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# THE MURALS

IN THE

## THEODORE ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL HALL



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THE MURALS  
IN THE  
THEODORE ROOSEVELT  
MEMORIAL HALL

*Written by the Artist*

WILLIAM ANDREW MACKAY

*and*

A. A. CANFIELD

*of the New York State De-  
partment of Public Works*

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AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

# The Murals in the Theodore

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## ROOSEVELT'S EXPLORATIONS IN

THE murals in the Roosevelt Memorial Hall were painted by William Andrew Mackay and are symbolical representations of notable incidents in the career of Theodore Roosevelt. The subjects are: "Roosevelt's Ex-

ploration in Africa (opposite the entrance door of the Memorial), "The Building of the Panama Canal" (to the right as one enters the Memorial), and "The Signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth" (to the left of the entrance).

# Roosevelt Memorial Hall



## AFRICA, 1910

↑ *[Over the Doorway]* Against a background of a map of northern Africa is depicted the dispersal of the sons of Noah—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—after the voyage of the Ark. Ham, having shown disrespect to Noah, was

cursed by his father and destined with his son and all his descendants to perpetual slavery. In the center appear Ham and his wife and his brothers Shem and Japheth at the parting of their ways. Beyond the lefthand edge of this illustration, the mural displays snow-capped Mount Kenya, with a fringe of bamboo forest on its slopes.



← [Left center] Theodore Roosevelt stands above a Nubian lion and lioness, flanked by his gun bearers. In this group are several birds which were added to the collections of the American Museum and the National Museum in Washington. The trophies are being studied by a Girl and Boy Scout. Theodore Roosevelt was one of the organizers of the Boy Scouts. Science is represented by a man in academic gown.

↓ [Bottom left] The shield combines symbolically Roosevelt's port of entry into Africa, Mombasa, indicated by the device of a red lion on a white disc, as it appears on the flag of British East Africa, and his point of departure, Alexandria, symbolized by Egyptian figures. Surrounding the shield are natives on safari carrying weapons and impedimenta of an expedition.



↑ [Right] In a tangle of gnarled trees, hemmed in by rocks, an African elephant is captured by a group of native hunters with shields and spears. At the bottom is the seal of the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, in the interests of which much of Roosevelt's African exploration was undertaken. Supporting the seal is a typical African native chief of the Kikuyu tribe, clad in a lion skin and blue headdress. At the left of this chief is Kermit Roosevelt.



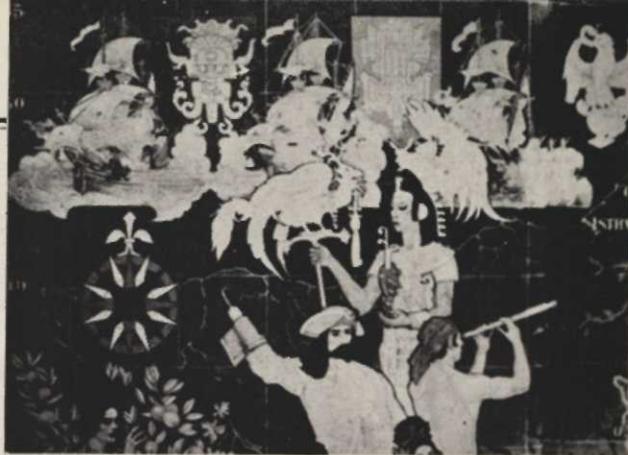
← [North Return Panel]

The zebras, blended into an early morning African landscape, show the principle of concealing coloration in nature. At the base of this return panel appear several natives of the Masai tribe, who have returned from the hunt. The woman wears a gay skirt and brass-ring necklace, and the hunters are dressed in leopard and gazelle skins, one with a monkey-skin headdress.

➔ [South Return Panel]

At the top, giraffes and ostriches blend into the landscape where they are usually found. Below upon a bent tree trunk crouches a leopard. At the base kneels a warrior with a taut bow and wearing two white ostrich plumes, evidence of his having slain two lions in single combat. Above him are the huge signal or war drums used by the natives. The entire panel is overlaid with beautiful red hibiscus and other rich African foliage.





## BUILDING THE PANAMA CANAL

[*Over the Doorway*] A seated Buddha (not illustrated here) symbolizes what Columbus hoped and expected to find when he sailed west across the Atlantic Ocean—India. Seated on the right is Queen Isabella, and above her Christopher Columbus. On the left are an East Indian prince and a native.

↑[*Left center*] The three shields display (from left to right) a Mayan emblem on a blue field, a Toltec emblem (a carved stone called the cross of Tlaloc, found in Toltec ruins) on a red field, and the emblem of the Aztec nation at the time of the Spanish Conquest—an eagle holding a snake in his beak.

The last-mentioned, somewhat modified, is the coat of arms of the Republic of Mexico at the present time. Between these shields, ships in battle recall the strife of early settlers with pirates.

Below these shields is emblazoned the mariner's compass, and at the right is a Mayan holding a ceremonial staff on which is perched the emblematic bird, the Quetzal. Beneath this figure are two pirates, one scanning the horizon with a telescope, the other having a hook in place of an arm lost in combat. Next are five women in ancient Spanish costume who display various products of the South American continent for which the Panama Canal provides export facilities.



The group dominated by Father Time signifies the transfer of the tugboat *Gatum*, the first craft to pass the Canal from one ocean to the other.

At the base of this panel the figures grouped about the shield of Panama represent the early founders in the development of this region. At the extreme left and right are men of the early races, the Mayan and Aztec. The figures next to the shield are a Spanish conquistador and an early pirate. The headdress of the Mayan priest is a crownlike structure adorned with feathers. The Aztec warriors carry weapons: left, a spear with flaming feather head and a huge chipped spear point; right, a sling and a bag of stones with a typical Aztec spiral design.



↑ [Right center] The three shields on this side of the center panel are the armorial design of Balboa, the discoverer of the Pacific Ocean, that of his Spanish sovereign, and the insigne of Republican France at the time when the Count de Lesseps initiated the enterprise of cutting a canal across the Isthmus. Below the shields are Balboa with the standard of Spain, and a pirate with the model of a pirate ship,

a bag of gold, and a native monkey. At the right a Mayan of high rank holds a ceremonial staff. Beneath these appears Sir Henry Morgan, richly dressed in red, who raided the Spanish Main and eventually became Governor of Jamaica. Here also is a wrecked and rusted French excavating machine, covered with vines, remnants of which still exist beside the Canal bank. Near by is a French army officer holding plans

of the projected canal, Count de Lesseps in white, and France typified by the figure of a woman.

↓ [Immediately below] President Theodore Roosevelt is seen discussing plans with Chief Engineer John F. Stevens. At the left an officer holds the flag of the Engineer Corps, United States Army. An officer of the Medical Corps, United States Army, in white uniform, holds a test tube, emblem of research into the causes of pestilence. A

negro sprays the ground against the mosquito pest, responsible for the yellow fever which had defeated the French in their heroic efforts to build the Canal. Laborers hold a steam drill and a crowbar. Below is a model of the Gatun Locks.

↓ [At the bottom] Color sergeants display the flag of the militia of the District of Columbia and the Presidential ensign with attendant elements of the Great Seal of the United States. The figures of Freedom at the left and Liberty at the right support a shield with the inscription: "Work on Panama Canal started May 4, 1904, by President Theodore Roosevelt. The land divided the world united. Completed 1914."





← [Left, or West, Return Panel]

This shows the last act in the great excavation, the meeting of the two enormous excavating machines, facing each other in the final task of scooping up the remaining earth and rock of the cut. Over the map of the Canal Zone, the steam from the power shovels forms the outline of the divided continents. Below the excavators is what the artist has aptly termed "a typical American construction engineer" in a characteristic pose. This is a portrait of the New York State Superintendent of Public Works, Colonel Frederick Stuart Greene, under whose direction the Roosevelt Memorial building was constructed.

At the bottom of this panel is a typical Latin-American Canal laborer holding the coat of arms of the Canal Zone, surrounded by the armorial designs of France, Spain, Scotland, and Portugal. At the left are two natives using a loading iron, making preparations for a blast, and at the right are other typical figures engaged in the building of the Canal.

→ [Right, or East, Return Panel]

At the top is the Goddess of the River, crowned with orchids, pouring the dew from an ancient water vessel, which she has gathered from the rainbow. Down it falls to become the Unknown River, discovered and explored by Theodore Roosevelt, and named for him Rio Teodoro. The discoverer is viewing the river at its source, his native attendants with their propelling poles pushing aside the branches, disclosing the stream. The President's son, Kermit Roosevelt, is shown recording the saga.

At the bottom are members of the Parecis tribe of Indians. A warrior holds in his right hand a richly decorative shield of the map of South America with the arms of Portugal and of Brazil; in his left is an ancient musical instrument. The warriors are equipped with long bows and arrows, and one of the native women carries a basket suspended by a band from her head.



## THE TREATY OF PORTSMOUTH SEPTEMBER 5, 1905

→ The immediate theme of this section is, of course, the termination of the Russo-Japanese War through the mediation of President Roosevelt, but there is a deeper underlying idea brought out by the identity of treatment on either side of the center panel and a balance in the design, the whole brought to a focal point in the

dominant figure at the top of the mural over the doorway. This is Jenghiz Khan, flanked by two of his sons, Juji and Jagatai. Jenghiz Khan, the greatest of Mongolian conquerors, typifies a common enemy engaged (to the left) in battle with early Russians, and (to the right) with medieval Japanese.

← [Left center] Russians killed in battle lie in a wheat field, mourned by relatives and attended by a Russian priest with a deacon and a Russian nurse. Near the doorway are the figures of Death, Famine, and Plague.

At the base of this panel is the group gathered for the signing of the peace treaty. From left to right these figures are: Theodore Roosevelt, M. Takahira, C. Nabokoff, Count S. de Witte, J. Korostovetz, and Baron Komura. Count de Witte and Baron Komura are holding the olive branches of peace. The figure of Columbia with a sheathed sword draped with a band of mourning is behind Roosevelt.



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SO-PING

PEKING

KALGAN

CHINA

THE KHAN

KORAEA

JAPAN SEA

SADO IS.

NIGATA

ISLAND OF HONDO  
SANGAR STR.

KANAZAWA

NAGAOYA

OKAYAMA

OKI ISL  
KOREAN STR.

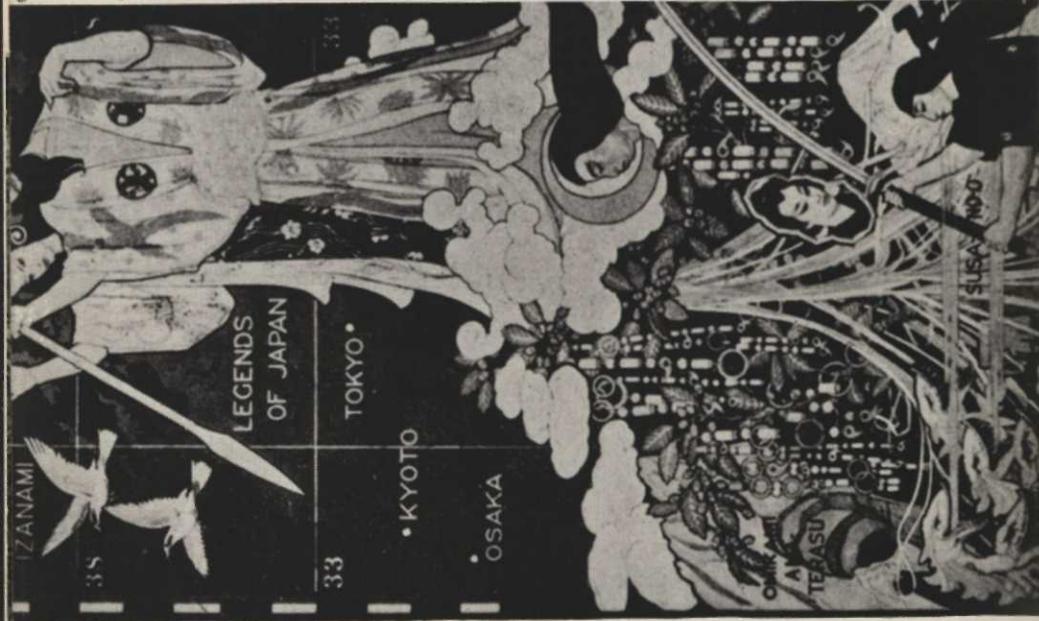


➔ [Right center] Here appears the Japanese Goddess of Mercy, Kwannon, her head encircled by a halo. The group of mourners is the counterpart of the Russian group opposite except for differences in racial types and costumes. A Shinto priest gazes upon the dead Japanese soldier, and the repeated figures of Death, Famine, and Plague emphasize that both nations face the same loss and ruin which follow war.

At the base of this panel, two typical American girls represent Justice and Mercy intervening between a Japanese and a Russian soldier. At the left of the base in full ceremonial vestments is the Emperor of Japan. Behind him is a banner bearing his "Mon" or armorial device in gold on blue. The rising sun banner of Japan flies above the figure of a Japanese infantryman, while the blue cross of St. Andrew on a white field stands above the Russian fighter. At the extreme right in coronation robes and wearing the imperial



crown is the Tsar, above his head the two-headed eagle on gold ground, the emblem of Imperialist Russia. The Mikado and Tsar are offering their swords in token of peace between their nations, and this is repeated in the open book of history which appears in the center.



← [Right, or West, Return Panel] Japanese legendary history. Superimposed upon the map of Japan are depicted Izanagi and Izanami, deities of Japanese tradition, standing upon the "Floating Bridge of Heaven." They thrust a spear into the ocean, and the drops of water falling from it formed the island of Onegoro or "spontaneously-congealed-island." Dwelling in the island they saw a wagtail and its mate alighting on a stone. They conceived the idea of marriage, and are held to be progenitors of "The Great Island Country." Wishing descendants to rule over the country, they became the parents of the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu.

Amaterasu appears below, where she has retreated into "The Rock Cave of Heaven" to avoid her unruly brother Susanoo. She has refused to see him before his banishment to the Land of Yomi (Hades), and the Gods



and Goddesses are disturbed at the prospect of darkness. Before the cave they have planted a Sakaki tree and upon it hung a mirror, a rosary of 500 jewels, and offerings of blue and white cloth. They finally induced the Sun Goddess to look upon a goddess more beautiful than herself—her own reflection in the mirror—and the goddess emerges from the cavern. Her consort, Tsuki, the Moon God, is shown above her.

Below is Susanoo in the act of slaying the eight-headed serpent after it had drunk a quantity of rice wine. In the background is the sacred mountain Fuji, and in the foreground, sword in hand, stands the first historic Japanese Emperor, Jimmu, descendant of Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess.

At the bottom of this panel is the armorial design of the Scottish family of Bulloch, the maternal ancestors of Theodore Roosevelt.



◀ [Left, or East, Return Panel] Russian legendary history. At the top is a primitive North Russian, kneeling, stringing his bow. Near him, holding spear and shield, stands the Norseman, Rurik, first historic ruler of a unified federation of Slavic tribes. The map background indicates the region of Novgorod, where Rurik first established his power.

Next below is Oleg, companion and brother-in-law of Rurik, who became Regent on Rurik's death in 879, during the minority of Igor, Rurik's son. Here Oleg is shown approaching a horse's skull. It had been foretold that he would die by reason of his horse. On its death Oleg was reassured, but going to look for the last time on its remains, a snake issued from the skull and bit him, thereby killing him. Next below appears Igor, son of Rurik, fighting with a Greek warrior, typifying his war with the Greeks in 941-944 A.D. Igor's Queen Olga held the Regency while her son Sviatoslav was a child. She is shown



releasing pigeons to carry fire to her enemies' thatched roofs. The pigeons were the only tribute she had demanded, and returning them with the fire, Olga avenged the deaths of her husband and her son. The figure to the right is a chief of the Petchenegs, enemies who slew Sviatoslav, who holds a drinking cup made of Sviatoslav's skull bearing the inscription, "He who grasped at the possessions of others lost all that was his own."

In the background is a Russian church. Olga first introduced Christianity into Russia. Her grandson, Vladimir, besieged a Greek city and finally captured it after an arrow bearing a message revealing the location of the city water supply had been treacherously shot into his camp. He married the Greek princess of the city, and brought the Orthodox Greek religion to Russia as its established religion.

At the bottom of this panel are shown members of the Roosevelt family grouped around their armorial shield.

## Notes about the Competition and the Artist

An open competition was held in New York City in March, 1933, for the selection of designs by an American artist for the mural paintings for the New York State Roosevelt Memorial. Twenty-five artists anonymously entered sketches. The jury consisted of Colonel Frederick Stuart Greene, the Superintendent of Public Works; William E. Haugaard, the State Commissioner of Architecture; John Russell Pope, architect of the Roosevelt Memorial; the Board of Trustees of the New York State Roosevelt Memorial, namely, Governor Herbert H. Lehman, *ex officio*; Henry Fairfield Osborn, Chairman; Peter D. Kiernan, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Richard Derby; Charles W. Flint; Mrs. William H. Good; Chauncey J. Hamlin; Felix M. Warburg; and Abram Poole, an artist selected by the contesting artists. By unanimous vote they awarded the work to William Andrew Mackay. Colonel Greene, approving the choice and signing the sketches, contracted with Mr. Mackay for the execution of the work, which was completed and

installed on the walls of the Memorial in April, 1935.

The area covered is about 5,230 square feet. The canvasses are 34 feet in height and, including the wing panels, 62 feet in length.

The late Mr. Mackay, a descendant of an old American family, was educated at City College, New York City, and studied at the Julien Academy in Paris. In his early career he assisted the great painter, Robert Reid, later being associated with Frank Millet and Elmer E. Garnsey, upon whom he looked as his master. During World War I Mr. Mackay was Chief Camoufleur of the Second District, including Newport, Cape May, and New York Harbor.

Many very fine examples of decorative work have been executed by Mr. Mackay in the Library of Congress, in the Belmont Memorial Chapel, and the famous Chinese Tea House at Newport, Rhode Island. His mural painting "The Legend of the Sargasso Sea" at Castle Gould won honorable mention at the Architectural League.

## A Message from THEODORE ROOSEVELT

### NATURE

*There is a delight in the bardy life of the open*

(African Game Trails)

*There are no words that can tell the bidden spirit of the wilderness, that can reveal its mystery, its melancholy and its charm*

(African Game Trails)

*The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased; and not impaired in value*

(The New Nationalism)

*Conservation means development as much as it does protection*

(The New Nationalism)

### MANHOOD

*A man's usefulness depends upon his living up to his ideals insofar as he can*

(A Letter to Dr. Sturgis Bigelow, March 29, 1898)

*It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed*

(The Strenuous Life)

*All daring and courage, all iron endurance of misfortune—make for a finer, nobler type of manhood*

(The Great Adventure)

*Only those are fit to live who do not fear to die; and none are fit to die who have shrunk from the joy of life and the duty of life*

(Address before Naval War College, June, 1897)

### YOUTH

*I want to see you game, boys, I want to see you brave and manly, and I also want to see you gentle and tender*

(Address at Friends School, May 24, 1907)

*Be practical as well as generous in your ideals. Keep your eyes on the stars and keep your feet on the ground*

(Speech at Prize Day Exercises at Groton School, May 24, 1904)



*Character, in the long run, is the decisive factor in the life of an individual and of nations alike*

(American Ideals)

### THE STATE

*Ours is a government of liberty by, through, and under the law*

(Speech at Spokane, Wash., May 26, 1903)

*A great democracy must be progressive or it will soon cease to be great or a democracy*

(The New Nationalism)

*Aggressive fighting for the right is the noblest sport the world affords*

(Miscellaneous Writings)

*In popular government results worth having can only be achieved by men who combine worthy ideals with practical good sense*

(Address at Harvard Union, Feb. 23rd, 1907)

*If I must choose between righteousness and peace I choose righteousness*

(America and the World War)

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