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*BALLINGER VS. ROUGH RIDER GEORGE CURRY:**THE OTHER FEUD*

ROBERT W. LARSON

FORMER PRESIDENT Theodore Roosevelt was in the midst of a long African safari when a distraught supporter wrote him on October 28, 1909, saying "Taft is burning your soup. You had better come home."¹ It is a matter of opinion whether the portly, sincere man occupying the White House was "burning the soup," but he was in fact struggling with an increasing number of political difficulties, many of them involving former Roosevelt lieutenants. Gifford Pinchot, Roosevelt's close friend and Chief Forester of the federal government, had criticized Richard A. Ballinger, Taft's controversial Secretary of the Interior, thus paving the way for his own dismissal from office two months later. Newspapers periodically exposed serious differences of opinion between President Taft and rebellious progressives within the Republican contingent in Congress. These personal and ideological differences eventually led to an open and bitter break within the Republican party, and had a far-reaching effect upon American political history.

Much has been written about the famous Taft-Roosevelt feud and the consequences it had for the 1912 presidential election. From his Bull Moose third party platform, Teddy Roosevelt flailed mercilessly at the shortcomings of his former friend and was answered in kind by candidate Taft. Woodrow Wilson and the Democratic party easily swept into control of the presidency and both houses of Congress as a result of the split Republican vote.

George Mowry has contended that the feud between Ballinger and Pinchot was the ultimate blow to the already strained relation-

ship between Roosevelt and Taft. After his dismissal by Taft, Pinchot met with Roosevelt at Porto Maurizio. Mowry concludes that, having heard Pinchot's bitter complaints, Roosevelt never again felt the same toward Taft. The "Pinchot conference ended a friendship."² Seeds of discord had already been planted by Taft's failure to reappoint certain men recommended by Roosevelt such as James R. Garfield, Ballinger's predecessor in the Department of the Interior, and diplomat Henry White, but evidently Roosevelt was not seriously disturbed by Taft's independent actions until after Pinchot's dismissal.

Even better known are the sharp differences of opinion between Taft and Roosevelt supporters in Congress during Taft's term, over such issues as the Payne-Aldrich Tariff, the move to dislodge Speaker Cannon, and the Canadian-American reciprocity treaty.

There was another, lesser known, feud between a Taft man and a Roosevelt man which may also have directly affected the Taft-Roosevelt relationship. On October 25, 1909, George Curry, a Roosevelt appointee who had served as governor of New Mexico since 1907, offered his resignation to President Taft, who accepted it.³ The prime factor which motivated both the resignation and its acceptance was Ballinger's uncompromising hostility toward Curry. Taft supported his Secretary of the Interior in this affair in the same way he had backed him in the Pinchot controversy.

Roosevelt's reactions to the Curry-Ballinger clash are not so readily discernible as the repercussions from the Pinchot affair. The well-known friendship between Roosevelt and Pinchot was deeply rooted in their mutual devotion to "The Strenuous Life" and conservation of America's incomparable beauty and rich resources. An ardent supporter and loyal friend to Roosevelt over many years, Governor Curry also had qualities which had earned admiration and friendship in return.

The association began in a roundabout way when Curry met William H. H. Llewellyn, who later became a particularly close Roosevelt pal, at a horse race in Lincoln County, New Mexico, in 1889.⁴ The two men eventually became fast friends and officers in Roosevelt's Rough Rider regiment. Llewellyn's son, Morgan,

served under Curry as a corporal in the Spanish-American War, and in later years Curry and William Llewellyn made trips together to the East to see "the Colonel," as Roosevelt was affectionately called by men who had fought with him. During the Spanish-American War, Curry was captain of Troop H, composed primarily of volunteer New Mexicans. Simply by virtue of being one of the beloved Rough Riders, Curry now had a permanent place in Roosevelt's heart. In recounting the deeds of the Rough Riders, however, Roosevelt singled out Curry, a "New Mexican sheriff of fame,"⁵ along with several other favorite officers.

Undoubtedly Curry's friendship with Llewellyn, who served as a captain in Cuba, gave Curry added favor. The romantic Roosevelt was much drawn to the man he listed in *The Rough Riders* as ranking only just below martyred Bucky O'Neill of Arizona, killed shortly before the charge up Kettle Hill. In his book Roosevelt notes with approval that Llewellyn was "a good citizen, a political leader, and one of the most noted peace officers in the country; he had been shot four times in pitched fights with red marauders and white outlaws."⁶

Llewellyn became Roosevelt's chief source of information concerning the peacetime tribulations of his Rough Riders, and there were many. In one letter to the Colonel, Llewellyn mentions a comrade from Silver City, New Mexico, who was sent to the penitentiary for accidentally killing his sister-in-law while attempting to shoot his wife.⁷ Roosevelt never deserted his Rough Riders regardless of what they did. In 1906, when Taft, serving as Secretary of War, asked Roosevelt for the name of a Yale man who might be named to some post in the Southwest, Roosevelt responded: "I guess Yale '78 has the call, as there seems to be no Rough Rider available and every individual in the Southern District of the Indian Territory (including every Rough Rider) appears to be either under indictment, convicted, or in a position that renders it imperatively necessary that he should be indicted."⁸ Llewellyn is one of the few Rough Riders Roosevelt names in his autobiography.⁹ Roosevelt had enough faith in Llewellyn to appoint him United States attorney for the district of New Mexico

despite his lack of qualifications for the job. Curry said: "I think the President thought more of Llewellyn than any other man in New Mexico."¹⁰

But Curry also had his own special relationship with Roosevelt, which began when the two were comrades in arms. In June 1898 Curry and his troops, on a train bound for Tampa, Florida, were stopped and sidetracked for a period of eighteen hours only eighteen miles from their destination. Captain Curry, concerned by the lack of water for his troops' horses, asked the conductor and engineer to move the train two miles away where there was a small stockyard with a water supply. The trainmen refused, saying this was contrary to their orders. Curry then simply placed them under arrest and used some of his own men with railroad experience to move the train to the stockyard. The adjutant general to whom Curry reported this action angrily recommended that Curry be reprimanded. As Colonel Leonard Wood, Commander of the Rough Riders, was away, the job of reprimanding Curry fell to Roosevelt. But little did the adjutant general realize that to Roosevelt, Curry's resourcefulness represented precisely the sort of bold leadership he most admired. Having read the account of Curry's action, the bespectacled officer looked at Curry and in his distinct Harvard accent said: "Captain, why the hell did you wait eighteen hours?"¹¹ Thus began a friendship that continued as long as the two men lived. The toss of a coin sent Captain Maximiliano Luna's troops to Cuba rather than Captain Curry's, but Curry was waiting at Montauk Point, Long Island, to greet the fever-stricken, but victorious Rough Riders on their return from Cuba.¹²

Curry was one of those who left the Democratic party to follow the magnetic Colonel in his political battles. While Roosevelt was campaigning for the governorship of New York, Curry, on an excursion up the Hudson River to West Point, made his first speech as a Republican in support of Roosevelt's candidacy.¹³ Roosevelt also viewed with favor Curry's service in the Philippines both during and after the insurrection led by Emilio Aguinaldo. He served as a lieutenant in the army, a provost marshal, governor of several provinces, and Police Chief of Manila. While provost marshal at

Niaic on the island of Luzon, Curry met William Howard Taft, who was heading the Philippine Commission. Later, when Taft had been appointed civil governor of the Philippines by President McKinley, he made Curry chief of police in Manila¹⁴ and a cordial relationship developed between the two.

McKinley was assassinated in 1901 and Vice-President Roosevelt assumed the presidency. The new responsibility was a stimulating challenge for his restless, driving energy. But even in the midst of myriad activities he did not forget his friend Curry, serving his country in the best Roosevelt tradition. In 1903 Curry returned from the Philippines, a victim of cholera which had reduced his ordinarily robust six-foot frame to one hundred twenty-five pounds. He was invited to the White House in early January 1904, and spent a pleasant week imparting to an enthusiastic President his intimate knowledge of the Philippine situation. On the evening before his departure, Curry attended a Roosevelt dinner with such guests as Lord Brice, the British ambassador; John J. Pershing, then a colonel; and Bernard S. Rodey, New Mexico's delegate to Congress.¹⁵ Not long after, President Roosevelt arranged for Curry's return to the Philippines as governor of Isabela province. During Curry's second stay in the Philippines he was erroneously reported as missing in action at Macton in the province of Samar. Upon learning that Curry was safe, Roosevelt cabled him: "Heartiest congratulations on your miraculous escape. Keep a stiff upper lip. I am with you."¹⁶

When a vacancy occurred in the governorship of New Mexico, Roosevelt virtually commanded Curry to fill it. Problems within the Territory were a constant headache to the President. The territorial Republican party was torn by strife and frequent charges of corruption and abuse of power were heard. Miguel A. Otero, a strong-willed native governor, had resigned under pressure, and was followed by Herbert J. Hagerman, a career diplomat but an inexperienced politician. Although Roosevelt had hoped Hagerman would remain aloof from the feuding and help bring an end to corruption, Hagerman not only fought with local political leaders, but eventually became involved in a controversial land fraud

scandal which had national reverberations.¹⁷ In February 1907, even before the President asked for Hagerman's resignation, he cabled Curry asking whether he would be interested in the governorship of New Mexico should there be a vacancy. Captain Curry, then governor of the province of Samar in the Philippines, replied that he was engaged in a pacification program of native insurrectionists and could not leave the Philippines at this time. Such an answer could only endear Curry to Roosevelt and in a cable dated April 1, 1907, the President announced: "Have today appointed you as Governor of New Mexico. You must accept."¹⁸ Curry claimed that Taft, then Secretary of War, had recommended him for the post during a cabinet meeting at which he cited Curry's "exceptionally good" record in the Philippines.¹⁹ But a letter to Roosevelt from Major Llewellyn, dated February 27, 1907, urging the President to find a position for Curry in New Mexico, probably influenced Roosevelt's final decision as much as anything else.²⁰

The President did his best to pave the way for his old companion in the difficult New Mexico situation. "Curry is as straight as a string," he wrote an agent from the Justice Department who was investigating the land fraud scandals.²¹ When Curry was criticized personally, Roosevelt was quick to defend him against the charge that he could not "successfully resist the territorial gang" that ran New Mexico.²²

Many people interpreted Curry's appointment as governor as a sure indication that Roosevelt had given up his old plan of joining Arizona and New Mexico as one state and would now support single statehood for New Mexico.²³ Curry was an unwavering advocate of single statehood and claimed in his autobiography that before accepting the governorship he had received a pledge from the President allowing him a "free hand" in working for statehood. "The majority of my regiment were men from New Mexico and Arizona," Roosevelt told Curry. "I would like very much to be able to sign the bill creating the two states before my term as President expires."²⁴ Historian Claud G. Bowers states that Roosevelt's "sudden conversion" to single statehood was "undoubtedly due to the

presence of Governor Curry," which, added to political considerations, made this new presidential policy inevitable.²⁵

During the time Curry served as governor, Roosevelt demonstrated his warm regard for him on several occasions. Early in 1908 the President planned a steamboat trip down the Mississippi River with a group of governors whose states bordered on the great river. Governor Curry and Governor Frank Frantz of Oklahoma, a former Rough Rider officer, were invited by the President to join the party. Two large, luxuriously equipped steamboats waited at St. Louis: *The Mississippi* for the President and his staff, and *The Missouri* for the governors. Curry assumed he would join the other governors and therefore boarded *The Missouri*. But this delayed the entire trip as Roosevelt insisted that Curry sail with him and sent messengers to find his old comrade. *The Mississippi* started its river journey to Memphis only after Curry was safely on board.²⁶

Roosevelt's affection for Curry continued when he was no longer president. Writing to Bronson Cutting, who later became a senator from New Mexico and one of its most powerful politicians, Roosevelt said: "I have great regard for Curry. I have tested him again and again and he is straight as a string. Don't you like him?"²⁷

Curry more than repaid Roosevelt's faith in him over the years. As a member of Congress in 1912, his political loyalty to Roosevelt prompted him to be the first congressman to follow the former President to the Bull Moose side. Campaigning vigorously for the Progressive Party in the mining regions of Pennsylvania and West Virginia, Curry demonstrated that he was an honest, unhypocritical friend as well as a helpful one. George Perkins, the new party chairman, wanted to send \$50,000 to New Mexico to help carry the state for Roosevelt, but Curry told him frankly that the money would be wasted there. Although this caused Curry's progressive allies in New Mexico to criticize him bitterly, the advice proved sound, for Roosevelt carried only two counties in New Mexico, most of the voters preferring Wilson.²⁸

In the twilight of his career, Roosevelt called once more on his tried and true friend. Although he was no longer his former vig-

orous self, the indomitable Teddy wanted to organize and lead a volunteer force to France in the early days of America's participation in World War I. Curry was fifty-seven years old and doubted whether he could pass the military physical examination. Roosevelt was fifty-eight, had virtually lost his sight in one eye, was very nearsighted in the other, and his health had steadily declined since his Brazilian adventure. But this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the two men when they met at Oyster Bay and eagerly discussed plans for a volunteer regiment.

Curry was to recruit four companies in New Mexico and serve as a major. Once back in New Mexico, he filled his quota quickly for, as he wrote Roosevelt, enlistments "poured in from all parts of the state." Major Llewellyn's son volunteered to serve, as well as other Rough Riders including Judge David J. Leahy and George W. Armijo, prominent New Mexicans who were to be commissioned as captains.

A week after Wilson delivered his war message to Congress, Roosevelt spent an hour at the White House with the President and made a dramatic personal appeal for permission to recruit a special division of men imbued with the Rough Rider spirit. The former President carefully explained his plans for recruiting a regiment of volunteers from Arizona, Texas and New Mexico.²⁹ His desire to serve his country on the battlefield once more was so strong that he forgot all pride and past animosity as he literally pleaded for the necessary presidential permission. Wilson, however, probably had no choice but to give a flat "no" to the impractical request.

Curry was certainly proud of his long friendship with a man who was known throughout the world. That the relationship meant a great deal to him is amply testified to in his autobiography. Roosevelt was indeed unusual in his capacity for sincere and unaffected relationships with all sorts of people, both important and unimportant. And there is evidence to indicate that the welfare of his less important friends interested him just as much as that of his friends in influential circles. Archie Butt, who served as military

aide to both Roosevelt and Taft, relates an incident which occurred when Roosevelt was embarking on his famous African safari in late March 1909. Old friends and admirers thronged the New York docks to say goodbye, including Butt, who had remained in the White House to serve Taft. Roosevelt was delighted to see his former aide. "By George, it is good to see you again, Archie." Then followed inquiries about a dozen or so White House staff members including an assistant secretary and a secret service man. "Will Forster remain? How's good old Jimmie Sloan? Is Major Loeffler satisfied? Is Charlie Lee still at the stables?" The exuberant former President then commanded the crowd: "Let all Rough Riders hold up their hands so I can find them." Pushing through the crowd, he shook hands with every Rough Rider present.³⁰

In suggesting that the Curry-Ballinger feud was one strong factor which led to Roosevelt's irrevocable break with Taft, the friendly relations between Curry and Pinchot is a consideration. It is very likely that the link between the Curry-Ballinger feud and the Pinchot-Ballinger feud was strengthened in Roosevelt's mind by the sympathetic support Curry and Pinchot gave each other.

It was not always that way. As governor of New Mexico and as a stockgrower who, like many others, grazed his animals on the public forest reserves, Curry quite naturally disagreed with Pinchot, who, as Roosevelt's conservation-minded Chief Forester, was anxious to extend federal regulations to New Mexico. Governor Curry's ranch was in southern New Mexico, adjacent to Lincoln National Forest. Curry agreed with his neighbors, many of whom were Spanish-speaking, that they had users' rights to graze their stock on the public domain in order to support themselves.³¹ Curry spoke for many in New Mexico when he charged that federal regulation discriminated unfairly against ranchers. A letter to Curry from a Lincoln County resident claimed that Pinchot's policy regarding the use of forest reserves was forcing families to leave their homes because they could not afford to pay the fees charged for use of the forest.³² The problem of users' rights so concerned

Curry that on one occasion he invited local Forest Service officials to accompany him to Lincoln County and see the situation for themselves.

Despite these differences of opinion over the use of public lands, an open break between Curry and Pinchot did not occur until a New Mexico lumber company, Alamogordo Lumber, was accused of having fraudulently acquired twenty thousand acres of the Territory's timber land. Albert B. Fall, attorney general of the Territory, denied that the lumber company had done anything illegal and Curry supported this view. In the midst of the accusations and countercharges Curry rather abruptly offered to resign as governor. Greatly disturbed, Roosevelt refused to accept the resignation. He feared chaos in the affairs of the Territory should Curry vacate the governorship, and, no doubt, did not wish his friendship with the Rough Rider to end in such a way. The President then instructed federal officials in the Territory "not to meddle with territorial officials." In October 1907, the case against the Alamogordo Lumber Company was quietly dropped.³³

By the end of the year, however, the feelings of hostility and distrust between New Mexico's governor and Pinchot had deepened almost to a point of no return. Then Roosevelt decided to intervene and called Curry to Washington in January 1908. During this stay in the capital Curry, accompanied by Solomon Luna, largest sheep raiser in the Territory, and Holm O. Bursum, a territorial Republican leader, met with Pinchot to discuss forest policy and range control. The little conference was so unexpectedly friendly that it resulted in the immediate opening to grazers of several thousand acres of proposed national forest lands south of Albuquerque.

With this meeting, Curry's misunderstanding of the value of conservation gradually began to fade away. He came to regard conservation as a benefit not only for the public but for local landowners as well, and he personally mediated disputes between local forest officials and grazers. He established a Territorial Conservation Commission. Luna, president of the New Mexico Sheep Growers Association, served as a member along with other prominent citi-

zens. Pinchot addressed the territorial legislature in March 1909, and used the opportunity to discuss conservation problems with a delegation of New Mexico stockmen. Curry appointed W. A. F. Jones, a friend of Pinchot, as New Mexico's delegate to the first National Conservation Congress held in August 1909, in Spokane, Washington.³⁴ Curry was proud of his successful effort to reconcile the views of stock growers and federal forest officials in the Territory. "I think our joint efforts have been the means of making the forest service in New Mexico more popular than ever," he confided to Pinchot.³⁵ Curry's actions as governor did in fact prove that the Western view of conservation could be integrated into a federal program of resource management. Historian Elmo R. Richardson states: "Curry's official career clearly exemplified the essential role of the political leader in the satisfactory application of conservation in the West."³⁶

Governor Curry's gradual reshaping in the conservationist mold brought him a step closer to Roosevelt philosophically. As the months of Curry's governorship wore on, he and Pinchot came to feel sympathy for each other on still another score. Both were the recipients of Secretary of the Interior Ballinger's cold animosity. And both discovered that President Taft sided with Ballinger.

Curry's troubles began first. A number of families had filed homestead claims on land around Clovis, New Mexico. Having lived there and established farms and ranches, these people reacted with stunned indignation when the federal land office informed them in 1908 that the lands they occupied were being withdrawn as homestead entries. The only concession to the evicted farmers was an option to file for homestead rights elsewhere on the public domain. A delegation of the homesteaders asked Governor Curry to travel to Washington at their expense and protest the government's action. Curry refused the fee as he was already planning a Washington trip, but he did agree to discuss the matter with officials in the capital.

At that time Ballinger was serving as Roosevelt's Commissioner of Public Lands, so it was he whom Curry approached with his problem. Ballinger's response to the grievances of the homestead-

ers was completely unsympathetic. Curry noted not only his refusal to cooperate, but also his rudeness during the interview. Curry then took his case to Ballinger's superior, Secretary of the Interior James R. Garfield, who was far more understanding but reluctant to overrule his Land Commissioner. He did, however, give his approval to Curry's request to see President Roosevelt about the matter. Roosevelt listened intently, and after hearing Garfield corroborate the facts, he asked his Secretary of the Interior to direct Ballinger to restore the Clovis area to public entry.³⁷

According to Curry, Ballinger never forgot this incident. When Taft made him Secretary of the Interior he used his position to make things as difficult as possible wherever New Mexico was concerned, even impeding the Territory's statehood movement. In February 1909, Curry was honored by the creation of a new county named for him. This gave Ballinger an opportunity to be critical of low value assessments in the county.³⁸ Of all the ways in which Ballinger slighted New Mexico and its governor, however, Curry most resented federal appointments, particularly in the federal land department, which Ballinger made without consulting him.³⁹

Curry finally felt so offended that he submitted his resignation to President Taft. A number of prominent New Mexicans immediately urged Taft not to accept it.⁴⁰ The new President, no doubt anxious to avoid ill feeling and remembering his predecessor's affection for Curry, asked Curry to come to Washington and discuss his problem concerning Ballinger. Curry obliged and found Taft cordial and warm as he revived memories of their common experiences in the Philippines. The massive President earnestly pleaded with Curry to control his impatience and remain in office at least until New Mexico was admitted as a state. Curry agreed, but left himself a way out by telling the President that his personal financial difficulties were so great that he might be forced to resign anyway in order to regain his financial loss.⁴¹

Several months later Curry wrote Ballinger a letter, dated October 15, which followed Interior Department procedure in requesting permission to come to Washington in order to transact

personal business. Ballinger apparently pursued his usual practice of harassing the governor, and replied with a "curt note" asking Curry to state the nature of his business. The angry Curry refused to answer Ballinger's letter and resigned ten days later. His letter of resignation to Taft offered financial reasons only.⁴² Evidently there was another, longer letter to Taft, for in his letter informing Ballinger of Curry's action, the President remarked: "I don't think it necessary to pay any attention to the charges."⁴³

Curry had clashed with Ballinger and lost because Taft supported his controversial secretary. Two and a half months later Pinchot also found himself unable to reconcile his differences with Ballinger. His dismissal from office in January 1910, following a bitter, public dispute with Ballinger, prompted a warm letter from Curry, recalling their earlier disagreements and admitting that he had been "absolutely wrong."⁴⁴ Curry's strong emotional commitment to his old chief and his allies was even more clearly revealed in a letter he wrote to another friend about the same time. He expressed relief to be retiring as governor, for he was now completely free to back Roosevelt in the growing Republican party split and lend full support should the Colonel decide to run for the presidency in 1912.⁴⁵

Pinchot's reaction to his loss of office was, however, far from the equanimity displayed by Curry. The tall, aesthetic-looking for-ester, who was described by Archie Butt as being a member of "that class who see evil motives in everyone else's acts save those few who agree with them. . . ,"⁴⁶ did not take his dismissal lying down. Convinced that he was defending the nation's natural treasures from spoilers, Pinchot went abroad to see Roosevelt, catching up with the touring celebrity at his sister-in-law's villa in Porto Maurizio, Italy. Pinchot spent the entire day of April 11, 1910, telling Roosevelt his version of the controversy. To support his position he had letters from Albert J. Beveridge, Jonathan DOLLiver, and William Allen White.⁴⁷ Undoubtedly he told of Curry's resignation. Ballinger's role in losing a governor in New Mexico was too much like the role he had played in Pinchot's own case for

him to forget it. Pinchot probably also instinctively knew that Roosevelt's sentiments were sure to be aroused by an adversity that befell a Rough Rider companion and friend.

We shall never know precisely how Teddy Roosevelt reacted to the news of Curry's misfortune. Pinchot's troubles were infinitely more important politically. Moreover, the letters he brought were critical of the administration on important issues such as the Payne-Aldrich tariff. But Curry's claim on the former President's emotions was sure to play some part in Roosevelt's growing disillusionment with his successor. We do know that Roosevelt and Curry continued to be close friends and political associates in the important months that followed, while a total break with Taft and his administration became increasingly inevitable.

When Roosevelt ended his grand tour at New York harbor on June 18, 1910, Curry was among the many people waiting for their colorful hero's return. The press drew an historical parallel, referring to the tumultous arrival as the "Return from Elba."⁴⁸ It was also the ninety-fifth anniversary of Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo. No doubt Teddy felt more like a victorious Napoleon than a defeated one on that day as he greeted and waved to thousands of admirers. Eighty ships, including a battleship and six torpedo boat destroyers, participated in a naval parade up the Hudson River to Fifty-ninth Street and down to the Battery where an elated Roosevelt disembarked to hear a speech of welcome by New York City's mayor.⁴⁹ Roosevelt's first personal remark was a cheerful "Hello Gifford."⁵⁰ Pinchot rode in one of fourteen carriages which moved up Fifth Avenue in a gigantic parade featuring two thousand veterans of the Spanish-American War and an American flag said to be the largest then in existence.⁵¹

Curry rode proudly with the fully uniformed Rough Riders. Major Llewellyn and Colonel Alexander O. Brodie, former governor of the Territory of Arizona, were among them. The Rough Riders were divided into an Eastern delegation, composed primarily of diplomats and stockbrokers, and a less illustrious but far more interesting Western group.⁵² The Westerners had taken a

special train from St. Louis and had stopped in Washington for a visit with President Taft before proceeding to New York.⁵³ In spite of this Taft found himself completely out of the limelight during Roosevelt's arrival.

At the end of the parade route the Rough Riders drew their horses into a squadron on the Fifty-ninth Street Plaza. Roosevelt's carriage stopped there and the Colonel got out to greet his boys enthusiastically. Curry was singled out with what one reporter called "an especially hearty greeting." "Oh, my old friend," smiled Roosevelt, and Curry returned the greeting by leaning down from his mount and saying how delighted "the boys were to see him back home safe and sound." With warm nostalgia the Colonel said "Boys, you certainly have a claim on me."⁵⁴ At that moment he must have seemed hardly older than in the exciting days of 1898.

It was a sentimental time for the former President. Four days after his return he attended a Rough Rider reunion at the Harvard Club with about one hundred of his old comrades.⁵⁵ But looking back, one feels that these carefree days of jovial friendship had a bittersweet flavor, for they were soon to be followed by the final, bitter break between Taft and Roosevelt and by serious political upheaval resulting from the disruption of the Republican party. A letter from Ballinger to Roosevelt gives a hint of the trouble in the air. Although he congratulates his former boss upon his safe return, Ballinger sends regrets that "circumstances" do not allow him "the honor of joining your other friends in personally greeting you on your arrival in New York."⁵⁶

The rough-and-tumble world of politics was tense and exciting in the crucial years following Roosevelt's return in 1910. Curry and Roosevelt maintained close contact with one another, working particularly hard to achieve statehood for New Mexico. Roosevelt wrote his old and influential friend Senator Lodge that Curry would probably call on him to discuss the statehood bill. "He is the salt of the earth. . . . It is possible, by the way, if things go as I hope that Governor Curry will be back as a Congressman, or perhaps as a colleague if New Mexico comes in as a State."⁵⁷ In

January 1912, New Mexico was finally admitted to the Union. President Taft, who had given his full support to the Territory's aspirations, signed the statehood proclamation.

Roosevelt was delighted when Curry was elected one of the new state's two congressmen. "I'm awfully pleased that Curry . . . got through," he wrote Llewellyn.⁵⁸ Shortly before the Republican national convention of 1912, Roosevelt had a personal conference with Curry, during which the two men analyzed the political situation in New Mexico, especially, no doubt, its effect on Roosevelt's candidacy.⁵⁹ Knowing that he faced stiff opposition from the Old Guard in New Mexico, Curry immediately left Washington to journey home and campaign personally for the former President's nomination. At the state Republican convention Curry worked diligently with Judge David Leahy and Holm Bursum, hoping to insure at least an evenly split delegation to represent New Mexico in Chicago. But at the national convention Curry and his allies were deeply disappointed when two of the three delegates pledged to Roosevelt deserted to join the Taft forces, leaving Bursum as the state's sole Roosevelt delegate.⁶⁰ When Roosevelt split the party by walking out, Rough Rider Curry followed his Colonel out of the party without a moment's hesitation. With New Mexico's ex-governor Otero, he issued a call in his state for the formation of a new party and the election of delegates to the Progressive national convention which would meet in Chicago on August 5.⁶¹

The year nineteen sixteen again found Curry working with great enthusiasm for Roosevelt's return to the presidency. He had returned to the Republican fold along with Roosevelt, and was elected permanent chairman of the New Mexico convention which chose delegates to the national convention. He attended the convention, again held in Chicago, as an ardent but unsuccessful supporter of Roosevelt. The party's choice of Charles Evans Hughes as standard bearer was disappointing, but when Roosevelt passed through Albuquerque as he campaigned for Hughes, it did give Curry a chance to visit with his friend.⁶²

Right up to his death in 1919, Roosevelt knew that in Curry he had a man he could count on. The friendship grew from its Rough Rider beginnings into a solid, enduring relationship of genuine affection and mutual support. In varying capacities as soldier, political leader in the Philippines, Governor of New Mexico, Pinchot's ally in conservation, and the first congressman to come out for Roosevelt in the 1912 campaign, Curry's simple virtues—honesty, courage, loyalty—justified Roosevelt's faith in him again and again. Since the friendship between the two men was as warm after the clash Curry had with Ballinger as it had been before, it seems impossible not to believe that Curry's difficulties with Taft's administration did influence Roosevelt's feelings for Taft. To a Roosevelt perplexed by his chosen successor's conduct on several other matters, the Curry-Ballinger clash was "the other feud."

NOTES

1. J. E. Forbes to Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.
2. George E. Mowry, *The Era of Theodore Roosevelt and the Birth of Modern America* (New York, 1958), p. 269.
3. Letter of resignation reproduced in George Curry, *George Curry, 1861-1947: An Autobiography*, ed. by H. B. Hening (Albuquerque, 1958), p. 247.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
5. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Rough Riders* (New York, 1926), p. 17.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Henry F. Pringle, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography* (New York, 1931), p. 199.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 198.
9. Theodore Roosevelt, *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (New York, 1920), p. 124.

10. Curry, p. 209.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 124-25.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 126-27.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 154, 159-60.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 171-72.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 184.
17. For details on the difficulties encountered by Hagerman see Chapter 15 of Robert W. Larson's *New Mexico's Quest for Statehood, 1846-1912*, to be published by the University of New Mexico Press.
18. Curry, pp. 186-87.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
20. General Correspondence Files, 1907-53, Department of Interior, National Archives, Record Group 48 (cited hereafter as NA-RG 48). In his letter Llewellyn only sought two minor positions in New Mexico for his old comrade: a clerk in one of the six district courts in the Territory or Chief of the Sixth Field District General Land Office.
21. Roosevelt to Ormsby McHarg, July 31, 1907, Roosevelt Papers.
22. Roosevelt to Charles Bonaparte, Aug. 15, 1907, Roosevelt Papers.
23. Albuquerque *Evening Citizen*, Oct. 4, 1907, Marion Dargan Papers, Special Collections, University of New Mexico Library.
24. Curry, p. 202.
25. Claud G. Bowers, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era* (Cambridge, 1932), pp. 267-68.
26. Curry, pp. 214-15.
27. Roosevelt to Cutting, June 14, 1912, in Elting E. Morison, ed., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, 8 vols. (Cambridge, 1951-54), vol. 7, pp. 561-62.
28. Curry, pp. 269-70.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 283-84.
30. Butt to Mrs. Lewis F. Butt, March 24, 1909, in Archibald W. Butt, *Taft and Roosevelt: The Intimate Letters of Archie Butt, Military Aide*, 2 vols. (Garden City, N. Y., 1930), vol. 1, pp. 28-29.
31. Elmo R. Richardson, "George Curry and the Politics of Forest Conservation in New Mexico," NMHR, vol. 33 (1958), pp. 278-79.
32. J. W. Owen to Curry, Jan. 22, 1908, *ibid.*, p. 279.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 280-82.
35. Curry to Pinchot, Dec. 22, 1909, *ibid.*, p. 283.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 284.
37. Curry, pp. 225-26.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 226-27.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 242.
40. J. M. Cunningham, president of the San Miguel National Bank of East Las Vegas, to Taft, March 22, 1909; Secundino Romero of East Las Vegas to Taft, March 22, 1909; I. Sparks of Santa Fe to Taft, March 22, 1909; Harry W. Kelly, president of Gross-Kelly Company of East Las Vegas, to Taft, March 22, 1909; George S. Klock of Albuquerque to Taft, March 23, 1909. NA-RG 48. Ballinger was forced to acknowledge letters protesting Curry's resignation. See Ballinger to D. W. Snyder of Clayton, April 5, 1909, and Ballinger to a Gallegos, April 12, 1909. NA-RG 48. Curry's account of the resignation is rather garbled, implying that he resigned in May, but Richardson cites a letter from Curry to Taft, dated March 22, in which Curry resigned because Ballinger refused him permission to come to Washington to urge the adoption of a statehood bill and to discuss conservation matters. See Richardson, p. 283.
41. Curry, pp. 242-43.
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 246-47.
43. Nov. 15, 1909. Copies of the letter are in the William Howard Taft Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, and in NA-RG 48.
44. Dec. 22, 1909, in Richardson, p. 283.
45. Curry to C. Lyon, Jan. 11, 1910, *ibid.*, pp. 283-84. Although Curry resigned on Oct. 25, 1909, his resignation was not to take effect until Feb. 28, 1910.
46. Butt to Mrs. Lewis F. Butt, Sept. 6, 1909, in Butt, p. 194.
47. William Henry Harbaugh, *The Life and Times of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York, 1966), p. 364. Earlier, a week before his dismissal, Pinchot had written a long letter to Roosevelt indicting the Taft Administration on sixteen points. See Gifford Pinchot, *Breaking New Ground* (New York, 1947), pp. 498-501.
48. *New York Times*, June 18, 1910. Also called the "back from Elba" movement. See *ibid.*, June 10, 1910, and Butt to Mrs. Lewis F. Butt, Feb. 9, 1910, in Butt, p. 280.
49. *New York Times*, June 17 and 18, 1910.
50. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, June 19, 1910, in George E. Mowry, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Progressive Movement* (Madison, 1947), p. 120.
51. *New York Times*, June 18, 1910.
52. *Ibid.*, June 11, 1910.
53. *Ibid.*, June 16, 1910.
54. *Ibid.*, June 19, 1910.
55. Arthur F. Cosby to Roosevelt, June 22, 1910, Roosevelt Papers. Cosby, a Rough Rider, was also secretary of the Roosevelt Reception Committee of the City of New York headed by Cornelius Vanderbilt.
56. June 18, 1910, Roosevelt Papers.

57. May 23, 1911, in Morison, vol. 7, pp. 269-70.
58. Nov. 14, 1911, *ibid.*, p. 435. Roosevelt's continuing interest in Llewellyn is evident as he encouraged the Major in his unsuccessful effort to become speaker of the lower house of New Mexico's first state legislature.
59. Roosevelt to Bronson Cutting, June 14, 1912, *ibid.*, pp. 561-62.
60. Curry, p. 268.
61. Roosevelt to Alford W. Cooley, July 10, 1912, in Morison, vol. 7, p. 575.
62. Curry, pp. 281-83.