

OKLAHOMA  
TERRITORY

## TERRITORIAL TALES

Bits of  
History  
Before  
Statehood

INDIAN  
TERRITORY

SEP 25 1982

# Teddy Roosevelt Told of Wolf Hunt

President Theodore Roosevelt, leader of the Rough Riders in the Spanish-American war and signer of the proclamation that made Oklahoma a state in 1907, had other connections with the state.

He was famous for his hunting trips to Africa, but he made a well-publicized wolf hunt in Oklahoma in April of 1905.

Oklahoma City was the scene of a reunion of "Roosevelt's Rough Riders." That site was chosen because several members of the famous military unit had settled in the territory. They staged a steer-throwing, cowboy whoopee and T.R. loved it. Territorial Gov. Frank Frantz had been one of the Rough Riders and had been appointed by Roosevelt.

Roosevelt also was taken to Frederick for a wolf hunt that was featured in newspaper headlines across the country. The party included John Abernathy, a professional wolf hunter who had a pack of greyhounds; Burke Burnett; and the famous Quanah Parker.

Roosevelt described the hunt as follows in one of his books:

"Abernathy, with aid of his perfectly trained horse, was helping his one remaining greyhound catch the coyote.

"There was a scuffle, then a yelp from the greyhound as the wolf bit it. The hound let go and jumped back a few feet, and at the same moment Abernathy leaped off his horse and sprang on top of the wolf. He held the reins with one hand and thrust the other into the wolf's mouth, jamming his hand down cross-wise between the jaws, seizing the lower jaw and bending it down so that the wolf could not bite him. With his knees he kept the wolf from using its fore-paws to break the hold, until it gave up struggling. ...

"I was not 20 yards distant at the time and as I leaped off the horse he was sitting placidly on the live wolf, his hand between its jaws. It was a remarkable feat of the kind as I have ever seen."