This special edition of

THE WINNING OF
THE WEST

VOLUME I

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT

has been privately printed
for the members of
The Frontier Classics Library
INTRODUCTION

I fear my “purpose” in writing The Winning of the West must be gathered by the reader himself; I can only say that it seemed to me well worth while to write of the deeds of the frontiersmen, and of their victories, sufferings and defeats, as they conquered the continent which we inherit, and laid broad and deep, the foundation of the mightiest of all Republics.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

handwritten inscription in a first-edition copy

The underlying premise of Theodore Roosevelt’s monumental four-volume narrative, The Winning of the West, is that for the American people, the direction of freedom has always been westward. Initially, because of religious persecution, economic hardship, or simply a desire to start life anew, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, hundreds of thousands of Englishmen journeyed west to inhabit the American colonies and create the new and unique political concept we now know as American freedom. Beginning in the late seventeenth century and continuing through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, yet another migration occurred, as large numbers of colonists traveled west from the Atlantic seaboard to occupy the vast western lands then sparsely occupied by Native Americans.

Roosevelt reasons that to come to a full and complete understanding of the development of American freedom, one should examine both these migrations along a timeline consisting of five principal cornerstones:
First, in the seventeenth century, the establishment of British colonies along America's Atlantic coast.

Second, in the late eighteenth century, the colonists' dissatisfaction with Great Britain's colonial policies, leading to the American Revolution, victory over the British, and independence.

Third, the Founding Fathers' formation of a republican government under the provisions of the U.S. Constitution in 1787.

Fourth, in the early 1860s, the Emancipation Proclamation, immediately followed by Union victory in the Civil War, which put an end to slavery and preserved the Union.

Fifth, the geographical circumstance that west of America's Allegheny and Appalachian mountains there lay a huge expanse of relatively uninhabited and underdeveloped land, to which — beginning in the late seventeenth century and continuing through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whether through missionary fervor, to take advantage of the opportunity to homestead on free land; to begin a new career in hunting, trapping, mining, farming, or cattle raising; or simply to shake off the restraints of the structured society of the Atlantic seaboard — hundreds of thousands of colonists migrated.

For Roosevelt, the underpinnings of American freedom were therefore not only philosophical; they were geographical, in that only because of the existence of huge tracts of

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1 These migrations became considerably larger after the American victory in the Revolutionary War and the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, when Britain ceded to the United States control of lands west of the Appalachians (including the present-day states of Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, and Mississippi); as well as after the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, in which the United States acquired from France a vast area of 828,800 square miles of western land (today's Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Nebraska, plus large portions of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, New Mexico, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and Louisiana); the acquisition of Texas in 1845; the acquisition of California, Nevada, and Utah and parts of Arizona and several other states in the Mexican Cession of 1848; and the acquisition of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho and parts of Montana and Wyoming in the Oregon Treaty of 1846.
western land ripe for habitation and development could the unique concept of American freedom be nurtured and fully developed into political maturity. For Roosevelt, the frontier was freedom:

The Americans began their work of western conquest . . . at the moment when they sprang into national life. It has been their great work ever since. All other questions save those of the preservation of the Union itself and of the emancipation of the blacks have been of subordinate importance when compared with the great question of how rapidly and how completely they were to subjugate that part of their continent lying between the eastern mountains and the Pacific.

*The Winning of the West* is Theodore Roosevelt's ambitious and compendious examination of the nation's westward expansion from its trans-Appalachian frontier to the Pacific Ocean, from the beginnings of the French and Indian Wars through the end of the nineteenth century. He projects a sweeping drama, well documented and filled with accounts of Americans fighting Indian confederacies north and south while dealing with the machinations of the British, French, and Spanish and their sympathizers.

Long before and well after the Revolutionary War, English, French, and Spanish settlers and armed forces occupied frontier lands outside the American colonies. The province of Quebec, then called Canada, was initially settled by the French. Subsequently, England won from France the lands of Canada as well as America's Ohio Valley. France ceded to its Spanish allies Louisiana, including the territory vaguely bounded by the Mississippi River all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Spain had itself lost to England both Floridas (as the coastal regions between Georgia and Louisiana were called).

This was a dynamic time, a time characterized by confusion and change. It was only after the American colonists' increasing dominance over all these lands (with the exception of Canada) that the situation resolved itself into the simple task of conquering the Indians.
The focus of volume 1 is on early encounters between American colonists and Native Americans and between the colonists and British and French settlers along the western borders of the original colonies: in the north, those areas immediately west of the Alleghenies, and in the south, those areas immediately west of the Appalachians, as American colonists, moving southwest, west, and northwest, began occupying the land. Roosevelt wanted to show how backwoodsmen such as Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton, followed by hardy pioneer settlers, gave the United States eventual claim to land west of the Appalachians and Alleghenies. Heroism and treachery among both the whites and the Indians can be seen in his story of a people on the move. By force and by treaty, the new nation was established.

Roosevelt wrote The Winning of the West after a series of political defeats and the loss of half his capital in a ranching venture in North Dakota. The work is primarily based on archival material documented by the United States government dating back to 1774. It clearly embodies Roosevelt's attitudes toward expansion that he demonstrated after becoming president in 1901.

The Winning of the West is Roosevelt's finest historical work. According to historian John Milton Cooper Jr., it "remains one of the greatest works of western history. . . . [It] reflects the character of its author. It is sometimes quirky and full of prejudices and blind spots, but it is cultivated and sweeping in its learning and encompassing in its judgments."

The Winning of the West was immensely successful upon its first appearance, selling out within one month of publication, and it has since become a classic of American literature. Volume 1 is an exact facsimile of the 1904 edition.

Les Adams
Chairman, Editorial Board

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA
OCTOBER 1, 2010
THE WINNING OF THE WEST

VOLUME I
THIS BOOK
IS DEDICATED, WITH HIS PERMISSION
TO
FRANCIS PARKMAN
TO WHOM AMERICANS WHO FEEL A PRIDE IN THE
PIONEER HISTORY OF THEIR COUNTRY
ARE SO GREATLY INDEBTED
"O strange New World that yet wast never young,
Whose youth from thee by gripin' need was wrung,
Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed
Was prowled roun' by the Injun's cracklin' tread,
And who grew'st strong thru shifts an' wants an' pains,
Nursed by stern men with empires in their brains,
Who saw in vision their young Ish'mel strain
With each hard hand a vassal ocean's mane;
Thou skilled by Freedom and by gret events
To pitch new states ez Old World men pitch tents,
Thou taught by fate to know Jehovah's plan,
Thet man's devices can't unmake a man.

Oh, my friends, thank your God, if you have one, that he
'Twixt the Old World and you set the gulf of a sea,
Be strong-backed, brown-handed, upright as your pines,
By the scale of a hemisphere shape your designs."

—LOWELL
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PREFA CE

MUCH of the material on which this work is based is to be found in the archives of the American Government, which date back to 1774, when the first Continental Congress assembled. The earliest sets have been published complete up to 1777, under the title of "American Archives," and will be hereafter designated by this name. These early volumes contain an immense amount of material, because in them are to be found memoranda of private individuals and many of the public papers of the various Colonial and State governments, as well as those of the Confederation. The documents from 1789 on—no longer containing any papers of the separate States—have also been gathered and printed under the heading of "American State Papers;" by which term they will be hereafter referred to.

The mass of public papers coming in between these two series, and covering the period extending from 1776 to 1789, have never been published, and in great part have either never been examined or else have been examined in the most cursory manner. The original documents are all in the Department of State at Washington, and for convenience will be referred to as "State Department MSS." They
are bound in two or three hundred large volumes; exactly how many I can not say, because, though they are numbered, yet several of the numbers themselves contain from two or three to ten or fifteen volumes apiece. The volumes to which reference will most often be made are the following:

No. 15. Letters of Huntington.
No. 16. Letters of the Presidents of Congress.
No. 18. Letter-Book B.
No. 27. Reports of Committees on the War Office. 1776 to 1778.
No. 30. Reports of Committees.
No. 32. Reports of Committees of the States and of the Week.
No. 50. Letters and papers of Oliver Pollock. 1777-1792.
No. 56. Indian affairs.
No. 73. Georgia State Papers.
No. 81. Vol. 2. Reports of Secretary John Jay.
No. 120. Vol. 2. American Letters.
No. 125. Negotiation Book.
No. 136. Vol. 2. Reports of Board of Treasury.
No. 147. Vol. 2. Reports of Board of War.
No. 147. Vol. 5. Reports of Board of War.
No. 147. Vol. 6. Reports of Board of War.
No. 149. Vol. 1. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 149. Vol. 2. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 149. Vol. 3. Letters and Reports from B. Lincoln, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 1. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 2. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 150. Vol. 3. Letters of H. Knox, Secretary at War.
No. 163. Letters of Generals Clinton, Nixon, Nicola, Morgan, Harmar, Muhlenberg.
No. 180. Reports of Secretary of Congress.

Besides these numbered volumes, the State Department contains others, such as Washington's letter-book, marked War Department 1792, '3, '4, '5. There are also a series of numbered volumes of "Letters to Washington," Nos. 33 and 49, containing reports from Geo. Rogers Clark. The Jeffer-
son papers, which are likewise preserved here, are bound in several series, each containing a number of volumes. The Madison and Monroe papers, also kept here, are not yet bound; I quote them as the Madison MSS. and the Monroe MSS.

My thanks are due to Mr. W. C. Hamilton, Asst. Librarian, for giving me every facility to examine the material.

At Nashville, Tennessee, I had access to a mass of original matter in the shape of files of old newspapers, of unpublished letters, diaries, reports, and other manuscripts. I was given every opportunity to examine these at my leisure, and indeed to take such as were most valuable to my own home. For this my thanks are especially due to Judge John M. Lea, to whom, as well as to my many other friends in Nashville, I shall always feel under a debt on account of the unfailing courtesy with which I was treated. I must express my particular acknowledgments to Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell. The Nashville manuscripts, etc., of which I have made most use are the following:

The Robertson MSS., comprising two large volumes, entitled the "Correspondence, etc., of Gen'l James Robertson," from 1784 to 1814. They belong to the library of Nashville University; I had some difficulty in finding the second volume, but finally succeeded.

The Campbell MSS., consisting of letters and memoranda to and from different members of the Campbell family who were prominent in the Revo-
lution; dealing for the most part with Lord Dunmore's war, the Cherokee wars, the battle of King’s Mountain, land speculations, etc. They are in the possession of Mr. Lemuel R. Campbell, who most kindly had copies of all the important ones sent me, at great personal trouble.

Some of the Sevier and Jackson papers, the original MS. diaries of Donelson on the famous voyage down the Tennessee and up the Cumberland, and of Benj. Hawkins while surveying the Tennessee boundary, memoranda of Thos. Washington, Overton, and Dunham, the earliest files of the Knoxville Gazette, from 1791 to 1795, etc. These are all in the library of the Tennessee Historical Society.

For original matter connected with Kentucky, I am greatly indebted to Col. Reuben T. Durrett, of Louisville, the founder of the "Filson Club," which has done such admirable historical work of late years. He allowed me to work at my leisure in his library, the most complete in the world on all subjects connected with Kentucky history. Among other matter, he possesses the Shelby MSS., containing a number of letters to and from, and a dictated autobiography of, Isaac Shelby; MS. journals of Rev. James Smith, during two tours in the western country in 1785 and ’95; early files of the "Kentucke Gazette"; books owned by the early settlers; papers of Boone, and George Rogers Clark; MS. notes on Kentucky by George Bradford, who settled there in 1779; MS. copy of the record book of Col. John Todd, the first governor of the Illinois
country after Clark's conquest; the McAfee MSS., consisting of an Account of the First Settlement of Salt River, the Autobiography of Robert McAfee, and a Brief Memorandum of the Civil and Natural History of Kentucky; MS. autobiography of Rev. William Hickman, who visited Kentucky in 1776, etc.

I am also under great obligations to Col. John Mason Brown of Louisville, another member of the Filson Club, for assistance rendered me; particularly for having sent me six bound volumes of MSS., containing the correspondence of the Spanish Minister Gardoqui, copied from the Spanish archives.

At Lexington I had access to the Breckenridge MSS., through the kindness of Mr. Ethelbert D. Warfield; and to the Clay MSS., through the kindness of Miss Lucretia Hart Clay. I am particularly indebted to Miss Clay for her courtesy in sending me many of the most valuable old Hart and Benton letters, depositions, accounts, and the like.

The Blount MSS. were sent to me from California by the Hon. W. D. Stephens of Los Angeles, although I was not personally known to him; an instance of courtesy and generosity, in return for which I could do nothing save express my sincere appreciation and gratitude, which I take this opportunity of publicly repeating.

The Gates MSS., from which I drew some important facts not hitherto known concerning the King's Mountain campaign, are in the library of the New York Historical Society.
pioneers remembered in their old age. The later historians, for the most part, merely follow these two. In consequence, the mass of original material, in the shape of official reports and contemporary letters, contained in the Haldimand MSS., the Campbell MSS., the McAfee MSS., the Gardoqui MSS., the State Department MSS., the Virginia State Papers, etc., not only cast a flood of new light upon this early history, but necessitate its being entirely rewritten. For instance, they give an absolutely new aspect to, and in many cases completely reverse, the current accounts of all the Indian fighting, both against the Cherokees and the Northwestern tribes; they give for the first time a clear view of frontier diplomacy, of the intrigues with the Spaniards, and even of the mode of life in the backwoods, and of the workings of the civil government. It may be mentioned that the various proper names are spelt in so many different ways that it is difficult to know which to choose. Even Clark is sometimes spelt Clarke, while Boone was apparently indifferent as to whether his name should or should not contain the final silent e.. As for the original Indian titles, it is often quite impossible to give them even approximately; the early writers often wrote the same Indian words in such different ways that they bear no resemblance whatever to one another.

In conclusion I would say that it has been to me emphatically a labor of love to write of the great deeds of the border people. I am not blind to their
The Virginia State Papers have recently been published, and are now accessible to all.

Among the most valuable of the hitherto untouched manuscripts which I have obtained are the Haldimand papers, preserved in the Canadian archives at Ottawa. They give, for the first time, the British and Indian side of all the Northwestern fighting; including Clark’s campaigns, the siege of Boonesborough, the battle of the Blue Licks, Crawford’s defeat, etc. The Canadian archivist, Mr. Douglass Brymner, furnished me copies of all I needed with a prompt courtesy for which I am more indebted than I can well express.

I have been obliged to rely mainly on these collections of early documents as my authorities, especially for that portion of Western history prior to 1783. Excluding the valuable, but very brief, and often very inaccurate, sketch which Filson wrote down as coming from Boone, there are no printed histories of Kentucky earlier than Marshall’s in 1812; while the first Tennessee history was Haywood’s, in 1822. Both Marshall and Haywood did excellent work; the former was an able writer, the latter was a student, and (like the Kentucky historian Mann Butler) a sound political thinker, devoted to the Union, and prompt to stand up for the right. But both of them, in dealing with the early history of the country beyond the Alleghanies, wrote about matters that had happened from thirty to fifty years before, and were obliged to base most of their statements on tradition or on what the
manifold shortcomings, nor yet am I ignorant of their many strong and good qualities. For a number of years I spent most of my time on the frontier, and lived and worked like any other frontiersman. The wild country in which we dwelt and across which we wandered was in the far West; and there were of course many features in which the life of a cattleman on the Great Plains and among the Rockies differed from that led by a backwoodsman in the Alleghany forests a century before. Yet the points of resemblance were far more numerous and striking. We guarded our herds of branded cattle and shaggy horses, hunted bear, bison, elk, and deer, established civil government, and put down evil-doers, white and red, on the banks of the Little Missouri and among the wooded, precipitous foothills of the Bighorn, exactly as did the pioneers who a hundred years previously built their log-cabins beside the Kentucky or in the valleys of the Great Smokies. The men who have shared in the fast vanishing frontier life of the present feel a peculiar sympathy with the already long-vanished frontier life of the past.

Theodore Roosevelt.

Sagamore Hill, May, 1889