio set; 57 yrs old, born in Northern Ireland; Gardener, Private Estate; farm schedule, no. 1
_____, Annie E. - H, wife, 52 yrs, born in England
_____,Nancy E. - Daughter, 22, born in New Jersey - Reg. Nurse - in hospital
_____, Robert W., Jr. - Son 22 yrs old born in NJ - Surveyor, Engineering
_____, Isabelle - Daughter, 18 yrs old, born in New York - attended school during last year
_____, John B. - Son, 13 yrs old, born in New York - attended school during last year
Dahl, Martin K. - Boarder, 40 yrs. old, he and both parents born in Norway, Norwegian is mother tongue, immigrated 1915, alien; Gardener on Private estate.

Appendix 6. The Coe, Field, and Guggenheim Estates

William Robertson Coe's house and estate ,"Planting Fields," in Oyster Bay (west of the village) is well documented. Coe purchased a 359-acre estate in 1913, and added an additional 50 acres. (The original house and estate with several outbuildings had been designed by Grosvenor Atterbury in 1906.) Coe added additional outbuildings designed by the Walker & Gillette architectural firm. The estate was landscaped by Guy Lowell and A.R. Sargent, who "enlarged an existing green, remodeled the garden [tea] house, and designed the superintendent's house." After a fire destroyed the main house in 1918, Walker & Gillette designed "Coe Hall" on the same site, with 65 rooms, including a service wing. Their design for the house was in the Tudor Revival style and the interior incorporated architectural elements from Europe. The 18th-century Carshalton entrance gates came from Sussex, England. The Olmsted Brothers firm landscaped the grounds from 1918 to 1929, completed designs for the Camellia House, and designed the chicken and duck houses. Several hundred people were employed seasonally by the Coes. The site, with its formal gardens, is now Planting Fields Arboretum State Historic Park, and Coe Hall is preserved as an historic house museum. Concerts and other activities are held in the park, and the "hay barn" survives under adaptive reuse.[14]
The Marshall Field III estate across Cold Spring Harbor from Cove Neck on Lloyd Neck is an example of a very large estate (more than 2,000 acres) with a very extensive farm complex. "Caumsett" had stables and a dairy farm, greenhouses, formal gardens, and cottages for workers. The main house was designed by John Russell Pope in 1921-

[14]Robert B. MacKay, Anthony Baker, and Carol A. Traynor, eds. *Long Island Country Houses* and *Their Architects, 1860-1940* (New York: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities [SPLIA]/W.W. Norton, 1997), 264, 326-28, 425-26, 490. Edith Roosevelt recorded in her diary that she "rode to Planting Fields Road" before Coe bought the property (diary entries June 20, 1901, July 13, 1904, and September 7, 1904, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Harvard University). The area had been planting fields for the local Matinecock Indians.

1925 in Georgian Revival style; the architectural firm of Warren & Wetmore designed an indoor tennis court in 1925. Alfred Hopkins designed a very large cow barn for Caumsett in 1925, which survives. Olmsted Brothers landscaped the grounds from 1924 to 1927, and Marian Coffin did the landscape for the "Winter Cottage." The estate survives as Caumsett State Park.[15]

Going further afield, the Guggenheim estate in Sands Point originally encompassed 800 acres. The main house was designed by Hunt & Hunt in 1909 for Howard Gould. The style has been variously described as Tudor and Elizabethan Gothic. Medieval antiques were incorporated in the decor. Augustus Allen designed the enormous stable complex in the "crenelated style of an Irish castle"; the complex included quarters for servants (it is now known as "Castlegould"). Allen also designed the dairy farm, guest lodges, gate houses, and a casino.

Daniel Guggenheim purchased the estate in 1917 and renamed the main house "Hempstead House." When Guggenheim's son Harry married in 1923, his father gave him 90 acres of the estate, on which he built "Falaise" in a Neo-French Renaissance manor style. Harry and his wife Caroline Morton traveled abroad and collected European art and antiquities to incorporate in their house. These three structures, as well as the smaller and less pretentious house that Mrs. Daniel (Florence) Guggenheim built in 1931, "Mille Fleurs," survive in Nassau County's Sands Point Preserve. Falaise is an historic house museum, with original furnishings intact. Hempstead House is open regularly weekends seasonally, with exhibits of the Buton Wedgewood collection; the house is not furnished. Castlegould has had special exhibitions and is a storage facility for the county's museum system.[16]

---

[15] MacKay, Baker, and Traynor, *LI Country Houses*, 118, 218, 328-30, 362-63, 438-39, 497; Lisa Sclaar and Donald Sclaar, *Beaux-Arts Estates: A Guide to the Architecture of Long Island* (New York: Viking Press, 1980),170-76; and Clive Aslet, *The American Country House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 71- 77. A wing of the main house was removed in the 1950s to save on taxes. Many of the outbuildings, including the cow barn and stables, are extant.

[16] *Sclare, Beaux-Arts Estates*, 58-77; Richard Winsche, "The Evolution of the Gould/Guggenheim Estate at Sands Point," in *Long Island: The Suburban Experience*, edited by Barbara M. Kelly (Interlaken, N.Y. Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1990), 39-49; and *Aslet, American Country House*, 146.

Appendix 7: Long Island Country Houses Preserved as Historic House Museums

Estate	Date	Original Owner	Location	Current Owner
Cedarmere	1843	William Cullen Bryant	Roslyn Harbor	Nassau County
Deepwells	1847	William J. Gaynor	St. James	Suffolk County
Sagamore Hill	1884	Theodore Roosevelt	Oyster Bay	Federal-N.P.S.
Meadow Croft	1891	John Roosevelt	Sayville	Suffolk County
Westbury House	1906	Henry Phipps	Old Westbury	Pvt. non-profit
Eagle's Nest	1907	Wm. K. Vanderbilt, Jr.	Centerport	Suffolk County
Planting Fields	1919	Wm. Robertson Coe	Oyster Bay	NY State Parks
Falaise	1923	Harry Guggenheim	Sands Point	Nassau County

Eighteenth-century historic house museums include Rock Hall in Lawrence (owned by the Town of Hempstead); Raynham Hall in Oyster Bay (Town of Oyster Bay); the Van Nostrand-Starkins House (Roslyn Landmark Society); William Floyd Estate in Mastic Beach (National Park Service); and the Manor of St. George in Shirley (private trust/foundation).

Caumsett, the Marshall Field III estate in Lloyd Harbor, is now a State Historic Park. Many of the outbuildings are extant and have found adaptive reuse. The main house was leased to CUNY Queens College as a Center for Environmental Education Teaching and Research. It is not now open to the public. (The shell of the house remains, though the wings were demolished, but it does not have its original or period furnishings.) Similarly, Bayard Cutting Arboretum on the South Shore (Oakdale) is now a state park and the house itself is not furnished.

Some estates were converted to country clubs and golf courses, with the main house now the club house. Other mansions are preserved in adaptive reuse by corporations, educational institutions (e.g., Walter P. Chrysler's home is now Wiley Hall at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point), or museums (e.g., Childs Frick's "Clayton" is now the Nassau Country Museum of Art in Roslyn).

For locations and additional information on the historic house museums and other sites, see Barbara Shea, *Discover Long Island: Exploring the Great Places from Sea to Sound* (Melville: Newsday Books, 2002); and Raymond E. Spinzia, Judith A. Spinzia, and Kathryne E. Spinzia, *Long Island: A Guide to New York's Suffolk and Nassau Counties*, 1988, rev. 2d ed. (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1991).

Appendix 8: William McMillan, Architect of Old Orchard

William McMillan (1906-1994) was the husband of Grace Green Roosevelt (1911-1994), the eldest daughter of Theodore (Ted) Roosevelt, Jr,. and his wife Eleanor. McMillan's mother, Josephine Warfield, was a painter and sculptor who had studied for a time with William Merritt Chase. McMillan graduated from Princeton University (B.A. 1928) and Princeton's Graduate School of Architecture (M.A. 1931). He also was a yachtsman who competed in ocean races in his 59-foot schooner in the early 1930s. McMillan began his architectural career in 1932 in the New York City offices of John Russell Pope, at a salary of $20 a week. While with Pope, McMillan worked on the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. He designed the entrance lobby which opens onto the mall.[17]

McMillan met Eleanor and Theodore Roosevelt (Jr.) in 1933 when he was returning from a hunting trip in Indo-China with a friend. The Roosevelts were heading back to the United States from the Philippines, where TR, Jr., had been governor. The Roosevelts invited McMillan and his friend to travel with them through India, Afghanistan, and Turkey. After they returned to the United States, McMillan met and courted the Roosevelts' daughter, Grace. In March 1934 he married Grace in Christ Church in Oyster Bay. The couple moved into a Georgian-style country home that McMillan had designed and built in Glyndon, Maryland, near Baltimore. By the time of his marriage, McMillan had established his own firm in Baltimore.[18] William McMillan, Architect, and specialized in designing large residences.

As the eldest son, Ted Roosevelt, Jr., had expected "eventually to inherit Sagamore Hill." But by 1937, Ted and Eleanor Roosevelt were "tired of living here and there in rented houses" during 27 years of marriage. Edith Roosevelt gave them four acres in Sagamore Hill's apple orchard, and the younger Roosevelts asked their son-in-law to design their house in the same style as his Maryland home. Thus, William McMillan was the architect of "Old Orchard" in 1938.[19]

[17] McMillan's son, William McMillan, Jr., is also an architect in Maryland, and he provided information on his father and his architectural career (April 17, 1994, obituary in the *Baltimore Sun*, and e-mails, February 5, and March 22, 2003). He was unable to locate any original plans for Old Orchard. The Town of Oyster Bay did not require building plans to be filed until 1943, so the town has no records on Old Orchard, nor does the Avery Architectural Library at Columbia University.

Pope (1874-1937) had a distinguished career in architecture and "was recognized as the consummate designer of both country houses and public buildings." Pope designed some 18 homes on Long Island, the largest being Caumsett on Lloyd Neck for Marshall Field III in 1921-25, in Neo-Georgian style (see Appendix 7). Steven Bedford, "John Russell Pope, 1874-1937," in *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects, 1860-1940*, edited by Robert B. MacKay, Anthony Baker, and Carol A. Traynor (New York: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities [SPLIA]/W.W. Norton, 1997), 356-64.

[18] Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *Day Before Yesterday* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1959), 320, 377, 379, and ad passim.

[19] Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., *Day Before Yesterday*, 390, 423.

McMillan enlisted in the Navy at the beginning of World War II, serving with the Third Fleet in the Pacific as an intelligence officer on board the *Alabama and South Dakota*. He had attained the rank of commander when he was discharged in 1946. After the war he joined the Baltimore firm Smith and Veale, Architects. McMillan's commissions included Alfred G. Vanderbilt's home at Sagamore Farm in Worthington Valley, Maryland (home of Native Dancer); Clarence Wheelright's residence in Stevenson, Maryland (now St. Timothy's School); and the Georgian-style President's House at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore (1958, renamed Nichols House in 1972). He also designed buildings at a number of schools, including the Chapel at Garrison Forest School in Garrison, Maryland, and the Library at Foxcroft School in Middleburg, Virginia. He retired in 1965.

McMillan served as a trustee of Johns Hopkins Hospital (1938-1979) in Baltimore and chaired its building committee (1949-1973). He was responsible for saving from destruction the original Johns Hopkins Hospital building (the John Shaw Billings Administration Building), which is now on the National Register of Historic Places. Its landmark dome is the symbol of the medical complex.

Bibliography

Natalie A. Naylor

Bibliographic Essay

Little has been written previously on farming at Sagamore Hill. It is discussed briefly on two pages in a recent booklet prepared by the Sagamore Hill staff.[1] Other internal studies for the National Park Service were helpful, in particular the *Cultural Landscape Report* (1995) by Regina Bellavia and George Curry and the *Historic Resource Study* (1972) by Francis Wilshin. Some of the maps from the *Cultural Landscape Report* are cited in this essay (Figs. 2-4). The illustrations included in the present volume, which follow my chapter entitled "A Working Farm," include photographs of the stable and lodge, farmhands, the vegetable garden, and haying. Locations of the original images from newspaper and magazine articles are noted in the credits for the illustrations.

References to farming at Sagamore Hill are scattered in the writings of Theodore Roosevelt and his family. Even the sources on the history of Long Island agriculture are sparse; there is no comprehensive or general history of Long Island farming (see the "Long Island Agriculture and Farming" section in my Bibliography below). A few magazine articles during TR's presidential years focused on the farming operations at Sagamore Hill. (See, in particular, the articles by Walter Andrews, Henry James Forman, Henry Beach Needham, and Charles Somerville in the section of my Bibliography on "Theodore Roosevelt and Sagamore Hill.") Newspaper articles from the

---

[1] *Sagamore Hill National Historic Site: Home of Theodore Roosevelt* (Lawrenceburg, Ind.: Creative Company, R.L. Ruehwein, 2000), 7-8. This booklet is distributed for sale by Eastern National and is available in the Sagamore Hill Museum Shop.

Summer White House in Oyster Bay occasionally focused on the agriculture. (Newspaper articles are not listed separately in the Bibliography, but are fully cited in the footnotes.) Sources for copies of articles in what are now obscure magazines are also included in the Bibliography.

Clive Aslet's *The American Country House* (1990) is the best study to date of the broader national history of country houses. (Aslet is an expert on English country houses and includes comparisons between American and English country houses in his book.) Aslet has a chapter on estate farm groups which is helpful, but most of the farm complexes he discusses are much more extensive than are those at Sagamore Hill. Although anecdotal and not scholarly, Cleveland Amory's *The Last Resorts* (1952) gives a historical overview of Bar Harbor, Newport, and other resort areas, with some mention of Long Island. Aslet and other authors tend to focus on mansions and "great estates" rather than the smaller, more typical homes such as Sagamore Hill. (See the "Country Houses and Resorts" section in my Bibliography below for these and other titles.)

Histories of Long Island give some attention to the Gold Coast and estate era. Robert B. MacKay's chapter, "Of Grand Hotels, Great Estates, Polo, and Princes," in *Between Ocean and Empire* (1985) and his introduction to *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects, 1860-1940* (1997) are among the best sources, though the latter book is typical of others in focusing on architecture. (Other titles are listed in the "Long Island Country Houses and Estate Era" section in my Bibliography.)

The Theodore Roosevelt Collection at Harvard University and the Theodore Roosevelt Papers in the Library of Congress are the primary and most important repositories. Manuscripts selected and recommended by Wallace Dailey, including Edith Roosevelt's diary and correspondence, which had been added to the collection relatively recently, were read at the Houghton Library at Harvard. Some references are used from biographers and researchers who cited other manuscripts in the Harvard Collection. Because they are indexed, the microfilmed Theodore Roosevelt Papers from the Library of Congress proved to be very useful. The papers include some correspondence with Noah Seaman, as well as newspaper clippings. The curatorial files at Sagamore Hill, of course, are invaluable and include interviews (conducted in the 1970s) with descendants of TR and Sagamore Hill staff. References to farming are sparse in these accounts, except for the interview with Robert Gillespie, son of Robert Gillespie who was the Superintendent from 1914 to 1943. TR's published correspondence and works on Roosevelt and his family, including recent biographies, have some reference to farming at Sagamore Hill (see sections in the Bibliography on "Writings by Theodore Roosevelt and Family" and "Biographies and Biographical Studies"). Edmund Morris and Kathleen Dalton have cautioned that various editors "sanitized" some of TR's published correspondence. However, this probably would have little or no effect on the focus of my research.

Local history resources were explored by personal visits to repositories. The vertical files in the Nassau County Museum collection at the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University

(619 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, NY 11549), include a number of articles on Roosevelt from the presidential years, which yielded some of the photographs included in the report (including Figures 8a and 8b of Alfred Davis, Gardener; and Noah Seaman and Staff). The Institute also has local history periodicals, atlases and maps, and photographs, including Henry Otto Korten photographs of Sagamore Hill (c. 1910) and Mattie Edwards Hewitt photographs of the interior (1927), but none of the stable, barns, or farm. (Photocopies of these photographs were given to the Sagamore Hill Curator, Amy Verone.) The Long Island Studies Institute has the federal manuscript census of population for Long Island for the years 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930, as well as the manuscript New York State Census for 1915 and 1925. Since the focus at Sagamore Hill has been on TR's presidential and post-presidential years and the household staff, apparently the 1910 manuscript census was the only one previously utilized by researchers. (The 1920 and 1930 manuscript censuses were not released until 1992 and 2002, respectively, and the New York State manuscript census is not widely available.) Information from these censuses is in Appendix 5.

The Huntington Historical Society's Library has area atlases and was the source of Henry James Forman's article, "Roosevelt, The Husbandman." The Oyster Bay Historical Society has a number of early articles, including those in *Broadway Magazine.* The Oyster Bay Historical Society's book, *Walls Have Tongues: Oyster Bay Buildings and Their Stories* (1999), includes drawings and brief descriptions of many buildings mentioned in this report, including Yellowbanks (22-23), Octagon Hotel/Nassau House (25), Edward Swan's 1870s house (30), Youngs House (46), Molly Cooper's Grey Cottage on Cooper's Bluff (65), Seawanhaka Club House (74), Sagamore Hill (80), the 1902 Townsend Manor summer hotel (92), Old Orchard (95), and Cove School (104).

Interviews were conducted on two different dates with Isabelle Wildt, daughter of Superindent Gillespie. Mrs. Wildt reviewed and amended the summary of the interviews. She also provided a layout of the interior of the lodge (Figures 14a and 14b). An interview with her brother, Robert Gillespie, was conducted in 1973 by National Parks Service staff, but the transcription or summary of the audiotape of Gillespie's interview was missing from the curatorial files. The audiotape was transcribed in the course of this research. (Copies of the Wildt and Gillespie interviews have been deposited in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files.) Robert Gillespie had drawn the interior of the stable (copies are in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files). His two drawings should be useful for any reconstruction and interpretation or exhibition related to the stable and lodge. The interviews with children of the superintendent provide useful information on their father and on farming on the property. The typescript and files on computer disk of these interviews have been deposited in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files.

Additional interviews were conducted with Elizabeth Roosevelt, who has lived on Cove Neck all her life, and with Nancy Jackson, daughter of Archibald Roosevelt. Elizabeth is the granddaughter of W. Emlen Roosevelt and daughter of John K. Roosevelt. She also spoke to her older sister, Dorothy Armentrout, about farming at Sagamore Hill during the 1930s and 1940s.

It is possible that memories may blur as to which property had what agriculture, since the families sometimes shared their produce with each other and, as in TR's day, children roamed the various adjoining Roosevelt properties. In earlier years, Park Service staff found that some people thought their parents or grandparents had worked at Sagamore Hill, whereas actually their relatives had worked for Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., whether at Old Orchard or in one of the houses he rented before 1938.

William McMillan (born 1935), the architect son of William McMillan (architect of Old Orchard and son-in-law of TR, Jr.), was contacted and information he provided is in Appendix 8.

Recommendations for Additional Research

There may be additional information on farming at Sagamore Hill in the manuscripts in the Roosevelt Collection at Harvard University, but it is scattered. With limited time in Cambridge, the collections could not be thoroughly explored for this report. If a more precise picture is desired of the economics of the Sagamore Hill farm operations, a careful analysis of Edith's accounts might be possible. These are in manuscripts at Harvard University, with copies of some in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files.

Secondary sources on servants on estates (whether domestics working inside the house or those outside on the grounds) is quite limited and anecdotal. Appendix 5 provides information on those who worked at Sagamore Hill and comments therein analyze some of the data. The curatorial files have some additional information based on interviews and family reminiscences. The manuscript census data could be further analyzed for numbers and ethnic background of employees on neighboring estates for comparisons and to help put this information in a broader context.

[After my research concluded, the Oyster Bay Historical Society had an exhibit and publication, " 'Upstairs, Downstairs' Look at Oyster Bay Estate Life," ed. Thomas A. Kuehhas, and Maureen Monck, special issue, *Freeholder* (Oyster Bay Historical Society) 10, (Fall 2005). NAN SH-NPS]

One or more reviewers of an earlier draft of my essays in this volume suggested elaborating on such topics as: demographic changes with the onset of the estates; the social and economic links and impact on the local economies; distinctions between summer and year-round residents; and how the Roosevelts were viewed by the local residents. Some of these interesting aspects have been touched on in the reports, but available source materials and secondary studies to adequately address these topics are not available.

Bibliography

This bibliography is divided into the following sections:

National Park Service Reports
Oyster Bay and Long Island History
Theodore Roosevelt and Sagamore Hill
Writings by T. Roosevelt and Family
Biographies and Biographical Studies Long Island Agriculture and Farming
American Country Houses and Resorts
Long Island Country Houses-Estate Era
Maps
Census
Interviews and Informants
Repositories Consulted

National Park Service Reports

Bellavia, Regina M., and George W. Curry. *Cultural Landscape Report for Sagamore Hill National Historic Site.* Boston: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, 1995.

Wallace, David. *Historic Furnishing Report, Sagamore Hill.* 2 vols. National Park Service, 1989, 1991.

Wilshin, Francis. *Historic Resource Study: Sagamore Hill and the Roosevelt Family.* National Park Service, 1972.

_____. *Historic Resource Study: Historic Base Map Documentation.* National Park Service, 1972.

Oyster Bay and Long Island History

Bayles, Richard M. *Bayles' Long Island Handbook.* Babylon: Privately printed, Budget Steam Print, 1885.

Failey, Dean, and Zachary N. Studenroth. *Edward Lange's Long Island.* Setauket: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities, 1979.

Hammond, John E. *Oyster Bay Remembered.* Huntington: Maple Hill Press, 2002. Hazelton, Henry Isham. *The Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens Counties of Nassau and Suffolk, Long Island, New York, 1609-1924.* 6 vols. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1925.

Irvin, Frances. *Oyster Bay in History: A Sketch.* Typescript in Oyster Bay Historical Society, 1960; copy in the Nassau County Museum collection, Long Island Studies Institute.

_____. *Historic Oyster Bay* (pamphlet). Oyster Bay: Oyster Bay Historical Society, 1916, 2d ed. 1953.

Irvin, Frances, and H.P. Horton. "The Town of Oyster Bay." In *Long Island: A History of Two Great Counties, Nassau and Suffolk,* edited by Paul Bailey, 1:457-79. 3 vols. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1949.

Jameson, J. Franklin, ed. *Narratives of New Netherlands, 1609-1664.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910.

Layton, Edna T. "The Early Life and Education of Miss Edna T. Layton," edited by Mary Jane Lippert. *Freeholder* Oyster Bay Historical Society 4 (Summer 1999): 3-6, 19.

Lessard, Suzannah. "The Suburban Landscape: Oyster Bay, Long Island." *New Yorker,* October 11, 1976, 44-79.

Long Island Illustrated. New York: Long Island Railroad, 1882.

Long Island Railroad, *Out on Long Island.* New York: Long Island Railroad, 1890. Munsell, W.W. *History of Queens County.* New York: W.W. Munsell, 1882.

Oyster Bay Historical Society. *A Walking Tour of Oyster Bay.* Oyster Bay: Oyster Bay Historical Society, 1996.

_____. *Walls Have Tongues: Oyster Bay Buildings and Their Stories,* 1977. 3d. ed. [Oyster Bay]: Oyster Bay Historical Society, 1999.

Radcliffe, Lewis. "Long Island's Shellfisheries. In *Long Island: A History of Two Great Counties, Nassau and Suffolk,* edited by Paul Bailey, 3 vols.; 2:116. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1949.

Ross, Peter, and William S. Pelletreau. *A History of Long Island From its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time.* 3 vols.; 1:919-54 re Oyster Bay. New York: Lewis Publishing, 1902.

Rossano, Geoffrey L. "To Market, To Market: Oyster Bay and the International Economy in the Mid-Eighteenth Century." In *Evoking a Sense of Place,* edited by Joann P. Krieg, 63-74. Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1988. Smits, Edward J. *Nassau: Suburbia, U.S.A.* Syosset: Friends of Nassau County Museum, 1974.

Tooker, William Wallace. *Indian Place-Names on Long Island,* 1911. Reprint; Port Washington, N.Y.: Ira J. Friedman, 1962.

Walton, Terry. *Cold Spring Harbor: Rediscovering History in Streets and Shores.* Cold Spring Harbor: Whaling Museum Society, 1999.

Theodore Roosevelt and Sagamore Hill

Amato, Dennis J. "Teddy Roosevelt and Oyster Bay Polo." *Long Island Forum* 49 (August 1986): 156-58.

Amos, James E. *Theodore Roosevelt: Hero to his Valet.* New York: John Day, 1927. Andrews, Walter E. "Theodore Roosevelt as a Farmer." *Farm Journal* 30 (December 1906): 431. (Photocopy from Olin Library, Cornell University.)

Butt, Archibald W. *The Letters of Archie Butt, Personal Military Aide to President Roosevelt,* edited by Lawrence F. Abbot. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1924.

_____. *Taft and Roosevelt, The Intimate Letters of Archie Butt, Military Aide.* 2 vols. Garden City: Doubleday, Dorn & Company, 1930.

Cheney, Albert. *Personal Memoirs of the Home Life of the Late Theodore Roosevelt.* 2d ed. Washington, D.C.: Cheney Publishing, 1919.

D'Elia, Alexis. "Recycling Foundations: Preserving the Legacy of the Stable and Lodge at Sagamore Hill." *Freeholder* Oyster Bay Historical Society 5 (Winter 2001): 17-18.

Fawcett, Waldon. "President Roosevelt's Country Home." *Indoors and Out* 1 (August 1906): 231-33.

Forman, Henry James. "Roosevelt, The Husbandman." *American Review of Reviews,* August 1910, 173-79. (Copy at the Huntington Historical Society Library.)

Gillespie, Robert (Jr.). Interview by S. Paul Okey, National Park Service, and Mrs. Jessica Kraft, Sagamore Hill curator, July 17, 1973. Audiotape. Original transcript or summary was missing from the Sagamore Hill files. I transcribed the tape and deposited a copy of the transcript in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files.

Hagedorn, Hermann. *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill.* New York: Macmillan 1954.

Matthews, Franklin. "Theodore Roosevelt, The Man." *Harper's Weekly,* 1908, p. 984 ff.

McElwain, Franklin R. "The Search for Noah Seaman: TR's Superintendent and Friend." *Freeholder* Oyster Bay Historical Society 2 (Winter 1998): 20-22.

Needham, Henry Beach. "Theodore Roosevelt as a Country Gentleman." *The Country Calendar,* October 1905, 531-35, 579-80. (Photocopy from New York Botanical Garden Library in the Bronx; a copy also is in the Sagamore Hill curatorial files, from Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site.)

Payne, George Henry. "Theodore Roosevelt, Fox Hunter." *Long Island Forum* 2 (December 1939): 5-6.

"Recollections of 'T.R.' at the Cove School at Oyster Bay." *New York State Education,* October 1958, 16-17, 69. Copy in the TR vertical file, Nassau County Division of Museum Services, Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University.

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site. *Sagamore Hill National Historic Site: Home of Theodore Roosevelt.* Lawrenceburg, Ind: Creative Company, R.L. Ruehwein, 2000. Booklet distributed by Eastern National, available for purchase at Sagamore Hill Museum Shop.

Somerville, Charles. "How Roosevelt Rests." *Broadway Magazine* 18 (September 1907): 657-70. (Copy in the Oyster Bay Historical Society.)

Wildt, Isabelle Gillespie. Daughter of Superintendent Gillespie. Interviewed September 21 and October 21, 2002. A summary of our conversation (which she reviewed, corrected, and added to) is deposited in the Sagamore Hill files, as well as the layout she provided of the interior of each floor of the superintendent's house (Fig. 8).

Writings by Theodore Roosevelt and Family

Library of Congress, Theodore Roosevelt Papers and Roosevelt Family Papers, Microfilm. (Available at Harvard University, St. John's University, and other repositories.)

Morison, Elting E., et. Al. eds. *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt.* 8 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951-1954.

Robinson, Corinne Roosevelt. *My Brother Theodore Roosevelt.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

Roosevelt, Theodore. "At Home." In *Outdoor Pastimes of an American Hunter (*1905), 377-99. Reprinted; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

——. *An Autobiography,* 1913. Reprinted; New York: Charles Scribner's, 1920.

——. "Cross-Country Riding in America." *Century Magazine* 32 (July 1886): 335.

——. *Letters from Theodore Roosevelt to Anna Roosevelt Cowles, 1870-1918,* edited by Anna Roosevelt Cowles. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924.

——. *Letters to Kermit from Theodore Roosevelt, 1902-1908,* edited by Will Irwin. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946.

——. *Letters to His Children,* edited by James Bucklin Bishop. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919. Reprinted as *A Bully Father: Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children,* with a new introduction by Joan Paterson Kerr. New York: Random House, 1995.

——. *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884- 1918,* edited by Henry Cabot Lodge, 2 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925.

Roosevelt, Theodore, Jr. *All in the Family.* New York: G.P. Putnam and Sons, 1929.

Roosevelt, Mrs. Theodore, Jr. *Day Before Yesterday: The Reminiscences of Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.* New York: Doubleday, 1959.

Biographies and Biographical Studies

Gluck, Sherwin. *TR's Summer White House: Oyster Bay.* Oyster Bay: Privately printed, 1999.

Caroli, Betty Boyd. *The Roosevelt Women.* New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Dalton, Kathleen. *Theodore Roosevelt: A Strenuous Life.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Harbaugh, William H. *Power and Responsibility: The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1961.

McCullough, David. *Mornings on Horseback.* New York: Touchstone, 1981. Miller, Nathan. *Theodore Roosevelt: A Life.* New York: William Morrow, 1992. Morris, Edmund. *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt.* New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1979.

——. *Theodore Rex.* New York: Random House, 2001.

Morris, Sylvia Jukes. *Edith Kermit Roosevelt: Portrait of a First Lady.* New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1980.

Naylor, Natalie A., Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable, eds. *Theodore Roosevelt: Many- Sided American.* Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing/Hofstra University, 1992.

Renehan, Edward J., Jr. *The Lion's Pride: Theodore Roosevelt and His Family in Peace and War.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Rixey, Lillian. *Bamie: Theodore Roosevelt's Remarkable Sister.* New York: David McKay, 1963.

Long Island Agriculture and Farming

Fullerton, Edith L. *History of Long Island Agriculture* (pamphlet). New York: Long Island Railroad, c. 1929.

Horne, Field, ed. *Diary of Mary Cooper: Life on a Long Island Farm, 1768-1773* [on Cove Neck]. Oyster Bay: Oyster Bay Historical Society, 1981.

Johnston, John. "John Johnston on Long Island." *The Country Gentleman,* October 14, 1860. Clipping in Nassau County Museum vertical files, Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University.

Knapp, Halsey B. "Long Island's Agriculture." In *Long Island: A History of Two Great Counties, Nassau and Suffolk,* edited by Paul Bailey, 2:17-34. 3 vols. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing, 1949.

Linder, Marc, and Lawrence S. Zacharias. *Of Cabbages and Kings County: Agriculture and the Formation of Modern Brooklyn.* Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999. Stephens, L.M., and F.C. Hersman. "The Agriculture of Long Island." *Long Island Forum* 1 (May 1938): 6, 13-14.

United States Bureau of the Census. *Census of Agriculture,* various years. Statistics for county level.

American Country Houses and Resorts

Amory, Cleveland. *The Last Resorts.* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952.

Aslet, Clive. *The American Country House.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

Comstock, William T. *Country Houses and Seaside Cottages of the Victorian Era,* 1893. Reprint; New York: Dover, 1989.

Country Life. Magazine published by Doubleday in Garden City, 1919-1937. Available at Ward Melville Library, Stony Brook University.

Downing, A.J. *The Architecture of Country Houses,* 1850. Reprint; New York: Dover, 1969.

Hewitt, Mark Alan. *The Architect & The American Country House.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

Lewis, Arnold. *American Country Houses of the Gilded Age (Sheldon's "Artistic Country-Seats"* [1886-87]). New York: Dover, 1982

Preservation Society of Newport. *A Guidebook to Newport Mansions.* Newport: Preservation Society of Newport, 1984.

Roth, Leland M., and Bret Morgan. *Shingle Styles: Innovation and Tradition in American Architecture, 1874 to 1982.* New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999.

Scully, Vincent J., Jr. *The Shingle Style and The Stick Style: Architectural Theory and Design from Richardson to the Origins of Wright.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.

Sheldon, George William. *Artistic Country-Seats: Types of Recent American Villas and Cottage Architecture with Instances of Country Club-Houses,* 1886-1887. See Lewis above for reprint.

Stern, Robert A.M. *The Architecture of the American Summer: The Flowering of the Shingle Style.* New York: Rizzoli, 1989.

Long Island Country Houses and Estate Era

Boegner, Peggie Phipps, and Richard Gachot. *Halcyon Days: An American Family Through Three Generations* [the Phipps of Old Westbury Gardens]. New York: Old Westbury Gardens and Harry N. Abrams, 1986.

Batten, Andrew C. "Upstairs/Downstairs in Old Oyster Bay." Oyster Bay Historical Society's *Freeholder* 5 (Spring 2001): 3-5. Re servants, including Typhoid Mary.

Bookbinder, Bernie. *Long Island: People and Places, Past and Present,* 1983 (particularly 133-72). 2d ed. (with new final chapter). New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998.

Havemeyer, Harry W. *Along the Great South Bay: From Oakdale to Babylon, The Story of a Summer Spa, 1840 to 1940.* Mattituck: Amereon, 1996.

_____. *East on the Great South Bay: Sayville and Bayport, 1860-1960.* Mattituck: Amereon, 2001.

MacKay, Robert B., "Of Grand Hotels, Great Estates, Polo, and Princes." In *Between Ocean and Empire: An Illustrated History of Long Island,* edited by Robert B. MacKay, Geoffrey L. Rossano, and Carol Traynor, 112-31. Northridge, Calif.: Windsor, 1985. Rev. 2d ed. under title, *Long Island: An Illustrated History,* edited by Robert B. MacKay and Richard F. Welch, 112-31. Sun Valley, Calif.: American Historical Press, 2000.

_____. "Turmoil Begat 'Tranquility.'" In *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American,* edited by Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable, 45-53. Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992.

MacKay, Robert B., Anthony Baker, and Carol A. Traynor, eds. *Long Island Country Houses and Their Architects, 1860-1940.* New York: Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA)/W.W. Norton, 1997.

"The North Shore: A Small Patch of Long Island Houses the Rich and Great of New York." *Life,* July 22, 1946, 73-78.

Parrish Art Museum. *The Long Island Country House, 1870-1930.* Exhibition catalog. Southampton, NY: Parrish Art Museum, 1988. Essays by Richard Guy Wilson (13- 36) and Steven M. Bedford (37-78), as well as exhibition checklist.

Randall, Monica. *The Mansions of Long Island's Gold Coast,* 1979. Rev. ed. New York: Rizzoli, 1987.

Sclare, Lisa, and Donald Sclare. *Beaux-Arts Estates: A Guide to the Architecture of Long Island.* New York: Viking Press, 1980. Re: Sagamore Hill, 163-69.

Shaver, Peter. *The National Register of Historic Places in New York State.* New York: Rizzoli, 1993.

Shodell, Elly. *In the Service: Workers on the Grand Estates of Long Island, 1890s-1940s.* Port Washington: Port Washington Public Library, 1901.

Sobin, Dennis P. *Dynamics of Community Change: The Case of Long Island's Declining "Gold Coast."* Port Washington: Ira J. Friedman, 1968.

Spinzia, Raymond E., and Judith A. Spinzia. "*Gatsby:* Myths and Realities of Long Island's North Shore Gold Coast." *Nassau County Historical Society Journal* 52

(1997): 17-26.

_____. "Long Island's North Shore Families and Their Estates," 1997. Typescript (1,833 pages), 3 vols. In Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University.

_____. *Long Island's Prominent North Shore Families: Their Estates and Their Country Homes*, 2 vols. College Station, Tex.: Virtual Bookworm, 2006.

Winsche, Richard. "The Evolution of the Gould/Guggenheim Estate at Sands Point," In *Long Island: The Suburban Experience*, edited by Barbara Kelly, 39-49. Interlaken, NY: Heart of the Lakes Publishing/Hofstra University, 1990.

Maps - Originals at the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University, unless otherwise noted

Atlas of Long Island, New York. New York: Beers, Comstock, 1873.

Atlas of Nassau County, Long Island, N.Y. Brooklyn: E. Belcher Hyde, 1914.

Map of Gold Coast Estates, c. 1920. Reproduced by the Oyster Bay Historical Society. *Map of Long Island.* Brooklyn: Belcher-Hyde, 1906.

1900 [Bird's-eye] View of Oyster Bay. Engraving reproduced by the Oyster Bay Historical Society, c. 1998.

Real Estate Map of Nassau County. New York: E. Belcher Hyde, 1927.

Censuses

Manuscript Census of Population: 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 (Roosevelts, servants, superintendent, and families). Microfilm at the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University.

New York State Manucript Census: 1915, 1925. Microfilm at the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University.

U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920, Vol. 6, pt. 1, Agriculture: Reports for States with Statistics for Counties: The Northern States* (microfilm). Available in the Axinn Library (Government Documents), Hofstra University.

Interviews and Informants

John A. Gable, Executive Director, Theodore Roosevelt Association.

Robert Gillespie (transcribed Sagamore Hill taped 1973 interview), son of Superintendent from 1914-1943.

John E. Hammond, Oyster Bay historian.

Nancy Roosevelt Jackson, grandaughter of Archibald Roosevelt.

Robert B. MacKay, Director, Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities. William McMillan, Jr., son of William McMillan, son-in-law of TR, Jr., and architect of Old Orchard.

Elizabeth Roosevelt, granddaughter of W. Emlen Roosevelt.

Amy Verone, Curator, Sagamore Hill.

Isabelle (Mrs. Edward) Wildt, daughter of Robert Gillespie, Superintendent from 1914- 1943.

Repositories Consulted

Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University.
East Hampton (N.Y.) Library, Long Island Collection.
Harvard University, Houghton Library, Theodore Roosevelt Collection.
Huntington Historical Society, Huntington, L.I., N.Y. - vertical files.
Library of Congress, Theodore Roosevelt Papers and Roosevelt Family Papers; used microfilms at Harvard and St. John's Universities.
Nassau County Division of Museum Services Collections at the Long Island Studies Institute, Hofstra University, 619 Fulton Ave., Hempstead, NY 11449 - vertical files and photograph files.
Oyster Bay Historical Society, 20 Summit St., P.O. Box 297, Oyster Bay, NY 11771 - vertical files.
Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Oyster Bay - curatorial files.
Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace National Historic Site, New York City - copies of oral history interviews with Roosevelt family members (duplicates of those at Columbia University).

Other libraries and repositories visited which did not have unique information for this study:

Cold Spring Harbor (NY) Public Library.
Huntington (NY) Public Library.
New-York Historical Society, New York City.
New York Public Library.
Oyster Bay (NY) Public Library.
Regional [Federal] Archives, New York City.
Society for the Preservation of Long Island Antiquities (SPLIA), Cold Spring Harbor, NY.
Suffolk County Historical Society, Reference Library, Riverhead, NY.
Syosset (NY) Public Library.

Bibliography

H. W. Brands

Publications

Bishop, Joseph Bucklin. *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time,* 2 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919-20.

Brands, H. W. *TR: The Last Romantic.* New York: Basic Books, 1997.

Gluck, Sherwin. *TR's Summer White House: Oyster Bay.* Oyster Bay, N.Y.: Sherwin Gluck Publisher, 1999.

Gould, Lewis L. *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt.* Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991.

Hagedorn, Hermann. *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill.* New York: Macmillan, 1954.

Headrick, Daniel R. *The Tools of Empire.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Morris, Edmond. *Theodore Rex.* New York: Random House, 2001. Morison, Elting E., and John M. Blum, eds. *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt,* 8 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951-54.

Morris, Sylvia Jukes. *Edith Kermit Roosevelt: Portrait of a First Lady.* New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, 1980.

Zimmerman, Warren. *First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002.

Letters (in Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress) Theodore Roosevelt to Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Feb. 10, 1904.

—— to Kermit Roosevelt, June 21, 1904.

_____ to James R. Garfield, July 13, 1904.
_____ to Christopher Grant La Farge, January 27, 1905.
_____ to Kermit Roosevelt, June 14, 1905.
_____ to Henry Cabot Lodge, July 18, 1905.
_____ to Cecil Spring Rice, July 24, 1905.
_____ to William Howard Taft, July 29, 1905.
_____ to Czar Nicholas, in message to Witte, Aug. 21, 1905,
_____ to Kaneko, Aug. 22, 1905.
_____ to Wilhelm, Aug. 27, 1905.
_____ to William Rockhill, Aug. 29, 1905.
_____ to Emperor of Japan in TR to Komura, Aug. 29, 1905.
_____ to Wilhelm, Aug. 30, 1905.
_____ to Nicholas, Aug. 31, 1905.
_____ to Henry Cabot Lodge, August 6, 1906.

Newspapers

Brooklyn Standard Union, May 1903.
Cleveland Plain Dealer, Aug. 9, 1903.
New York Times, July 7, 1902; July 8, 1902; Sept. 15, 1902; Aug. 18, 1903; Sept. 23, 1907.
Oyster Bay Guardian, June 14, 1907.

Bibliography

Kathleen Dalton

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Archibald Bulloch Roosevelt Papers in Series 16 TR Papers.
Alice Roosevelt Longworth Papers, used with permission of Joanna Sturm. Gifford Pinchot Diaries and Gifford Pinchot Papers.
Kermit and Belle Wyatt (Willard) Roosevelt Papers.
Owen Wister Papers.
Theodore Roosevelt Association Film Collection.
Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., Papers.
Theodore Roosevelt Papers, microfilmed and Series 13-J clippings not filmed.

Hyde Park, New York—Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library
Roosevelt Family Papers (includes Family Papers Donated by the Children). Eleanor Roosevelt Papers.
Small Collections—TR and other Papers.
F.D.R Papers: Papers as President, President's Personal File, F.D.R. Scrapbooks.

New York, New York—Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace
National Park Service, Theodore Roosevelt Collection, Anecdotes File, etc.

Berkeley, California—University of California
Woman Suffrage and the Equal Rights Amendment Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California (available on-line).

Oyster Bay, New York—Theodore Roosevelt Association, Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, and National Park Service Headquarters (Old Orchard House) Theodore Roosevelt Association Offices: Theodore Roosevelt Association and Roosevelt Memorial Association Papers.

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site: Theodore Roosevelt Family Papers, Roosevelt Division Archives, Sagamore Hill Accounts Book, Inventories, Servants Files, Vertical Files.

National Park Service Headquarters (Old Orchard House): Book List, Visitors' Log Book.

Cambridge, Massachusetts—Harvard University

For a collection of primary and secondary sources see Harvard University Library. Theodore Roosevelt Collection: Dictionary Catalogue and Shelflist. 6 vols. Cambridge, Mass., 1986; also on-line.

Published Primary Sources

Abbott, Lawrence F., ed. *The Letters of Archie Butt, Personal Aide to President Roosevelt.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1924.

Amos, James E. *Theodore Roosevelt: A Hero to His Valet.* New York: John Day, 1927.

Bok, Edward W. *The Americanization of Edward Bok: An Autobiography.* New York: Pocket Book, 1920, 1965.

Burroughs, John. *Camping and Tramping with Roosevelt.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1907.

Ferber, Edna. *A Peculiar Treasure.* New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1939. Irwin, Will. *Making of a Reporter.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1942.

La Farge, John. *The Manner Is Ordinary.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1954.

Leary, John J. Jr. *Talks With T.R.: From the Diaries of John J. Leary, Jr.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1920 (orig. 1919).

Lodge, Henry Cabot, ed. *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918.* Vols. I and II. New York: Da Capo Press, 1925.

Longworth, Alice Roosevelt. *Crowded Hours: Reminiscences of Alice Roosevelt Longworth.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933 (orig. 1932).

Oliver, Lawrence J., ed. *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt and Brander Matthews.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995.

Parsons, Frances Theodore (Smith). *Perchance Someday.* New York: privately printed, 1951.

Pinchot, Gifford. *Breaking New Ground.* New York: Harcourt Brace, 1947.

Riis, Jacob A. *The Making of An American.* New York: Macmillan Co., 1943.

____. *Theodore Roosevelt, The Citizen.* New York: Outlook Co., 1904.

Robinson, Corinne Roosevelt. *My Brother, Theodore Roosevelt.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.

Roosevelt, Eleanor Butler Alexander. *Day Before Yesterday.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959.

Roosevelt, Anna Eleanor Roosevelt. *This Is My Story.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1 961. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932 .

Roosevelt, Kermit. *The Happy Hunting-grounds.* London: Hodder & Stroughton, 1920.

Roosevelt, Nicholas. *A Front Row Seat.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953.

_____. *Theodore Roosevelt: The Man As I Knew Him.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1967.

Roosevelt, Theodore. *An Autobiography.* New York:, 1985 (orig. 1913).

_____. *A Bully Father: Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children.* Joan Paterson Kerr, ed. New York: Random House, 1995.

_____. *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt,* 8 vols., Elting E. Morison, John Morton Blum, and Alfred Chandler, eds., Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951-1954.

_____. *Letters from Theodore Roosevelt to Anna Roosevelt Cowles, 1870-1918.* Anna Roosevelt Cowles, ed. New York, 1924.

_____. *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt.* Memorial Edition. 20 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923-1926.

_____. "Better Life on the Farm," *Journal of Education,* Aug. 27, 1908, 189-190.

_____."Social Values and National Existence," address before the American Sociological Society, in *Current History,* Feb. 1916.

Roosevelt, Theodore, Jr. *All in the Family.* New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1929. Straus, Oscar S. *Under Four Administrations From Cleveland to Taft: Recollections of Oscar S. Straus.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1922.

Teague, Michael. *Mrs. L: Conversations with Alice Roosevelt Longworth.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1981.

Vorse, Mary Heaton. *A Footnote to Folly: Reminiscences of Mary Heaton Vorse.* New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1935.

White, William Allen. *The Autobiography of William Allen White.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1946.

_____. *Masks in a Pageant.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1928.

Wister, Owen. *Roosevelt: The Story of a Friendship, 1880-1919.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930.

Wood, Frederick S. *Roosevelt As We Knew Him: The Personal Recollections of One-Hundred and Fifty of His Friends and Associates.* Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co., 1927.

Selected Published Secondary Sources

Berman, Jay Stuart. *Police Administration and Progressive Reform: Theodore Roosevelt as Police Commissioner of New York.* New York: Greenwood Press, 1987.

Bishop, Joseph Bucklin. *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time Shown in His Own Letters.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920.

Boris, Eileen. *Art and Labor: Ruskin, Morris, and the Craftsman Ideal in America.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986.

Caroli, Betty Boyd. *The Roosevelt Women.* New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Chessman, G. Wallace. *Governor Theodore Roosevelt: The Albany Apprenticeship, 1898- 1900.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Cohen, Michael P. *The Pathless Way: John Muir and American Wilderness.* Madison.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984.

Cutright, Paul Russell. *Theodore Roosevelt the Naturalist.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956.

____. *Theodore Roosevelt: The Making of a Conservationist.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1985.

Dalton, Kathleen. "Between the Diplomacy of Imperialism and the Achievement of World Order by Supranational Mediation: Ethnocentrism and Theodore Roosevelt's Changing Views of World Order," in Pierre Melandri and Serge Ricard, eds. *Ethnocentrisme et diplomatie: l'Amérique et le monde au XXe siècle.* Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2001.

____. The Bully Prophet: Theodore Roosevelt and American Memory," in Natalie A. Naylor, Douglas Brinkley, and John Allen Gable, eds. *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American.* Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing/Hofstra University, 1992.

____. "The Early Life of Theodore Roosevelt." Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1979.

____. "Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of War," *The Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal,* Vol. VII, #4, Fall 1981, 6-11.

____. Theodore Roosevelt, Knickerbocker Aristocrat," *New York History,* Vol. 67, #1, January 1986, 39-65.

____. "Why America Loved Teddy Roosevelt: Or Charisma is in the Eyes of the Beholders," in Robert J. Brugger, ed. *OurSelves/Our Past: Psychological Approaches to American History.* Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981.

____, Steven J. *A Very Different Age: Americans of the Progressive Era.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1998.

Dunlap, Thomas R. *Saving America's Wildlife: Ecology and the American Mind, 1850- 1990.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Dyer, Thomas G. *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980.

Einstein, Lewis. *Roosevelt: His Mind in Action.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930. Fink, Leon, ed. *Major Problems in the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era.* Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1993.

Finnegan, John P. *Against the Specter of a Dragon: The Campaign for American Military Preparedness, 1914-1917.* Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1974.

Fitzpatrick, Ellen. *Endless Crusade: Women Social Scientists and Progressive Reform.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Forcey, Charles. *The Crossroads of Liberalism: Croly, Weyl, Lippmann, and the Progressive Era 1900-1925.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.
Fox, Stephen R. *John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement.* Boston: Little Brown, 1981.
Fredrickson, George M. *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914.* New York: Harper and Row, 1971. Freeman, Jo. *A Room at a Time: How Women Entered Party Politics.* Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.
Gable, John. *The Bull Moose Years: Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Party.* New York: Kennikat, 1978.
" The Bull Moose Years: Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Party, 1912-1916." Ph. D. dissertation, 1972.
____. Garraty, John. *Henry Cabot Lodge, a Biography.* New York: Knopf, 1953.
Gatewood, Willard B. *Theodore Roosevelt and the Art of Controversy: Episodes in the White House Years.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970. Gibson, William M. *Theodore Roosevelt Among the Humorists: W.D. Howells, Mark Twain, and Mr. Dooley.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1980. Goodwin, Lorine Swainston. *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders, 1879-1914.* Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1999.
Goodwyn, Lawrence. *The Populist Moment.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978. Gordon, Dudley. *Charles F. Lummis: Crusader in Corduroy.* Los Angeles: Cultural Assets Press, 1972.
Gould, Lewis L. *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt.* Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1991.
____. "The Price of Fame: Theodore Roosevelt as a Celebrity, 1909-1919," *Lamar Journal of the Humanities,* X (Fall, 1984), 7-18.
Graham, Sally Hunter. "Woodrow Wilson, Alice Paul, and the Woman Suffrage Movement," *Political Science Quarterly,* Vol. 98, #4, Winter 1983-84, 665-679. Green, Constance McLaughlin. *Washington: Capital City 1879-1950.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963.
Hagedorn, Hermann. *The Boys' Life of Theodore Roosevelt.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1922.
____. *The Bugle That Woke America: The Saga of Theodore Roosevelt's Last Battle for his Country.* New York: The John Day Company, 1940.
____. *The Hyphenated Family: An American Saga.* New York: The Macmillan Co., 1960.
____. *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill.* New York: Macmillan, 1954. Haley, Bruce. *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978.

Harbaugh, William H. *Power and Responsibility: The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt.* Newtown, Conn.: American Political Biography Press, 1997 (orig. 1961).

Harlan, Louis R. *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1865-1901.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.

____. *Booker T. Washington: The Wizard of Tuskegee 1901-1915.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Hart, Albert B., and H.R. Ferleger, eds. *Theodore Roosevelt Cyclopedia.* New York: Roosevelt Memorial Association, 1941.

Havig, Alan R. "Presidential Images, History and Homage: Memorializing Theodore Roosevelt, 1919-1967," *American Quarterly* 30 (Fall 1978).

____. "Theodore and Franklin: F.D.R.'s Use of the Theodore Roosevelt Image, 1920-1936," *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal,* 5, #2 (Spring 1979): 6-10.

Hays, Samuel P. *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 189 0-1920.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959.

Huth, Hans. *Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957.

Jaher, Frederic Cople, ed. *The Rich, the Well-Born, and the Powerful.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973.

____. *The Urban Establishment.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982.

Jordan, Winthrop D. *White over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968.

Kaplan, Wendy, et. al. *"The Art That Is Life": The Arts and Crafts Movement in America, 1875-1920.* Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987.

Lash, Joseph P. *Eleanor and Franklin: The Story of their Relationship, based on Eleanor Roosevelt's private papers.* New York: New American Library, 1973.

Lears, T.J. Jackson. *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920.* New York: Pantheon, 1981.

Luker, Ralph E. *The Social Gospel in Black and White: American Racial Reform, 1885-1912.* Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1991.

Lunardini, Christine A. and Thomas J. Knock, "Woodrow Wilson and Woman Suffrage: A New Look," *Political Science Quarterly* 95 (Winter 1980-81): 655-7.

Lutts, Ralph H. *The Nature Fakers: Wildlife, Science, and Sentiment.* Golden, Col.: Fulcrum, 1990.

McCullough, David. *Mornings on Horseback.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981.

Mangan, J.A. *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Marling, Karal Ann. *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture, 1876-1986.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988.

Merchant, Carolyn. *Major Problems in American Environmental History: Documents and Essays.* Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1993.

Miller, Char. *Gifford Pinchot and the Making of Modern Environmentalism.* Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2001.

_____. ed. *American Forests: Nature, Culture, and Politics.* Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1997.

Morris, Edmund. *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt.* New York: Coward, McCann and Geohagan, 1979.

Morris, Sylvia Jukes. *Edith Kermit Roosevelt: Portrait of a First Lady.* New York: Coward, McCann and Geohagan, 1980.

Mowry, George E. *Era of Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of Modern America 1900-1912.* New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962.

_____. *Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1960 (orig. 1946).

Muncy, Robyn. *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890-1935.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Nash, Roderick. *Wilderness and the American Mind.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976, (orig. 1967).

Naylor, Natalie A., Douglas Brinkley, John Allen Gable, eds. *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American.* Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992.

Ninkovich, Frank. "Theodore Roosevelt: Civilization as Ideology," *Diplomatic History,* 1986, 10 (3): 221-245.

Odem, Mary E. *Delinquent Daughters: Protecting and Policing Adolescent Sexuality in the United States, 1885-1920.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995. Oliver, Lawrence J. "Theodore Roosevelt, Brander Matthews, and the Campaign for Literary Americanism," *American Quarterly,* Vol. 41, Mar. 1989, #1, 93-111. O'Reilly, Kenneth. *Nixon's Piano Presidents and Racial Politics from Washington to Clinton.* New York: Free Press, 1995.

Ornig, Joseph R. *My Last Chance to Be a Boy: Theodore Roosevelt's South American Expedition 1913 -1914.* Mechanicsburg, Pa.: Stackpole Books, 1994.

Orvell, Miles. *The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880-1940.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989.

O'Toole, Patricia. *The Five of Hearts: An Intimate Portrait of Henry Adams and His Friends.* New York: Ballantine Books, 1990.

Painter, Nell Irvin. *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1987.

Pearlman, Michael. *To Make Democracy Safe for America: Patricians and Preparedness in the Progressive Era.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984.

Pringle, Henry F. *The Life and Times of William Howard Taft.* 2 vols. New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1939.

_____. *Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography.* New York: Harcourt Brace, 1931.

Putnam, Carleton. *Theodore Roosevelt: The Formative Years.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958.

Putney, Clifford. *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920.* Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2001.

Pyne, Stephen J. *How the Canyon Became Grand: A Short History.* New York: Viking, 1999.

Reiger, John F. *American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation.* New York: Winchester Publishing Co., 1975.

Reisner, Christian F. *Roosevelt's Religion.* New York: Abingdon Press, 1922.

Rixey, Lilian. *Bamie: Theodore Roosevelt's Remarkable Sister.* New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1963.

Rothman, Ellen. *Hands and Hearts: A History of Courtship in America.* New York: Basic Books, 1984.

Rotundo, E. Anthony. "American Fatherhood: A Historical Perspective," *American Behavioral Scientist,* Vol. 29, No. 1, September/October 1985, 7-25.

____. *American Manhood: Transformations in Masculinity from the Revolution to the Modern Era.* New York: Basic Books, 1994.

"Body and Soul: Changing Ideals of Middle-Class Manhood, 1770-1920," *Journal of Social History,* June 1983.

____. "Learning about Manhood: Gender Ideals in Nineteenth-Century America," in J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, eds. *Morality and Manliness: Nineteenth-Century*

____. *Images in the Old and New World.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987. Runte, Alfred. *National Parks: The American Experience.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987.

Saarinen, Aline B. *The Proud Possessors: The Lives, Times, and Tastes of Some Adventurous American Art Collectors.* New York: Random House, 1958.

Sklar, Kathryn Kish. "Women and the Creation of the American Welfare State," in Carl J. Guarneri, ed. *America Compared: American History in International Perspective,* vol. ii. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997, 178-187.

Shi, David E. *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Sinkler, George. *The Racial Attitudes of American Presidents from Abraham Lincoln to Theodore Roosevelt.* Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1971.

Smith, Mary Ann. *Gustav Stickley: The Craftsman.* Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1983.

Smith-Rosenberg, Carroll. *Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America.* New York: Knopf, 1985.

Solomon, Barbara Miller. *Ancestors and Immigrants: A Changing New England Tradition.* Cambridge, Mass.: Northeastern University Press, 1956.

Southern, David W. *The Malignant Heritage: Yankee Progressives and the Negro Question, 1901-1914.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.

Stasz, Clarice. *The Vanderbilt Women: Dynasty of Wealth, Glamour, and Tragedy.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991._

Steinson, Barbara J.
American Women's Activism in World War I. New York: Garland Publishing, 1982.
Sullivan, Mark. *Our Times: The United States 1900-1925,* 6 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926-35.
Takaki, Ronald. *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in Nineteenth-century America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.
——. *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1989.
Teague, Michael. "Theodore Roosevelt and Alice Hathaway Lee: A New Perspective," *Harvard Library Bulletin,* Vol. XXXIII, Summer 1985, #3, 225-238.
Thompson, Mark. *American Character: The Curious Life of Charles Fletcher Lummis and the Rediscovery of the Southwest.* New York: Arcade Publishing, 2001.
Wagenknecht, Edward. *The Seven Worlds of Theodore Roosevelt.* New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1958.
Wallace, David H. *Sagamore Hill: Sagamore Hill National Historic Site, Oyster Bay, New York.* Harpers Ferry, NY: National Park Service, 1991.
Ward, Geoffrey C. *Before the Trumpet: Young Franklin Roosevelt, 1882-1905.* New York: Harper & Row, 1985.
——. *A First-Class Temperament: The Emergence of Franklin Roosevelt.* New York: Harper & Row, 1989.
White-Hensen, Wendy, and Veronica M. Gillespie, compilers, *The Theodore Roosevelt Association Film Collection.* Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1986.
Wiebe, Robert H. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1967.
Whorton, James. *Crusaders for Fitness: The History of American Health Reformers.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982.
Williams, Vernon J. Jr. *Rethinking Race: Franz Boas and His Contemporaries.* Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 1996.
Wilson, Derek. *The Astors 1763-1992: Landscape with Millionaires.* London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1993.
Ziglar, William Larry. "Negro Opinion of Theodore Roosevelt." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Maine, 1972.

Bibliography

Lewis L. Gould

Abbott, Lawrence F. ed. *The Letters of Archie Butt, Personal Aide to President Roosevelt.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1924.

Amos, James E. *Theodore Roosevelt: Hero to His Valet.* New York: The John Day Co., 1927.

Chessman, G. Wallace. *Governor Theodore Roosevelt: The Albany Apprenticeship, 1898- 1900.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965.

Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990.

Dawbarn, Charles. "Theodore Roosevelt: The Man and President. Impressions of a Visitor to Oyster Bay." *Pall Mall Magazine,* January 1909.

Doran, George H. *Chronicles of Barabbas, 1884-1934.* New York: Rinehart & Co., 1934, 1952.

Garland, Hamlin. "My Neighbor, Theodore Roosevelt." *Everybody's Magazine* 41, October, 1919.

Gilman, Bradley. *Roosevelt The Happy Warrior.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1921.

Gould, Lewis L. "The Price of Fame: Theodore Roosevelt as a Celebrity, 1909-1919," *Lamar Journal of the Humanities,* 10, Fall, 1984.

_____, d. "The Paladin and the Rough Rider: Lord Grey's Account of a Visit with Theodore Roosevelt in 1911." *Durham University Journal* 76, June 1984.

_____. *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt.* Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1991.

_____. *Reform and Regulation: American Politics from Roosevelt to Wilson.* Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, 1996.

Hagedorn, Hermann. *The Bugle That Woke America: The saga of Theodore Roosevelt's last battle for his country.* New York: The John Day Co., 1940.

____. *The Roosevelt Family of Sagamore Hill.* New York: Macmillan, 1954 Harbaugh, William H. *The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Howe, M.A. DeWolfe. *George von Lengerke Meyer: His Life and Public Services.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1920.

Johnson, Karin. "A Visit to Sagamore Hill." *Gourmet,* June 1986.

Leary, John J. Jr. *Talks With T.R. From the Diaries of John J. Leary, Jr.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1920.

Leech, Margaret. *In The Days of McKinley.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959.

Lodge, Henry Cabot, ed. *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918,* 2 vols. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925.

Looker, Earle. *Colonel Roosevelt, Private Citizen.* New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1932.

Low, A. Maurice. "The President's Home." *Saturday Evening Post,* 175. October 11, 1902.

Mowry, George E. *Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement.* Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1946; New York: Hill and Wang, 1960.

Naylor, Natalie A., Douglas Brinkley, John Allen Gable, eds. *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American.* Interlaken, N.Y.: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1992. Needham, Henry Beach. "Theodore Roosevelt—An Outdoor Man," *McClure's Magazine,* 26, January, 1906

Seale, William. *The President's House: A History,* 2 vols. Washington: White House Historical Association, 1986.

Sexton, William. "T.R.: Peacemaker of Oyster Bay," *Newsday,* September 7, 1978, reprinted in *Theodore Roosevelt Association Journal,* IV, Fall, 1978.

Stimson, Henry L. "Personal Reminiscences, 1911-1912, Confidential.," ca. March 1913, Henry L. Stimson Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University.

Thayer, William Roscoe. *Theodore Roosevelt: An Intimate Biography.* Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1919.

Thompson, Charles Willis. "Roosevelt Ten Years After." *The Commonweal,* 9. January 16, 1929.

Newspapers and Journals

Journal, Minneapolis, July 9, 1910.

Leslie's Weekly, September 14, 1905.

The Literary Digest, 52, "Roosevelt or Hughes," April 15, 1916.

____, 41. "Little Journeys to Oyster Bay," July 23, 1910. *Tribune,* New York, June 20, 1910.

____, June 27, 1910.

Letters, Diaries, and Memoranda

Brown, Ashmun to Erastus Brainerd, July 8, 1910, Erastus Brainerd Papers, University of Washington Library, Seattle.

Cortelyou, George B. Memorandum, Long Distance Telephone Conversation, Washington Canton, August 12, 1900, and Long Distance Telephone Conversation, Washington Canton, September 16, 1900, in George B. Cortelyou Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Box 64, Washington, D.C.

Durand, Mortimer to Lord Lansdowne, August 10, 1905, Papers of Lord Lansdowne, F0800/144. Public Record Office, Kew Gardens.

Garfield, James R., Diary. June 23, 1910; February 17, 1911; May 22, 1911, Box 9, James R. Garfield Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

Haskell, H. J. to William Allen White, July 21, 1910, William Allen White Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.

Loeb, William to Albert Shaw, June 30, 1905, Albert Shaw Papers, New York Public Library.

Swift, Lucius B. to Ella Swift, July 8, 1910, Lucius B. Swift Papers, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis.

Lodge, Henry Cabot to Elmer Stevens, June 23, 1916, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

—— to W.S. Bigelow, June 24, 1916, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers.

Needham, Henry Beach to Theodore Roosevelt, ca. July 19, 1905, Reel 56, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, microfilm edition.

Root, Elihu to Henry Cabot Lodge, 29, 1911, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers.

Roosevelt, Ethel to James T. Williams, ca. September 20, 1910, James T. Williams Papers, Duke University Library.

Roosevelt, Theodore to Henry Cabot Lodge, May 20, 1887, in Henry Cabot Lodge, ed. *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge.*

____ to Henry Cabot Lodge, July 31, 1890, in *Selections.*

____ to Kermit Roosevelt, June 13, 1907, in Elting E. Morison, et al., eds., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt,* 8 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951- 1954, VII.

____ to Gifford Pinchot, June 28, 1910, in Morison, VII.

____ to Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., December 5, 1910, in Morison, VII,

____ to Henry Beach Needham, January 9, 1912, in Morison, VII.

____ to Kermit Roosevelt, February 8, 1915, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

____ to Quentin Roosevelt, January 27, 1918, in Morison, VIII.

Wickersham, George W. to Charles Nagel, July 3, 1910, Box 11, Charles Nagel Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University.

About the Authors

H. W. Brands is the Dickson Allen Anderson Centennial Professor of History at The University of Texas at Austin. His books include *The Strange Death of American Liberalism* (2001); *The First American: The Life and Times of Benjamin Franklin* (2000), which was a Pulitzer Prize finalist; *TR: The Last Romantic* (1997); *What America Owes the World: The Struggle for the Soul of American Foreign Policy* (1998); and *The Devil We Knew: Americans and the Cold War* (1993). He is a regular guest on national radio and television programs, and is frequently interviewed by the American and foreign press.

Kathleen Dalton is the Cecil F. P. Bancroft Instructor of History and Social Science and Co-director of the Brace Center for Gender Studies at Phillips Academy, Andover. She is the author of *Theodore Roosevelt: The Strenuous Life* (2002) and *A Portrait of a School: Coeducation at Andover* (1986). She has been a Research Fellow at the Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, a Gilder Lehrman Fellow, and an Instructor at the Harvard Extension School. She was recently awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for research on her next book.

Lewis L. Gould is the Eugene C. Barker Centennial Professor Emeritus at The University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt* (1991), *The Modern American Presidency* (2003), *Grand Old Party: A History of the Republicans* (2003), and *The Most Exclusive Club: A History of the Modern United States Senate* (2005).

Natalie A. Naylor served for more than thirty years on the faculty of Hofstra University, where she taught courses in American history. She was director of Hofstra University's Long Island Studies Institute from its founding in 1985 until her retirement in 2000, and has edited or co-edited several of Hofstra University's conference volumes, including *Theodore Roosevelt: Many-Sided American* (1992). Among the many articles she has published on Long Island history is "Theodore Roosevelt in the Local Arena" (2000). Since 1991 she has been editor of the *Nassau County Historical Society Journal.*

Juliet S. Frey (editor), has a doctorate in linguistics and served as managing editor of Indiana University Publications, and subsequently for several years as director of information resources in the Office of the President, Indiana University. She coauthored with Thomas Ehrlich *The Courage to Inquire: Ideals and Realities in Higher Education (*1995), and is currently a freelance editor.