

# Enthusiasm Story

## THE COLONEL OF KETTLE HILL

“CHAAAAARGE!!” Bullets flew in every direction as the Rough Riders sprang from their cover on the San Juan Heights. It was June 1898, and American troops were fighting the Spanish army on the island of Cuba. Spanish troops had dug in on top of one of the hills and their constant fire forced the American troops to seek cover.

The Rough Riders were a group of volunteers led by Colonel Theodore Roosevelt. A young soldier ran up to the colonel and handed him a note that said, “Take your men and attack Kettle Hill!” Theodore knew how important it was to capture that hill for the Americans to make any progress.

He jumped up and shouted, “Follow me, men!” Mounting his horse, he charged up the hill.

As the Spanish troops fired their guns, Theodore swung his hat and shouted to his men as they charged through tall grass and over rocks. Bullets whizzed by as he encouraged his men. As the Rough Riders reached the top of the hill, the Spanish troops retreated. The Rough Riders were victorious!

Theodore was not always this strong and energetic. As a child, he was often sick. One day his father had an idea. What Theodore needed was exercise! Theodore and his parents set up a routine, and every day he worked hard to build his muscles. Soon he was playing outside and doing things he could never do before. He ran through the woods, climbed mountains, and played lots of sports.

One of his favorite activities was hunting. On one trip, his guide caught a bear and brought it to him to shoot. But Theodore didn’t want to shoot an animal that wasn’t wild. A newspaper reporter wrote a story with a cartoon about Theodore sparing the bear. People liked the story, and someone made a stuffed bear and called it a “Teddy Bear”!

Theodore Roosevelt eventually became the 26th president of the United States. He was known for his cheerful smile, hearty laugh, and energetic personality. Despite his busy schedule and many responsibilities, his enthusiasm never changed from that day as Colonel of Kettle Hill.

