

*The Real  
Calvin Coolidge*

es 14 es

A Publication of  
The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation, Inc.  
Box 97, Plymouth Notch, Vermont 05056  
Phone: 802-672-3389 Fax: 802-672-3369  
web page: [calvin-coolidge.org](http://calvin-coolidge.org)

The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation, Inc.  
 Box 97  
 Plymouth Notch, Vermont 05056

---

Published 1999

---

© 1999  
 The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation, Inc.  
 ISSN 0898-9745

---

The Coolidge Foundation solicits articles and remembrances concerning Calvin Coolidge, his family, and era. The Publication Committee of the Foundation reserves the right to edit materials to conform to the policies and format of the publication.

---

Opinions and conclusions in *The Real Calvin Coolidge* are those of the authors and may not necessarily reflect those of the Coolidge Foundation.

*The Real Calvin Coolidge* is free to Foundation members. Inquires on membership should be sent to the foundation offices.

This issue is 14th in a series. Back issues are available for purchase year round through the Foundation offices, Box 97, Plymouth Notch, VT 05056. During the season (May to October) the President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site sells copies at the Cilley Store for \$2.95 each.

## ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This issue contains new information on the Coolidge family along with archival material. Volunteers have contributed to this edition and we thank them for their vigilance. So much misinformation has been circulated on Calvin Coolidge so this effort to publish fair and accurate essays is a welcome change.

"The Boones and the Coolidges" is written by Dr. Boone's son-in-law, Milton Heller. Dr. Boone was Calvin Coolidge's White House physician and was devoted to both Calvin, Jr. and John Coolidge, the president's sons. Dr. Boone's first suggestion to Vice President Calvin Coolidge was that the boys attend Mercersburg Academy, the doctor's preparatory school. The Coolidges followed this suggestion and a relationship developed over time. Mr. Heller drew on 75 or more letters from Grace Coolidge to the Boones over a 32 year period (1924-56) for his insights. David Pietrusza has written about Grace Coolidge's love of baseball (*The Real Calvin Coolidge #10*) and in this issue tells us of her other hobby, her pets. Actually both Calvin and Grace loved their pets and probably had more of them at the White House than any other occupant. Artifacts from those days are on display this season (1999) at President Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site and Mr. Pietrusza is scheduled for a talk on this topic.

The Coolidge Foundation is compiling Calvin Coolidge's speeches, remarks and messages. The books with speeches are out of print; they are "Have Faith in Massachusetts," "Foundations of the Republic" and "The Price of Freedom." To start this project, Trustee Guy DeStefano requested "Oratory in History," Coolidge's high school graduation essay, from the Vermont Historical Society. Karen Mansfield, of Coolidge Foundation, and Jim Cooke, the solo historical interpreter, studied the penciled manuscript and submitted this version of what young Mr. Coolidge had to say.

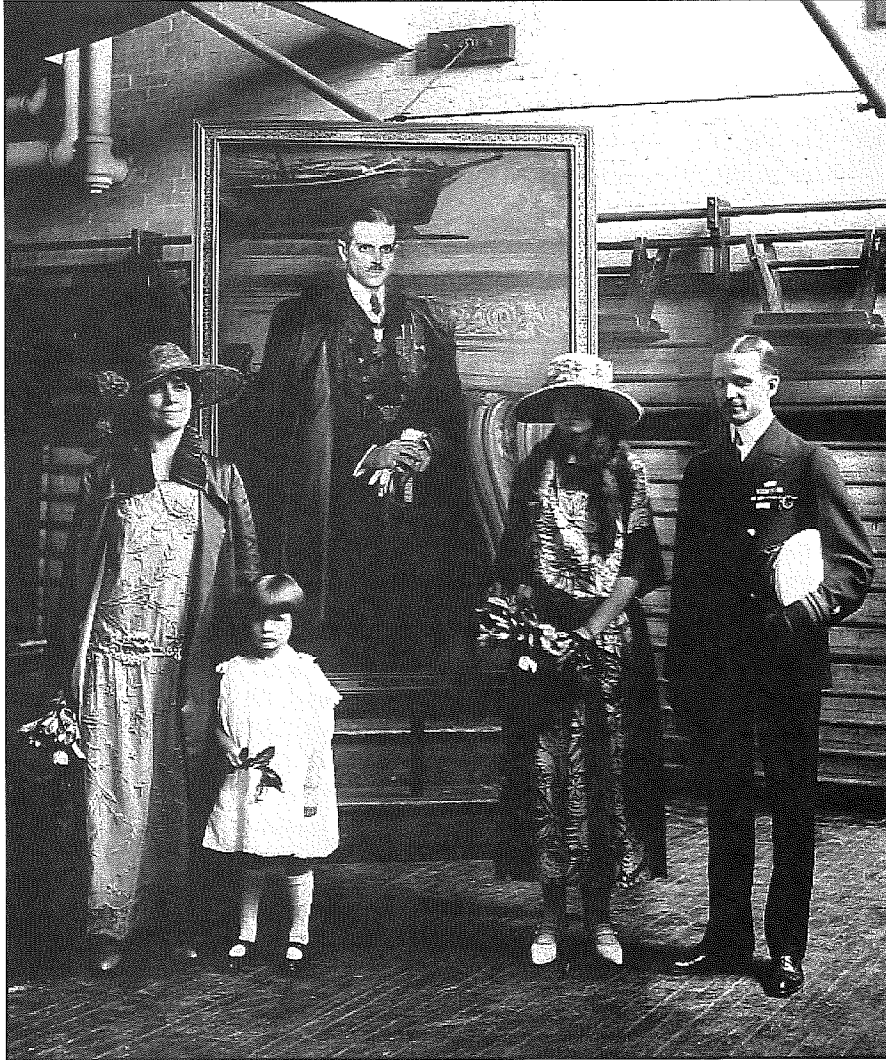
The Publication Committee:

Robert H. Ferrell

Lawrence Wikander

John Coolidge

We especially thank Cyndy Bittinger for her assistance in managing this project.



At Mercersburg Academy with Mrs. Coolidge, Suzanne and Helen for unveiling of portrait of Dr. Boone.

*Courtesy of Milton Heller.*

## THE BOONES AND THE COOLIDGES

By Milton F. Heller, Jr.

[Mr. Heller is the son-in-law of the late Dr. and Mrs. Joel T. Boone, having married the Boones' only child, Suzanne. He served as a destroyer officer in World War II and following a long business career, retired in Stowe, Vermont.]

Dr. and Mrs. Joel T. Boone and their daughter, Suzanne, had a most unusual relationship with President and Mrs. Coolidge and their sons, John and Calvin. The family ties, initiated in 1922 at the time Boone served as medical officer aboard the presidential yacht *Mayflower*, with additional duty as assistant White House physician, endured for life. At the time of Mr. Coolidge's inauguration as president, the association was somewhat formal and confined to medical attention to the first family. The necessity for Boone to be at the White House on a daily basis, however, meant that he soon became well-acquainted with each of the Coolidges, and they in turn went out of their way to befriend the physician, his wife and daughter. In the years following the Coolidges' departure from Washington and President Coolidge's death the bonds between the two families grew even stronger.

As Boone became acquainted with the Coolidges during the Harding Administration, an especially meaningful contact with them took place a year or so before they moved into the White House. Having heard that he was an alumnus of Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania, Mrs. Coolidge invited him to tea in the Willard Hotel suite then occupied by the vice president and his family to talk about a preparatory school for her sons. She explained that since both she and the vice president were New Englanders, they would ordinarily prefer that the boys attend a school in New England. Living in Washington, they would like to have them in a school closer at hand.

One of the high points in Boone's life was the opportunity to show Mercersburg to Grace Coolidge, leading to John and Calvin's enrollment there and a lifelong association with John and his mother. Boone was successful in transmitting to both mother and son his boundless enthusiasm for Mercersburg, and each of them was eventually to serve as a trustee of the academy. The Coolidges' attachment to Mercersburg became so strong that John even wrote music for a school hymn.

With the inauguration of Calvin Coolidge as president, following the death of President Harding, Boone continued in the same capacity as before—medical officer on the *Mayflower* and assistant White House physician; Brigadier General

Charles E. Sawyer continued as White House physician until succeeded by Major James F. Coupal in June of 1924. The need for obedience to Sawyer in carrying out White House medical duties was a source of frustration to Boone. It limited his ability to practice medicine as he felt appropriate and invited resentment on the part of the older man, who earlier had demonstrated fits of pique when Boone treated President Harding without Sawyer's explicit authorization.

General Sawyer was an inept superior. Whenever the time came to conduct a physical examination of the president, he invariably insisted it be brief. The younger physician recalled one instance when he was required to examine the president in the presence of Mrs. Coolidge and their sons, Calvin and John -- hardly the proper atmosphere for examination of any patient, let alone the nation's chief executive. To make matters worse, when the president was asked by Boone to strip to the waist for an examination of the chest, he merely unbuttoned the top of his shirt. Given the opportunity, Boone unquestionably would have taken a much more aggressive approach in dealing with the president's health-akin perhaps to his insistence in later years that another presidential patient, Herbert Hoover, participate in a vigorous daily exercise program, much to Mr. Hoover's benefit.

Something of a hypochondriac, President Coolidge made heavy demands on his physicians. He expected one of them to check his pulse every morning at precisely 8:00 and again in the evening at the stroke of 6:30 and to tell him exactly what his pulse rate was. It was not unusual for Boone to be called away from a theater performance or other personal engagement to treat the president's chronic nasal condition or other minor affliction--once it was a sore toe. By the same token, Mrs. Boone might be called away from dinner at home to fill in at a formal dinner at the White House.

Boone was amused by some of the president's habits and medical notions. He disapproved of eating candy and other tidbits between meals. He wondered why Coolidge insisted on showering, dressing in a tuxedo for dinner, and then working up a sweat while riding the mechanical horse that a friend had provided. This seemed to be "placing the cart before the horse," in Boone's opinion. The physician found it curious that the president insisted on having cocaine placed in his ears whenever threatened by seasickness, but concluded that it could do no harm.

Boone recognized the heavy demands placed on the president and first lady, regarding them as "actor and actress on the public stage of the American scene."s "He tried to keep the Coolidges as healthy as possible, support them in their duties, and whether standing in the wings or on stage to to be a reassuring influence. On June 2, 1928, he stood up to the demands of the president's well-mean-

ing political supporters, a New York City banker, Thomas Cochran, and an Amherst classmate of the president and later father-in-law of Charles A. Lindbergh, Dwight W. Morrow. Since Mrs. Coolidge's health had become a campaign issue, the men urged Boone to issue a public statement that Mrs. Coolidge's health would in no way be threatened if Mr. Coolidge were to run again and be elected for another term. He refused, knowing Mrs. Coolidge was not well and wanted release from White House life. Four years earlier the physician had been intimately involved in the tragic case of young Calvin, having played tennis with him at the time the youngster acquired a toe blister and thereafter dealing with the infection and watching over him night and day until the end.

He recognized a responsibility to care for his charges without disclosing to the public every detail of an indisposition. Nonetheless he always kept the public informed. He deplored the actions of his medical brethren in cover-up of serious illnesses suffered by presidents before and after his White House service--especially the cases of Presidents Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and John F. Kennedy.

Boone's medical responsibilities extended well beyond care of President and Mrs. Coolidge, John and Calvin, to include White House staff and visitors. He also served as a consultant to the physician caring for Mrs. Coolidge's mother, Mrs. Lemira B. Goodhue, while she suffered a protracted illness in Northampton.

Friendship between the Boones and Coolidges was a natural result of the physician's continuing attendance on the first family, Grace Coolidge's graciousness, and the need of John and Calvin for companionship when they were home from school. Boone and the boys rode horseback, played tennis, shot pool, went sightseeing in Washington, and had lunch aboard the *Mayflower*. One time he was boxing with John in the living quarters when the president appeared. With a frown, the nation's chief executive said pointedly, "You are almost as young as John, but not quite." Boone concluded that he disapproved of the boxing but did not let the comment bother him.

The boys asked Boone to help them select suits and hats from among the things brought home from the haberdasher's shop that they visited with Major Brooks, the president's valet. But here the president's desires proved paramount. Boone was with them one day when the president arrived from the executive offices, asked John and Calvin to try on the suits, and without inquiring of the boys as to their preferences simply pointed his finger and said in his nasal twang, "You will take that one, John. Calvin, you will take that one." After going through the same process with the hats, the president abruptly left the room.

President Coolidge had such a tight rein on his boys' behavior that he even dictated when they should wear overshoes, and ordered that they should wear suspenders, not just belts, to hold up their trousers. The president continued to select John's clothes even during his college years. Both boys were required to wear tuxedos at dinner, served regularly in the large state dining room rather than in the private dining room--out of respect for the office of president, according to Boone.

Boone was fond of both boys, each of them a distinct personality in his view. Calvin was a sprightly lad with a fine sense of humor, as illustrated by the remark he made to Dr. Irvine, headmaster of Mercersburg, when the two of them, along with Mrs. Coolidge and Boone, were just ending a game of pool in which Dr. Irvine had scored the fewest points: "Well, Doctor, you give splendid evidence of not having wasted your youth." John was a serious, hard-working young man, who was especially close to his mother. The Coolidges' friends, Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Stearns, sensed disagreement between the president and his wife as to how to deal with John. The president was inclined to be severe, whereas Mrs. Coolidge was sympathetic and loving. The Stearnses and Boone felt John was "farmed out" too much, in military camp or college, missing the influence of his mother in development of work habits and social interests. Boone tried to spend as much time as possible with him. The age difference of seventeen years made the relation akin to that of an older and younger brother. When asked about this seventy years later, John said, "Joel was somebody special." He added enthusiastically, "You know he's the one who introduced us to Mercersburg." In autographing a book containing a selection of letters from Calvin Coolidge to his father, John wrote: "To Joel T. Boone. With immeasurable esteem, admiration and affection. /s/ John Coolidge, Farmington, Conn. April 16, 1969."

Mrs. Coolidge expressed her appreciation for Boone's attention to her sons by writing Helen Boone this undated note from the White House: "Dear Mrs. Boone: A thousand thanks to you for permitting Commander Boone to give so much of his time which really belonged to you to my boys. The association has been a splendid thing for them and I appreciate it. Most sincerely, /s/ Grace Coolidge."

Boone had utmost respect for President Coolidge whom he regarded as a complex human being with many facets to his personality. He admired Coolidge's political skills and felt that he was the ideal president for the times because he was able to sit in the boat without rocking it, at the same time inspiring confidence. At times the president would compliment the physician, once even reassuring him that he was a "White House fixture." He could show concern

about intruding on Boone's time with his family. Yet he could be moody, as demonstrated to Boone on more than one occasion. Particularly memorable, if distasteful, was the time that Boone told the president that the navy department wanted equal treatment to that proposed for the army in temporarily promoting Boone's senior, White House physician Major Coupal. According to Boone, the president became furious, his face turning a brilliant red as he turned on his heel and left the room.

Coolidge could be difficult as a husband and father. His wife confided in Boone that he had a problem in controlling his temper and that when he concentrated intently, such as during preparation of a speech, he became impatient and irritable. Early in married life, she said, she recognized his frailties and decided that because of her deep love for him she would try to overlook them, stand by him and help him in any way she could. Mrs. Coolidge's account was confirmed by Mrs. Stearns who told Boone that the Coolidges as a young couple had frequent disagreements and that the situation was complicated by the attitude of Grace's mother who disapproved of the marriage.

The president seemed to play a dominant role in family decisions, well beyond selection of clothes for his boys. In a June 14, 1928, letter from Cedar Island Lodge in Brule, Wisconsin, Mrs. Coolidge wrote the Boones: "John is having a pretty good time and improving his score at golf by fits and starts, mostly fits, I guess. His future course is quite a problem. There are several opportunities lying open but none of them have met with presidential approval up to the present time." The president kept his cards close to the vest, so to speak, in making all sorts of family decisions. Mrs. Coolidge wrote on August 26 of the same summer, "From rumors running about, I think the president is planning to be here about two weeks longer . . ." Then, two years later, on June 26, 1930, ensconced in a new home named The Beeches in Northampton, Mrs. Coolidge noted: "Calvin has not unpacked any of his books. Sometimes I think he has a plan for extending it [the house] and sometimes I think he considers building a separate building in which he can have an office. I do not have to decide that. When I see operations beginning, I shall know what has been decided."

In the same letter to the Boones, the president's wife went on to write: "This can never be what #21 [Massasoit Street] was but it will seem like home after awhile, I guess. Somehow, I feel that it is only a temporary home, like the Adirondacks or South Dakota--or even the White House--but then, they are all temporary. And sometimes, I tell this only to you, I feel that when I get things a little bit settled here and everything going smoothly, maybe my work will be done." Much to the benefit of all whose lives she touched, Grace Coolidge lived

for twenty-seven more years.

There was another side to President Coolidge, not as recognized as his reputation for a straight face and few words, that endeared him to many Americans: a keen sense of humor. He knew how to laugh and enjoyed stories, according to Boone. He did not seem to mind being mimicked and never evidenced bitterness over cartoons or critical things said about him. Typical of the humor was the way he dealt with former secretary of state Charles E. Hughes as an overnight guest at the White House. A one-time governor of New York, presidential candidate in 1916, secretary of state, currently a justice of the International Court at The Hague, Hughes was destined to become chief justice of the Supreme Court. He wore a distinguishing mark: a full beard and mustache. The first morning after Hughes' arrival, at about breakfast time, the president rang for the White House doorman and presidential barber, Mays, who appeared in white starched coat, carrying a towel draped over his arm and a box containing barber tools. The president said to Mays, "I do not want any haircut or shave, but I want you to go up . . . to the bedroom which is being occupied by Justice Hughes. Knock on the door and ask him if he doesn't want a shave." The president insisted Mays go through the routine each morning that Hughes remained as a guest. Although it is doubtful that Hughes appreciated the humor, the chief executive enjoyed being a tease.

Coolidge was delighted to have the humorist Will Rogers as his guest on a train trip to Key West. According to Boone, who along with Dr. Coupal accompanied the party, the president was fond of Rogers' story-telling; the two men sat together for hours, much to the president's amusement. Boone felt this form of relaxation was therapeutic for a president who worried in advance of a speech such as the forthcoming one before a crowd in Cuba.

Boone noted that in contrast to the president, Mrs. Coolidge had the disposition of an angel. She was much more of a "social animal" than her husband. Grace would have enjoyed entertaining young people of John's age aboard the *Mayflower*, with music, dancing, and movies. But when she proposed this to the president he would say, "What for? To spoil them?" One time she suggested that she and John make a cruise on the *Mayflower* while her husband was visiting his father in Plymouth. He replied that to make the trip while John was home from school would not be good for him and that he must study.

It was largely through the influence of Mrs. Coolidge that Boone's wife, Helen, and daughter, Suzanne, became active participants in social and recreational activities involving the first family. Mrs. Coolidge frequently sent a lovely bouquet from the White House greenhouse to the Boones' apartment; the

physician's family reciprocated with a box of homemade cookies each Christmas. Boone's job carried such perquisites as use of the White House tennis courts, army stables, and the *Mayflower*. One of the more memorable parties on the *Mayflower* was held on May 26, 1927, in celebration of Suzanne's seventh birthday. Sixty children were present, along with Mrs. Coolidge and Mrs. Stearns. The first lady provided flowers and decorations for the dining room. The children had the run of the ship, which resounded with merriment. Suzanne liked to tell how the steward had introduced animation by placing live baby ducks in a pool in the middle of the table - a decoration her father found objectionable and had removed for sanitary reasons.

For Suzanne the night of November 14, 1923, was another memorable occasion. Her parents had been called out of town, and Mrs. Coolidge graciously invited her to spend the night at the White House. The little girl, not yet four years old, was so attached to Mrs. Coolidge that she accepted with enthusiasm. The first lady recorded the experience in a touching little essay, "Suzanne Spends a Night at the White House." [Published, together with the photograph mentioned in the next paragraph, in the November 11, 1995, issue of *The Real Calvin Coolidge*.] The youngster would never forget sleeping in the nine-foot-long Lincoln bed, a privilege that in recent times has been the source of much public discussion if not scandal. Earlier the bed had been occupied not only by President Abraham Lincoln but also by President Wilson after his stroke. Years after Suzanne slept in the bed, one of her small children was to boast to a friend, "My mother slept with Abraham Lincoln."

President and Mrs. Coolidge's invitation for Suzanne to accompany them to the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus on May 1, 1928, is yet another example of their fondness for this young person. The news photograph of the three seated with Mr. Ringling appeared in newspapers across the country, perhaps because it showed the president with a broad smile. One Washington publication, under the heading "The White House at the Circus," described it this way:

"Ringling" is satisfied that "Cal" is satisfied with the Greatest Circus on Earth.

The President has seen the G.O.P. elephant in action, and smiles accordingly.

The "First Lady" is humanly interested in the little lady whom she has taken to the circus.

The child's face is a dream wonder, intensified by her first circus experience.

And on the whole, the picture is a human classic.

Letters from Mrs. Coolidge to the Boones reveal her to have been a gracious, loving, considerate, communicative and supportive person with a strong religious faith. The latter quality was well demonstrated in a black-bordered card written on January 14, 1933, nine days after her husband's death, carrying this message: "All is well. You know the source from which my strength is supplied."

The growing attachment of Grace Coolidge to the Boones as the years progressed is illustrated by the changing nature of salutations and closing phrases in letters addressed to them. A letter written in 1924 around the time of young Calvin's death might be addressed, "Dear Doctor Boone," and signed "With much appreciation" or "Cordially, Grace Coolidge." As time passed, it began with "Dear Joel" or "Dear Booney," and closed with something like this: "Here's to you both with more love than can be measured. Grace." The Boones became so devoted to Mrs. Coolidge that Helen and Joel asked her to serve as Suzanne's guardian if they should become incapacitated or die. The former first lady acceded to the request, writing on April 9, 1938, "I have always considered Suzanne the perfect child and delighted that she wanted me for a guardian."

Among the seventy-five or more letters and notes written by Grace Coolidge to the Boones over the thirty-two-year period of 1924 to 1956, one of particular interest was written on Calvin Coolidge's fifty-seventh birthday, July 4, 1929, only four months after the Coolidges left the White House to return to their old home at 21 Massasoit Street in Northampton. It reads in part as follows:

Dear Helen and Joel,

This is the day – I cannot put it off any longer. And what better day could I choose for writing to you than the Glorious Fourth. Noises of many degrees are going bang in my vicinity . . .

I think [no] more gifts were poured in upon C.C. at the White House than at his "humble home" and there is a continuing stream of cars passing to take a view of the general lay-out. Old Glory floats from the top of the flag pole and serenity reigns beneath . . .

It was great to have that telephone talk with you. It certainly was a surprise and wasn't it fine that you happened to be at home that evening? We have had quite a number of picnics, going to the favorite places-Chesterfield, on the rocks by the swiftly flowing river and the Conway road by the little stream with a log for a table.

I shall finish on the type-writer for that is a little swifter and surer. I have been using it so much of late.

I hear from Mrs. Hoover occasionally. She seems to be thriving . . .

I am keen to know who is butler at the White House. . . Do you know what Roche is doing? It must be a great improvement to have that place that Dowling [the president's valet] used to have for your "works" [new medical clinic]. Where is Mary Randolph [Mrs. Coolidge's secretary] and how? . . .

We are both well and so are the dogs and the canaries . . .

I'm not going to read this over for mistakes, for I know they are there. You will know what I tried to say, anyhow. Be good to me and write soon even if I have been bad and deserve to be punished.

Oodles of love to the whole family,

Sincerely,

/s/ Grace Coolidge

Invasion of privacy at 21 Massasoit Street had to be one reason that the Coolidges moved to The Beeches. Both the former president and his wife had difficulty keeping a low profile, as evidenced by the need for Grace to don horn-rimmed glasses as a disguise when appearing in public. They continued to receive a large volume of letters and so many requests for photographs that the supply was soon exhausted.

In post-White House days, correspondence and an occasional long-distance telephone call served as links between the Boones and Coolidges, and the two families, following the former president's premature death in 1933, made a great effort to visit each other whenever possible. Mrs. Coolidge made several trips from Northampton to Newport to see Joel Boone when his ship called there. The Boones for their part visited Northampton, and in the summer of 1938 the writer had the pleasure of accompanying them as house guests of Mrs. Coolidge.

Letters from Mrs. Coolidge, typed or handwritten by her, covered a range of subjects. Several asked for Boone's assistance, as illustrated by this excerpt from one of June 16, 1929: "I love to be a nuisance but aside from that I do not feel that any tooth-mechanic outside the Navy knows anything about the peculiarities of my mouth-construction and I am therefore asking you to present my compliments once more to my friends on the hill-side, down by the Lincoln Memorial and ask them to come to my assistance." A year later after a similar problem

arose, Mrs. Coolidge wrote on July 28, 1930, "Thanks for attending to my é dental jewels.' You are doing a fine piece of work and the satisfaction of that will carry you along, I know. No physician in all the years has served three presidents . . ."

As loving as she could be, Mrs. Coolidge did not hesitate giving Joel a little advice. Recognizing him as a "workaholic," she wrote on January 12, 1955, "You know Helen has earned a little of your time and you have some fine grandchildren who wouldn't be any the worse off for a little attention from their grandfather as they grow older. "

The former first lady's attachment to Northampton is clear in this comment from *The Beeches* on July 6, 1934: "Northampton is grand, isn't it? I hope that I never have to live elsewhere. I often wish that I had a smaller place to take care of but as long as I can swing it financially, I shall probably stay here." A year or so later she did close *The Beeches*, lived for a time with a friend, Mrs. Florence Adams, and then built a house—the one visited by the Boones in 1938.

Loss of her husband added to Mrs. Coolidge's burdens but she handled them with equanimity. On September 7, 1933, just eight months after Mr. Coolidge's death, Grace wrote: "With the Plymouth properties on my hands and this place here [*The Beeches*], my time is fully occupied and my problems are many and varied. However, it is well for me to be busy and to keep the old mind active. I am getting some experience in affairs which I have never known anything about."

In the years that followed, the demands on her time for handling business affairs were offset by the pleasure of doing things heretofore denied her—traveling, attending the theater, picnicking, hiking. With her friend Mrs. Adams she made a trip to Europe, visited New York City to attend the theater night after night, made visits to Mrs. Adams' place in the mountains of North Carolina. On April 10, 1935, after a two-thousand-mile motor trip through the south with Mrs. Adams, she wrote: "It doesn't seem possible that we were gone four months and a half. We are hardened to an out-of-door life and find it a little difficult to get adjusted to city life. Most of the time we slept out on the terrace under the stars, some nights under two fur robes. We knocked off hikes of ten and twelve miles, up hill and down dale, without a pant. Life in the old girls yet? Well, I guess."

Mrs. Coolidge's letter of October 23, 1942, is noteworthy for its description of wartime life in Northampton, in particular the effect of the U.S. Navy school for WAVES at Smith Coolidge. Grace turned her home over to Captain Underwood, commanding officer of the school, for the duration. She and Mrs. Adams took responsibility for the Aircraft Warning Center, established after

Pearl Harbor, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. every day. Grace stood watch on Mondays, and spent time preparing surgical dressings.

After Mrs. Coolidge's death on July 8, 1957, John Coolidge and his wife, Florencé, remained in close touch with Helen and Joel Boone and their daughter, Suzanne, so long as each of them lived. Helen and Joel were especially pleased to have John and Florence honor them in helping to celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary in San Francisco on June 20, 1964, coincidental with the marriage of the Boones' oldest granddaughter to the son of the headmaster of Mercersburg Academy. Interestingly, Mercersburg, which had been the key to initiating the lifelong friendship of the Boone and Coolidge families seventy-six years ago, endured as a unifying link.

### **About the Boones**

The late Joel Thompson Boone and his wife, Helen Koch Boone, were natives of the anthracite coal-mining region of Pennsylvania. Following Joel's graduation from Mercersburg Academy and Hahnemann Medical College, he became a medical officer in the United States Navy. He served with the Marines in Haiti in 1915-16 and France in World War I, as well with the Pacific Fleet in World War II and the Korean conflict. In 1922, he was assigned as medical officer on the presidential yacht *USS Mayflower*, followed by duty as assistant White House physician and then White House physician, serving Presidents Harding, Coolidge and Hoover over a span of eleven years. Retiring as vice admiral, and having earned the Congressional Medal of Honor, among many other decorations, Boone is recognized as the most highly-decorated member of the navy medical service.



Northampton, Massachusetts.

December 29, 1931.

Dear Booney:

I think you are awfully good to send me the photograph of yourself and Suzanne. Every time I look at it I almost gasp with surprise at the grown-upness of your daughter. If I had not had a glimpse of her and she didn't look so much like you I should think you had borrowed one. Thanks, a lot, Jo-el.

The Mercersburg Calendar is very attractive this year, particularly the picture in color of the garden on the outside cover. I do appreciate your sending me one. It seems to me that Mercersburg is stepping along progressively and successfully under Dr. Edwards and I am sure that pleases you as well as anybody. It is fine that you continue your interest and that you are near enough to make that interest felt.

Everything here is just the same as ever. Winter picnics are the order of the day. I had the last one here in November. I went to New York with Mr. Coolidge in December. He and I were up at the Hills' for dinner a couple of nights before Christmas. Nobody got hilarious and put on fancy costume. The addition to their living room seems to make it twice as large as before and there is an extra window. In that corner their bachelor son has his special cosy seat with a floor lamp to light the page of the book he is reading. With his private bath-room out of his room,

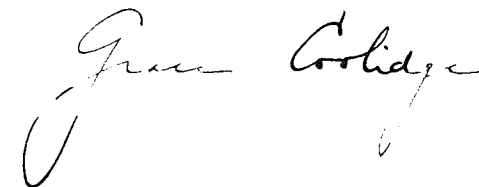
he is so well situated that it will require an awful nudge from some girl to pry him out of there. The only hope is that when Uncle Chris is through with his house in Haydensville he will take over that. It is astonishing to hear him tell what he think of most of the girls around here. I do not think he wholly approves of his mother and me.

I had a lovely Christmas. The children came up for the day and when father went up to take a nap after dinner, we snook away to see the Hills and the Browns.. Stephen has evidently made a good record for himself at Yale Medical for he has been made an interne in the New Haven Hospital and this is quite unusual.

I am going to write to Helen as soon as I get all my Christmas obligations discharged. I hope that everything is satisfactory with you and that the New Year will bring you happiness in full measure.

Again, my thanks and my love,

Sincerely,



Sample of Mrs. Coolidge's correspondence with Dr. Boone.

*Courtesy of Milton Heller.*

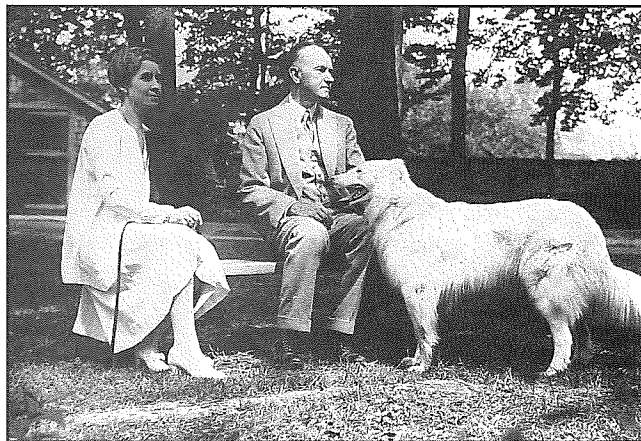


First Lady Grace Coolidge with Rebecca Raccoon, at Easter Egg Rolling 1925, the White House grounds.

*Courtesy Vermont Historical Society.*

Left to right, former First Lady Grace Coolidge, red chow Tiny Tim, former President Calvin Coolidge, white collie, Rob Roy, at their home, The Beeches, Circa 1931.

*Courtesy Vermont Historical Society.*



### “Wombats and Such:”

### Calvin and Grace Coolidge and Their Pets

By David Pietrusza

“Any man who does not like dogs and want them about,” Calvin Coolidge once observed, “does not deserve to be in the White House”.<sup>1</sup>

“Calvin and Grace Coolidge certainly lived up to those words—and more. Before, during, and after their White House years, the Coolidges kept a dizzying array of pets about them. From cats and dogs, canaries and mockingbirds, to wombats and raccoons, the Coolidges surrounded themselves with four-footed or feathered creatures.”

“Now, as one might expect, Calvin often kept his emotions about his pets to himself, often disguising his feelings about them with the most mordant of comments. One Maltese Angora cat that a friend had given Grace, he persisted in calling “Mud”—for, as he noted, anyone can see that his name is mud.”<sup>2</sup> And although Grace would write that “Mr. Coolidge and I are particularly fond of cats,”<sup>3</sup> her husband would take fiendish glee in stashing an early family cat, “Bounder,” in various unlikely places—including the hall clock and the porch roof. “Sometimes,” Grace once recalled, “I would hear [Bounder’s] ‘Meow’ in a tone that, being interpreted, meant ‘Help,’ and I knew that his master had hidden him in some outlandish place and I was expected to rescue him.”<sup>4</sup>

“Yet it should not be construed that no emotional bonds developed between the taciturn Mr. Coolidge and the feline breed—in fact, author Ishbel Ross claimed he liked cats far more than did Mrs. Coolidge. Miss Ross may have indeed been right. When Calvin took office in the state legislature in 1907, the reigning household tabby, Climber, missed his master so much “he pined away and died.”<sup>5</sup>

“In the White House, the Coolidges again had cats, this time two kittens named Tiger (or Tige) and Blacky. The President enjoyed walking around the White House with Tige draped around his neck. On one occasion, Tige provided the President with an opportunity to put an oppressive guest in her place. Journalist John Lambert described the occasion:

“A feminine guest at a White House luncheon had obviously sought this opportunity to belabor her pet enemy. This enemy happened to be an American ambassador who was understood by the Administration to have performed meritorious service. But, according to the lady’s estimate, he was rough, uncouth,

uncultured, and lacking in respect for the customs, traditions, and ceremonials of the ancient court to which he had been assigned.

“Tige, the old black cat that is almost a White House tradition, had sauntered into the room and was lazily rubbing itself against the table leg. The President turned to the person upon his right and said in a voice that was quite audible to the shrewish woman upon his left, “That is the third time that cat has stopped at this table.”<sup>6</sup>

The Coolidges had a green collar made for Tiger and a red one for Blacky. On both cats’ collars were affixed name plates on which the words “The White House” engraved. Eventually, Tiger disappeared (Mrs. Coolidge theorized that “perhaps, instead of safeguarding him with the collar, we had made him a too attractive and tempting souvenir.” Blacky, however, remained at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, usually preferring to take his chances in the kitchen rather than commune with the First Couple upstairs.

“After the President’s death, Grace had at least one more cat. We know this because of a photo that remains of her bestowing awards to a group of Eagle Scouts at her Northampton home. Her cat, a huge white creature has draped itself on the shoulders of one scout—or perhaps was placed there by the mischievous former First Lady.<sup>7</sup>

#### **A Bird in the Hand**

When the Coolidges moved to Washington in the spring of 1921, they resided in the Willard Hotel and really had no room for such large pets as cats or dogs. Instead, a friend suggested to Grace Coolidge that she get a canary. Before that happened, however, Grace and Cal moved into a semi-private house. The friend inquired as to whether she still wanted a bird. “Yes,” she replied, “two.”<sup>8</sup> And so the Coolidges became owners of their first two birds, Nip and Tuck, two olive green canaries. Eventually they were followed by a white canary (Snowflake), another canary (Peter Piper), a “yellow bird” (Goldy), and a trush (Old Bill), an unnamed mockingbird. This last bird caused a bit of problem for the First Lady, for she found out that keeping mockingbirds in confinement in the District of Columbia was punishable by a \$5 fine and a month in jail. “I was reluctant to part with my chorister,” Grace revealed, “but I was even more averse to embarrassing my country by the imprisonment of its First Lady.”<sup>9</sup>

“But the bird with character, “wrote Ishbel Ross,” was Do-Funny, a trained troupial from South America who sometimes lit on the President’s shoulder and

tweaked his ear, or jabbered madly at Mrs. Coolidge. He belonged to the Oriole family and was about the size of a crow, with vivid flashes of yellow and blue in his shiny dark plumes. He was loud and raucous when annoyed, but . . . had a flute like whistle for Mrs. Coolidge. When let out of his cage he would eat from her mouth and whistle. He liked to catch food or little wads of paper in his bill. When she whistled to him from another room he delighted her by answering.”<sup>10</sup>

#### **Cal’s Best Friends**

“Grace had little time to mourn the departure of her mockingbird friend. The Coolidge White House also witnessed a virtual parade of canine houseguests. First to arrive was Peter Pan, a wire-haired fox terrier. Peter Pan, however, was too nervous a pet to adjust to the hustle of White House life and was soon to depart for a quieter home. Before he left, though, the Coolidges acquired Paul Pry (the half-brother of Warren Harding’s famous airedale Laddy Boy)—yet another problem for the First Couple. “He is like some people,” Grace wrote to friends, “always keeping you guessing and always being funny. True to his breeding he assumed charge over one individual, that one in his case being me and he will not let my maid come into my room to pick up my things if I am not there.” Before long he too departed the scene.

“By and by other dogs also came and went. There was Tiny Tim, a red chow-chow puppy who arrived in celebration of a presidential birthday. Tiny Tim, who never did warm in the slightest to the President, soon became known as Terrible Tim. Diana of Wildwood, a white collie puppy first traveled to the White House via airplane and arrived covered with dark black grease. She later became known as Calamity Jane, a nickname that Mrs. Coolidge averred “seemed to fit her well.” Grace and son John smuggled Blackberry, a black chow, along on the summer 1927 presidential trip to the Black Hills. Blackberry eventually became the property of “John’s Certain Young Lady” (as Grace termed his future bride). Ruby Ruff, a brown and white collie, was literally left at the White House door. King Cole, a black Belgian Gruenendahl, eventually was farmed out to a schoolteacher. Beauty, yet another white collie, served as the President’s companion in retirement back in Northampton.

The most famous of White House dogs, however, were the Rob Roy and Prudence Prim. These collies were a striking pair, made all the more noticeable by the baths of blueing they underwent to give even greater gleam to their white coats.

Prudence Prim took a particular shine to Mrs. Coolidge—and vice versa. “I

loved her well," said the First Lady. The two were inseparable. Once Grace constructed a straw bonnet festooned with ferns and green ribbons for the dog, who wore it quite proudly to a White House garden party. Grace also had calling cards made up for Prudence Prim and would leave them behind with her own when she went a calling. When the dog died during the First Family's trip to the Black Hills, Grace was grief-stricken. "Rob [Roy] and I shared on a common sorrow," she would write.<sup>12</sup>

"Rob Roy, the President's favorite, was a sheep-herding dog from Wisconsin, and the transition to urban life in the District of Columbia was quite a shock to his system. "I think he had never been in a house very much . . . ," noted Mrs. Coolidge, "when I first took him into the [White House] for the first time, he crouched in fear. The elevator he regarded as an infernal contraption and lay on the floor of it with all four legs spread out in an attempt to hang on."<sup>13</sup>

Not helping the situation for Rob Roy was the presence of a rival in the household—a Boston bulldog named Beans, who had determined that he was master of the premises. When Rob Roy would attempt to exit the elevator on the second floor, Beans would cow him back onto the "infernal contraption." Grace eventually resolved the conflict by packing Beans off to Northampton to reside with her mother and the Coolidge family housekeeper.

"Rob Roy eventually got the hang of elevators and the great indoors, but like all dogs he preferred the pleasures of a walk on the boulevard. Grace would do the honors herself. It was not an easy task, as Rob Roy would soon go into high gear and take the First Lady along with him. "Why," noted one onlooker, "you almost expected her to break into a race with the collie."<sup>14</sup>

"Rob Roy was a wild one," said White House kennel master Harry Waters, "He would dig into me, but she had no fear of him. Sightseers were sometimes more interested in the dogs than they were in the White House."<sup>15</sup> Rob Roy was particularly interested taking after the squirrels on the White House grounds, only desisting after a "sharp reprimand" from his Master.

As was often the case, Silent Cal choose to hide his true feelings about Rob Roy and Prudence Prim. To Harry Waters he would snap, "You can lose them one of these days if you want to."<sup>16</sup> Waters was never sure if he was kidding or not.

He was. The President was actually quite taken by them and was particularly fond of Rob Roy (referred to in Coolidge's *Autobiography* as "my compan-

ion."), who he would take to his office each afternoon and to his Friday press conferences. Grace Coolidge recorded that Rob Roy took a "vocal" part in those proceedings.<sup>17</sup>

"Rob Roy was a stately companion," Calvin wrote with unusual warmth, "of great courage and fidelity. He loved to bark from the second-story windows and around the South Grounds. Nights he remained in my room and afternoons went with me to the office. His especial delight was to ride with me in the boats when I went fishing. So although I know he would bark for joy as the grim boatman ferried him across the dark waters of the Styx, yet his going left me lonely on the hither shore."<sup>18</sup>

The President also saw to it that his canine friends received their fair share of the federal larder—perhaps more than their fair share. "Well, they was feeding the dogs so much," White House guest Will Rogers once observed, "that at one time it looked to me like the dogs was getting more than I was. I come pretty near getting down on my all fours and barking to see if business wouldn't pick up with me."<sup>19</sup>

"The most famous portrait of Grace Coolidge is that painted by Howard Chandler Christy and featuring not just the First Lady but also Rob Roy. When Mrs. Coolidge donned a red dress so she might contrast with the pure white Rob Roy, the President impishly suggested that she wear a white dress and dye the dog red."<sup>20</sup>

Despite the fact that the dog was not dyed crimson, Coolidge enjoyed the portrait so much that he had a photograph made of it and had copies sent to his friends—including a copy to the man who had given him the animal. The man wired back: "Fine picture of dog. Send more photographs."<sup>21</sup>

### **The Pennsylvania Avenue Zoo**

And then there were the exotic animals. To an old Northampton friend, Alfred Pearce Dennis, Coolidge once wrote: "I'd like to have your two boys come to the White House to see the animals. We've got a bunch of young rabbits that might interest them. Kind people send us animals, puppies, kittens, queer animals sometimes—wombats and such."<sup>22</sup>

As usual, Silent Cal was not overstating the case. All sorts of animals found their way to the Coolidges during their Washington years. In his *Autobiography* Coolidge observed:

"A great many presents come to the White House which are all cherished,

not so much for their intrinsic value as because they are tokens of esteem and affection. Almost everything that can be eaten comes. We always know what to do with that. But some of the pets that are offered us are more of a problem. I have a beautiful black-haired bear that was brought all the way from Mexico in a truck, and a pair of live lion cubs now grown up, and a small species of hippopotamus which came from South Africa. These and other animals and birds have been placed in the zoological quarters in Rock Creek Park."<sup>23</sup>

The lion cubs were named Tax Reduction and Budget Bureau.

There were others—a wallaby from Australia, a duikir (a small deer) from Africa, and thirteen Pekin duck hatchlings. And, of course, there was Rebecca the raccoon. Rebecca arrived not as a pet, but rather as what the President had referred to as what "can be eaten." She was to have part of a Thanksgiving White House feast, but the Coolidges found her to be almost entirely domesticated and rather too pleasant to be sautéed. "We . . . had a house made for her in one of the large trees," wrote Grace, "with a wire fence built around it for protection. We kept her chained when out of doors, but in the house she had her liberty. She was a mischievous, inquisitive party and we had to keep watch of her when she was in the house. She enjoyed nothing better than being placed in a bathtub with a little water in it and given a cake of soap with which to play. In this fashion she would amuse herself for an hour or more."<sup>24</sup>

Rebecca would take her meals on the tiled floor of her mistress' bathroom. While most Americans of the time were dining on relatively simple gastronomic fare, Rebecca seemed a veritable gourmet. Her fare consisted of green shrimp, chicken, persimmon, eggs, and cream.

Some reports had the President walking Rebecca around the house on a leash. Whether that is so or not, it is true that he would often play with the raccoon after his afternoon paperwork was done—and as in the case of Tige the cat—walk about with Rebecca draped around his neck. The majority of the White House staff disliked the raccoon (she was always tearing clothes and ripping silk stockings). As usual the President saw a chance for his brand of humor. Once when Rebecca had scampered up Mrs. Coolidge's social secretary, Mary Randolph, Calvin teased to the nervous Miss Randolph: "I think that little coon could bite if she had a mind too."<sup>25</sup>

A few times Rebecca escaped from the grounds, but each time was recaptured. The Coolidges, fearing she would be run over in the street on one last jaunt, turned her over to the Rock Creek Zoo for her own safety. Grace and Cal,

however, still were concerned regarding her happiness and prevailed upon zoo officials to secure some companionship for her. That came in the form of a male raccoon dubbed Reuben. That matchmaking failed as Reuben eventually escaped from the zoo, leaving Rebecca to live a solitary life.

As for the Coolidges they considered living without a creature or two or three tramping or flying about the house, to be an unsatisfactory, solitary life. "I am unable to understand," Grace Coolidge once wrote, "how anyone can get along without some sort of pet" —a statement.<sup>26</sup>

1. Roy Rowan & Brooke Janis, *First Dogs: American Presidents and Their Best Friends*, p. 3.
2. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 146.
3. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 24.
4. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 25.
5. Ishbel Ross, *Grace Coolidge and Her Era*, p. 185; Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 25.
6. Edward Connery Lathem (ed.), *Meet Calvin Coolidge*, p. 152.
7. Lawrence E. Wikander and Robert H. Ferrell, *Grace Coolidge: An Autobiography*, p. 110.
8. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 146.
9. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 146.
10. Ishbel Ross, *Grace Coolidge and Her Era*, p. 186.
11. Ishbel Ross, *Grace Coolidge and Her Era*, p. 185.
12. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 149.
13. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 147.
- 14,15,16. Ishbel Ross, *Grace Coolidge and Her Era*, p. 183.
17. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," *The American Magazine*, December 1929, p. 152.
18. Calvin Coolidge, *The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge*, pp. 221-222.
19. Roy Rowan & Brooke Janis, *First Dogs: American Presidents and Their Best Friends*, p. 90.

20. Roy Rowan & Brooke Janis, First Dogs: American Presidents and Their Best Friends, p. 89.
21. Edward Connery Lathem (ed.), Meet Calvin Coolidge, p. 85-86.
22. Edward Connery Lathem (ed.), Meet Calvin Coolidge, p. 22.
23. Calvin Coolidge, The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge, p. 221.
24. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," The American Magazine, December 1929, p. 148.
25. Ishbel Ross, Grace Coolidge and Her Era, p. 186.
26. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, "Our Family Pets," The American Magazine, December 1929, p. 146.

### Book Review

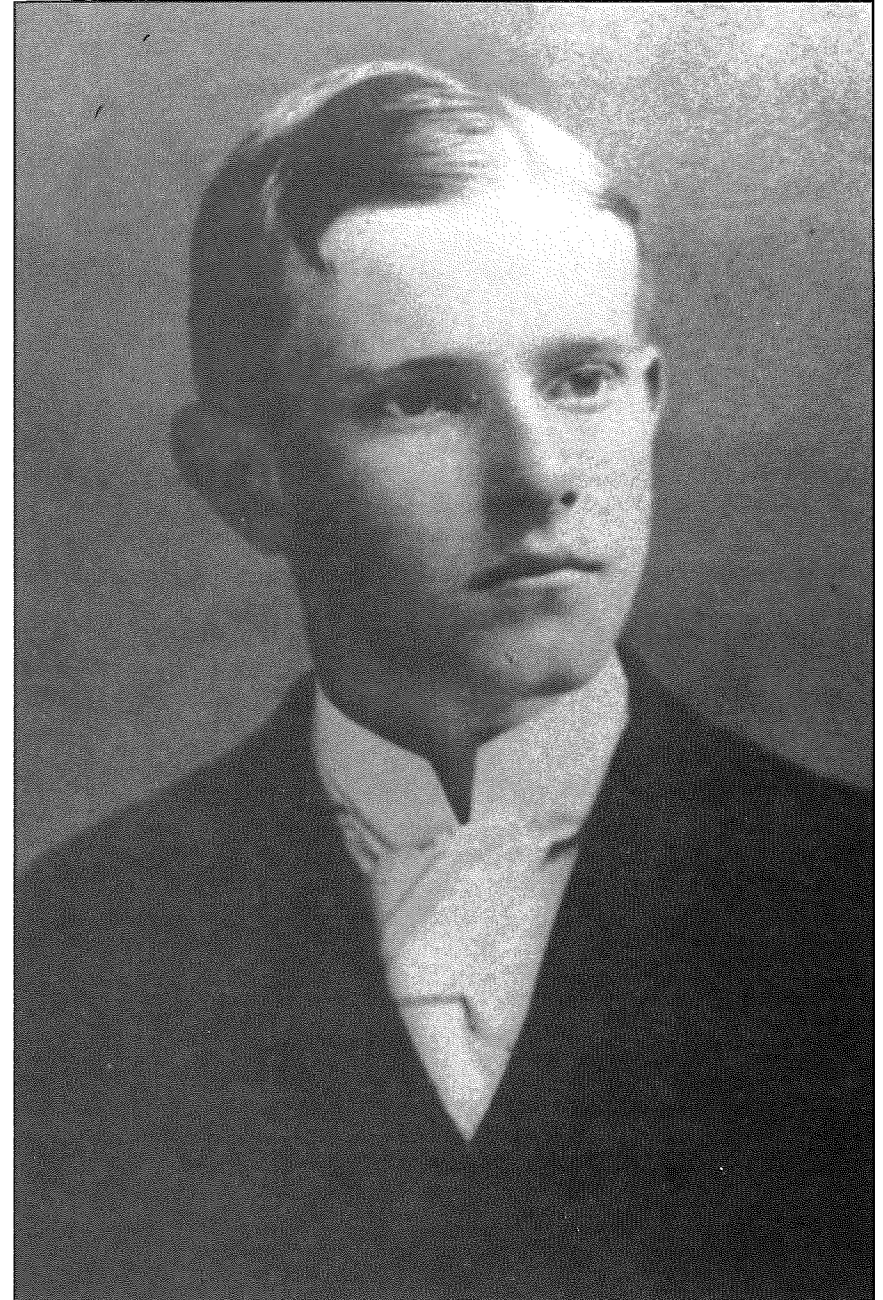
Nathan Miller, Star-Spangled Men: America's Ten Worst Presidents. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998. By Paul Di Carlo.

The book is an assessment of the ten worst presidents in America's history. President Calvin Coolidge is in this list and is rated number-four. Author Nathan Miller states that Coolidge proved that "eighty percent of success is showing up." On p. 89 the author proclaims that Coolidge made his ten-worst list "for doing nothing."

Miller partly blames Coolidge for not preventing the Great Depression that began in 1929. The author states that if the president had been more interested and assertive, he could have "fended off" the depression but what occurred in 1929 was due to economic factors that were undecipherable at the time. It is unjust to blame a politician for a depression caused by factors far beyond his control.

Miller minimizes Coolidge's sponsorship of the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928, referring to the treaty as a "feeble attempt at collective security...without any means of enforcement." Among other achievements, Coolidge helped foreign relations by improving relations with Mexico and opening a dialogue with other Latin American nations.

In summary, the critique of Coolidge is one-sided. It displays a do-nothing president.



Calvin Coolidge at his graduation from Black River Academy, 1890.



**Calvin Coolidge's First Speech**

Comments by Professor Robert H. Ferrell

It is a fascinating proposition that the future president of the United States gave his first speech at the age of eighteen and it was about—of all subjects—oratory in history. The oratory would become one of his most prized activities, once he rose to high public office; he wrote his speeches, took great care with them, and they proved enormously successful in advancing his presidential administration. As for history, his first address displays a knowledge of the past that would shame most high schoolers today.

As is well known, young Coolidge entered Black River Academy in Ludlow when he had finished with the ungraded school at the Notch, this at the age of thirteen. That winter of 1886, in bitter-cold temperatures of thirty below, the youth and his father made the journey over the hills, to the house where arrangements had been made for Calvin's room and board. They were accompanied by a calf that the elder Coolidge was taking to the railroad depot to sell. The last advice of John Coolidge was some Yankee wisdom: "Well, Cal, here you are in school in Ludlow...Study hard and maybe you'll get to Boston some day, remember that the calf will go there first."

Coolidge graduated from BRA, as the academy was known, in 1890, in a class of nine scholars enrolled in the classical curriculum. The school's total enrollment was perhaps one hundred. For forty years, a former church had housed the academy in its three downstairs rooms. When it burned, the students moved to rooms above a bakery, then to a place next to the lot where the school's new building was being erected. The towered stone structure of Victorian proportions was finished in 1888 and still stands; it is now a museum.

Coolidge decided at the outset to take the classical curriculum at BRA, which meant preparation for college. Graduation took place in the spring of 1890 in a ceremony that, according to custom, involved several speeches. Each member of the class enrolled in the classical curriculum gave an oration, and Coolidge's topic was "Oratory in History."

*The Vermont Tribune*, in 1890, gave it a favorable review:

"Calvin Coolidge gave an historical resume of the influence of oratory information of public opinion and in the great movements of history. It was the master spirit of both the nations of antiquity. When the Commons of Rome were ground to the dust beneath the load of debts which they owed to their patrician creditors, the oratory of an old man, imprisoned for debt, broke the shackles

which bound him and caused a change of laws. The eloquence of Brutus was potent in driving the Tarquin from Rome. Down the ages he came with a swift but sure tread and naming the men who, by silvery and impetuous speech, had swayed the people, Cicero, confounding Cataline, Peter the Hermit spurring the people on to drive back the Crescent, Luther giving birth to the Protestant Reformation, Cobden and Bright in securing the repeal of the obnoxious Corn Laws were cited as instances. In American History illustrations were not wanting. James Otis in 1861, Patrick Henry in the first American Congress, Webster in defending the Constitution, Garrison and Phillips in overturning slavery were notable instances. This oration was masterly in its conception and arrangements."

The speech itself follows (courtesy Coolidge papers. Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier, VT; found in a search by Guy de Stefano, deciphered from the manuscript by Jim Cooke and Karen Mansfield):

**ORATORY IN HISTORY  
BY CALVIN COOLIDGE (AGE 17)**

To further estimate the degree in which oratory has influenced the history of the world, would be a difficult task; but the history of every country and of every age turns with miracles wrought by this necromantic form.

Oratory, as every schoolboy knows, was the master spirit of both great nations of antiquity, Greece and Rome, and plays an important part in modern nations.

It was not the fleets of Attica, though mighty, nor the valor of her troops, though unconquerable, that directed her destinies; but the words and gestures of the men who had the genius and skill to move, to concentrate, and to direct the energies and passions of a whole people as though they were but one person.

Even when Greece was in the last stages of decay, when she was oppressed by the galling tyranny of Philip, the Athenian populace, roused by the burning words of Demosthenes, started up with one accord and one cry to march on Philip; and the Macedonian monarch himself said of the orator who had baffled him, "Had I been there, he would have persuaded me to take up arms against myself."

Such was the effect of oratory in Athens, a state weakened as it was by oppression and its life blood almost gone in long continued wars.

When the commons of Rome were ground down to the dirt beneath the load

of debts which they owed to their patrician creditors, it was the agonizing appeals of one old man in rags, pale and famished, who told the citizens he had fought in eight and twenty battles, and yet had been imprisoned for a debt which he had been compelled to contract but could not pay, that caused a change of laws and a restoration to liberty of those who had been enslaved by their creditors.

It was not alone the fate of Lucretia, but the eloquence of Brutus that drove the Tarquin from Rome, overthrew the throne, and established the Roman Republic.

Aye! "Rome, that sat on her seven hills and from her throne of beauty ruled the world" received her freedom by the power of oratory.

We are told that such was the force of Cicero's oratory, that it not only confounded the audacious Cataline, and silenced the eloquent Hortentious, not only deprived Curio of all power of recollection, when he rose to oppose that great master of enchanting rhetoric, but made even Caesar tremble, change his determined purpose and acquit the man he had resolved to condemn.

It was not till the two champions of ancient liberty, Demosthenes and Cicero, were silenced that the triumph of Despotism in Greece and Rome was complete.

In the Dark Ages, the earnest tones of a simple private man; who has left to posterity only his baptismal name with the modest surname of Hermit, that aroused the people to engage in the Crusades; drove back the victorious crescent, overthrew feudalism, freed the serfs, delivered the towns from the oppression of the barons, and changed the moral face of all Europe.

Two centuries later, the voice of a solitary monk shook the Vatican, and emancipated half of Europe from the dominion of Papal Rome.

In later times, the achievements of oratory have been hardly less potent.

What mighty changes have been wrought in England's political system within the last fifty years by the indomitable energy of such orators as Vincent, Cobden, Bright, and scores of others, who transversed the kingdom, advocating the repeal of the Corn Laws and other measures which were once deemed Utopian and hopeless!

During the French Revolution, it was the voice of Mirabeau, hurling defiance at the king, that inspired the Tiers-Etat with courage. When he cried out to the astonished emissary of Louis: "Slave, go tell your master that we are here by the will of the people, and that we will depart only at the point of the bayonet," the words sounded like a thunder clap to all Europe, and from that moment the

bondage of the nation was broken and the fate of despotism sealed.

Who can say what the history of Europe or even of the world would have been, had the British Parliament never been shaken by the powerful eloquence of Fox, Camden, or Grattan; or had Mirabeau, Louvert, and Danton never hurled their fiery bolts from the French tribune?

No one will say that in our own struggle for independence the majestic eloquence of Chatham, the profound reasoning of Burke, the burning satire and irony of Barre did not have influence on our fortunes in America. They tended to diminish the confidence of the British ministry in their hopes to hold us in subjection. There was not a man who did not struggle more boldly for liberty when those exhilarating sounds, uttered in the two houses of Parliament, reached him across the seas.

In the history of our own country, the triumphs of oratory have been hardly less marked than those of the Old World.

In the night of tyranny, the eloquence of the country first blazed up, like the lighted signal fires of a distracted border to startle and enlighten the community.

Everywhere as the news of some fresh invasion of our liberties and rights was bourne on the wings of the wind, men ran together and called upon some earnest citizen to address them.

When in 1761, James Otis, in a Boston popular assembly, denounced the British Writs of Assistance, in words like Marc Anthony, who said, "I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts,...I only speak right on: I tell you that which you yourselves do know"; his hearers were hurried away resistlessly on the torrents of his impressive speech. When he concluded, every man of the vast audience went away resolved to take up arms against injustice.

In the first American Congress, convened at Philadelphia, Patrick Henry arose, and drew such a picture of the horrors of servitude and the charms of freedom that his hearers became activated as one soul, and the universal shout was "Liberty or Death." The single speech of this one illustrious man gave an impulse which probably decided the fate of America.

During the present century, the effects of oratory are no less obvious.

As it was the eloquence of Hamilton, spoken and written, which in no small degree established our political system;-so it was the eloquence of Webster, with his clarion voice and mighty words, that mainly defended and saved it.



As the great orator of Massachusetts, the champion of the Federal Constitution, closed his memorable reply to Hayne, profound silence reigned in the crowded Senate Chamber.

When again, over thirty years later, Nullification once more raised its front, and stood forth armed for a long and desperate conflict, it was the ignited logic of this same Defender of the Constitution, and the echo of his burning, enthusiastic appeals for : "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable" which roused the people to resistance, and, with the eloquence of Garrison and Philips, broke the fetters of the slave, their removing the most formidable obstacle to the complete union of North and South.

The effects of sacred oratory on the history of the world would fill volumes.

We need only to recall the manner of John the Baptist, Paul, Peter, and Chrysostom, the golden mouthed; and in modern times, the names of such pulpit orators as Whitfield, Hall, Chalmers, Latimer, Knox, Edwards, Beecher, and Brookes.

It would be hardly too much to say, that since the dawn of civilization, the triumphs of the tongue have rivaled, if not surpassed, those of the sword.

Although some of the most fiery themes of eloquence may have passed away with the occasions of tyranny, outrage, and oppression that created them, though the age of Philippics has happily gone; yet so long as wickedness and misery, injustice and wretchedness prevail on the earth, so long as the millennium is still distant and Utopia a dream, the voice of the orator will still be need to warn, to denounce, to terrify, and to overwhelm.