

*The Real
Calvin Coolidge*

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The Real Calvin Coolidge # 15 was begun last year for the 75th Anniversary of the inauguration of Calvin Coolidge on March 4, 1925. The paper by archivist Jerry Wallace became a longer piece and the Communications Committee decided to dedicate an entire issue to the topic. Therefore, this issue does not contain book reviews or other articles.

We are grateful to **Jerry Wallace** for this article and the many others he has written over the past ten years. Jerry has served on three presidential inaugural committees and is considered an expert on the subject. Last year, television commentators often called upon him for his analysis of the George W. Bush inaugural. Jerry has encouraged colleagues and students to do original research and much of this material will be placed on the Coolidge web site.

The six photographs of the inaugural procession were donated to the Coolidge Foundation by Frank Teagle, a long time trustee. Mr. Teagle was a printer and advisor to the Coolidge Foundation for over twenty years. He noted that his friend, Jerry Anderson, took these snapshots in 1925.

We wish to thank our executive director, **Cyndy Bittinger**, for managing this series of booklets from 1990 to the present.

Kathy Wendling, Chair
Mimi Baird
Robert Ferrell
Donald Harpster
Christopher Jeter
Robert Kittner
Lawrence Wikander



The 1925 Inauguration of Calvin Coolidge. He is being driven to the inaugural stand with wife, Grace, and Senator Charles Curtis.
Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Calvin Coolidge's Third Oath Washington ~ March 4, 1925 The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary

By
Jerry L. Wallace

Know Your President's Voice

So read the newspaper ad for Ambler-Holman radio receivers, urging readers to listen in on Wednesday, March 4, 1925, to "The Greatest Inaugural in History." On that day, at precisely 11 a.m. Eastern Standard Time, a transcontinental radio hookup would come alive. Across the nation, Americans would gather wherever there was a radio to hear the man of their choice—Calvin Coolidge—inaugurated as President of the United States of America.¹

Those listening that day had witnessed many changes for better in American life since the Harding-Coolidge Administration assumed office in March 1921. Memories of the Great War were fading. The sharp post-war slump had passed. Prosperity was again smiling upon the land. In the air was that extraordinary vitality that would characterize the 1920s and make it so special. Change was everywhere, affecting almost every aspect of life. For most folks, with money in their pockets and leisure time to spend it, life in general was getting better—and they knew it. With prosperity, the tensions that had marred the late 'teens and early '20s were easing. Overseas, the Old World was gradually pulling itself back together. Under the Harding-Coolidge Administration, the New Era, as it would be known, was emerging and creating a new world centered not on the elite but on the common man and woman. Its focus—socially, economically, and politically—was increasingly upon their needs, their wants, and their well being. Some were beginning to sense that the twentieth century was to be their century.²

Radio, which was rapidly becoming a part of American life³, was

one of the most noticeable of the exciting, life-changing developments taking place. In 1925, radio changed the nature of the presidential inauguration, for the first time making it a national event shared by millions of Americans as it happened at the Capitol. In March 1917, only eight years before—but now a world apart—Woodrow Wilson had stood on same spot as would Calvin Coolidge to take the presidential oath. Then, with only the strength of his voice to carry his words, only those lucky few standing nearby could hear him; the vast crowd would have to wait for the evening or next day papers to read his speech. Four years later, in March 1921, at Warren G. Harding's inauguration, amplifiers were installed on the inaugural platform, and for the first time, the multitude gathered in the Capitol plaza could hear clearly his welcomed call for a return to normalcy. Now, through "the miracle of radio," millions of Americans in every corner of the land would hear Calvin Coolidge take the Presidential oath and give his inaugural address.

Calvin Coolidge was well aware of radio's significance, both for him and for the presidency⁴. That day, his words would travel through the ether into the homes, schools, and workplaces of his fellow citizens. His listeners would number more than the population of the United States in 1825. Coolidge's voice came across well over the radio, which compensated somewhat for his lack of oratorical skill. "I am very fortunate," he once said, "that I came in with radio." Calvin Coolidge would make 16 radio addresses during his presidency, thereby becoming, as Robert Sobel has noted in his *Coolidge: An American Enigma*, "the first president of the radio age."⁵

Three Oaths

Calvin Coolidge took the constitutional oath as president of the United States on three occasions, each under differing circumstances. March 4, 2000, marked the 75th anniversary of Coolidge's third oath-taking. This was his only formal inauguration, taking place on the constitutionally prescribed day of March 4, 1925,⁶ on the east front of the Capitol in Washington. It occurred 19 months after he had succeeded to the presidency and followed his triumphal electoral victory of Nov. 4, 1924, which had made him the first president elected from New England since

Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire won the White House in 1852.

This third inaugural is not widely known in comparison with Coolidge's first, the Homestead Inaugural of Aug. 3, 1923, following Warren G. Harding's sudden death. The unique and dramatic circumstances surrounding the Homestead Inaugural, along with its human interest appeal—a father swearing in his own son—and the fact that there is a historical site at Plymouth Notch, Vermont, dedicated to perpetuating its memory, combine to make this inaugural one of the best known and most popular of all presidential inaugurations. The second oath was a private one administered to Coolidge on Aug. 17, 1923, by Justice A. A. Hoehling of the District of Columbia Supreme Court. It was strictly a precautionary measure, necessitated by concern that the homestead oath might be invalid. Out of respect for his aged father, President Coolidge asked that this second oath be kept private, and it did not become public knowledge until after Col. Coolidge's death and Calvin Coolidge had left the presidency. To this day, it is not well known.⁷

The first two oath-takings involved an exceptional event: the vice president assuming the presidency upon the death of the incumbent. They were occasions marked by stark simplicity and minimal ceremony. The sole concern was that the constitutional oath-taking requirement be satisfied. The third oath taking, with which we are concerned, differed significantly. It constituted the centerpiece of a great quadrennial state occasion, consisting of official and unofficial events, known as the Presidential Inauguration. Here, there were traditions—some old, some new, some strong, some weak—to be followed. Pomp and circumstance marked the day, with the president-elect the cynosure of all eyes.

The third Coolidge inauguration is often pictured as a lackluster affair, dull and boring, supposedly reflecting the character of the president being inducted. "The whole occasion," as one historian has put it, "was to be lacking in color and festivity as compared with past inaugurations. It was conducted with a view toward saving time and money."⁸ In this article, I shall describe Mr. Coolidge's inauguration in some detail, so that the reader will have a good idea of what actually took place. In addition, I will look into how the inaugural was organized and staged, as well as the personal and impersonal factors shaping it. By doing so, we can arrive at a

better understanding of its true character, how it came to be perceived as it is, and how it compares with other presidential inaugurations. We can then assign Mr. Coolidge's third inauguration its proper place in inaugural history.

Inaugural Organizations

Presidential inaugurations consist of two distinct elements: the official oath-taking ceremony, which is the heart of the inaugural exercise, and the unofficial festive celebration. These elements are planned and executed by separate organizations, answerable to differing authorities. There is no direct relationship between the two, and while the official side varies little, the unofficial side is subject to considerable variation.

The official side is the responsibility of the U. S. Congress, acting on behalf of the people. It consists of the induction of the incoming president and vice president into their high offices, following the certification of their election. In 1925, the Joint Congressional Committee on Arrangements, headed by Sen. Charles G. Curtis of Kansas, planned and carried out these official ceremonies at the Capitol. Mr. Coolidge had no direct say in their work, although, as a courtesy, he would be consulted. The inaugural ceremonies involved two events: 1) the swearing-in of the vice president-elect in the Senate Chamber, over which he would preside as its President, and 2) immediately following, the swearing-in before the people of the president-elect on a special platform erected on the east front of the Capitol building. Time and tradition had set in place the form and format of these ceremonies.⁹ This would hold true for Coolidge's inauguration, which closely resembled Harding's 1921 ceremony, one that Mr. Coolidge found satisfactory. As will be seen, the ceremony was an impressive affair, staged in an attractive setting. Nothing was lacking. There was no question then or later of its stateliness and democratic elegance. Indeed, the Harding and Coolidge inaugurals set the tone for those to follow.¹⁰

The planning and execution of the festive celebration that traditionally accompanies the official swearing-in was (and is) the responsi-

bility of an inaugural committee, a quasi-official body that had first come into existence in 1865 to coordinate and oversee inaugural festivities. Today, this committee is known as the Presidential Inaugural Committee and since 1956, its status has been recognized in law.¹¹ In 1925, the committee was styled the "Washington Citizens' Inaugural Committee," the title emphasizing its provincial nature. The president-elect commissioned this body, naming a noted local citizen as its chairman. The chairman oversaw a staff of volunteers, who were often socially prominent or leaders in the business community. The committee was responsible to the president. It had, however, an air of independence about it, for it had its own private sources of local funding through subscriptions and ticket sales, although it did receive some indirect federal support, mostly for the parade. The committee was responsible for two traditional inaugural events, the parade and ball, plus other optional events and activities, such as concerts and fireworks, and helping to accommodate inaugural visitors. In 1925, this committee would stage a full complement of events—not on a gala scale, as it desired and first proposed—but limited in nature, satisfactory to the president and suitable to the circumstances and the occasion.

Historically, the festive side of the inaugural can vary from the most elaborate to almost nothing, reflecting the temperament of the president-elect, the tone he desires to set for his administration, and the public mood. Its scope is also influenced by whether it is a first or second inaugural. For instance, Washington's first inaugural in April 1789, which also marked the start of the new federal government under the Constitution, was, appropriately enough, the grandest of them all. His second, however, was one of the most subdued, including, at 135 words, the shortest inaugural address on record. Inaugurals involving the induction of a sitting president—such as Mr. Coolidge in 1925—are typically restrained affairs, lacking in anticipation, excitement, and expectation. Then and now, they do not attract the public enthusiasm of a first inaugural, and consequently, do not draw the crowds, especially of out-of-town visitors, and can be embarrassing money losers. Accordingly, they are typically scaled-back affairs.¹²

Before the advent of television coverage in 1949, the public at large centered its attention on the official ceremonies at the Capitol. The

president's oath-taking and inaugural address were the subject of newspapers, magazines, and, later, radio coverage. The inaugural festivities, meant for Washingtonians, received, with some exceptions, scant national attention. They had about them something of a distinct small town flavor.

In Coolidge's day, they were of interest primarily to these local groups: Washington society, who wanted an occasion to dance and meet the new president and his family; politicians, political supporters, and office-seekers, anxious to celebrate their victory and the patronage at hand; the diplomatic corps, who sought to ingratiate themselves with the new president; leaders of the military and civil establishments, eager to meet their new leader and his cabinet members; patriotic, political, and fraternal groups, wanting to show off and enjoy themselves; local citizens, wishing to welcome the new president to their city, as well as to have a good time; and merchants, hoping for extra sales from the crowds. As for attendance, political geography favored the Democrats, who could draw on local partisans from Washington itself and nearby Southern cities and countryside, whereas Republicans had to import theirs from distant points, such as New York City and Philadelphia.

Prelude - The Grand Celebration That Wasn't

The 1925 inauguration would take place in the shadow of 1921. In 1921, with the Great War over and advent of the Harding-Coolidge Administration at hand, the groups mentioned above wanted to celebrate. They were looking forward to an old-fashioned inaugural celebration, the kind they had not enjoyed since William Howard Taft's affair in 1909. Their desire, however, was frustrated—but not by Warren G. Harding, who wanted to celebrate, too. Mr. Harding had named Edward B. McLean, a close friend, head of his inaugural committee. McLean had planned a spectacular event, "the most dazzling celebration within the memory of the present generation." According to Mrs. Evalyn McLean, there were to be a "fireworks display, bands by the score, and all manner of excitement to mark the passage of executive power from Wilson's hands to those of Harding." A Washington newspaper welcomed the return of the inaugural ball "in a blaze of glory" after "an exile" of eight years.¹³

The problem was the Congress—specifically, Senator William Borah of Idaho, a powerful, outspoken, and difficult man. On Jan. 4 and 5, 1921, in Senate debate, Borah denounced McLean's plans for a gala inaugural as extravagant. Public criticism in the press soon followed. Critics focused on the propriety of such an elaborate event during a severe economic slump. Moreover, in light of Harding's call for economy and with the Federal deficit running at one billion dollars, it seemed inappropriate to spend a large sum—estimates went as high as one million dollars—on such an affair. "This is no time," said Senator Duncan Fletcher of Florida, "to indulge in these extravagant parades and demonstrations and celebrations."¹⁴

In an attempt to salvage the situation, Mr. Harding sent Harry Daugherty to "pour oil on troubled waters if possible." Daugherty failed. On Jan. 10, debate on the inaugural spread to the floor of the House. That night, Mr. Harding wired McLean his request that all inaugural festivities be cancelled: "It will be most pleasing to me to be simply sworn in, speak briefly my plight of faith to the country and turn at once to the work which will be calling." The public and Congressional response was positive. The inaugural committee complied. Washingtonians were disappointed, some outraged; they would have to wait until 1925 for their fun.¹⁵

From Northampton, Vice President-elect Coolidge followed this unhappy controversy. Four years later, as president, he would remember it and be determined to avoid a repetition. After Harding issued his statement, Mr. Coolidge stated his support: "I am in entire harmony with the expressed wishes of Senator Harding to have the inaugural ceremonies simple and free from extravagance. I feel sure that Senator Harding's judgment is correct and will meet with general approbation." He then made this point, "I can see no other position that he could take when the government is attempting to reduce extravagance."¹⁶ Mr. Coolidge would find himself in the same predicament four years hence.

The debate had concerned inaugural festivities—parade, ball, receptions, fireworks, concert—not the swearing-in. The swearing-in ceremonies for Mr. Harding on the east portico of the Capitol were quite impressive and elegant and in keeping with tradition. A new inaugural

pavilion—much more attractive and grand than the old—had been erected for the occasion. It would be saved and used again by Mr. Coolidge and his successors. For the first time, the crowd in the Capitol plaza would hear clearly the inaugural proceedings via amplifier horns.¹⁷

As for Mr. Coolidge, he took his oath as vice president in the Senate Chamber from Thomas Marshall, the out-going vice president. Breaking precedent, President-elect Harding had entered the Chamber, where he observed the ceremony seated in an armchair. Coolidge's speech lasted 10 minutes, the shortest on record. With his wife, two sons, and father looking on, he noted that his major task would be in presiding over Senate and then went on to praise the Senate as a great deliberative body, "a citadel of liberty."¹⁸

There was no parade, only an escort of cavalry to and from the Capitol. Warren Harding, being a modern man, broke with tradition, abandoning the horse and carriage and substituting a Packard Twin Six for his ride to and from the Capitol. He and his vice president became the first to ride by car to and from their inauguration. There was no official inaugural ball—but Washingtonians would dance, and they knew that Mr. Harding would not mind. Mrs. John Allan Dougherty organized a charity ball, with its proceeds going to child welfare work in Washington. Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge attended as the guests of honor. There was also an inaugural concert. That evening, before the ball, the McLeans hosted an "enormous dinner" at their home for members-designate of the Cabinet, justices of the Supreme Court, with the Vice President and Mrs. Coolidge as their honored guests. The new environment, the strain of the day had gotten to Mr. Coolidge. According to Mrs. McLean, he was shaking as he escorted her into dinner. He later complained of a stomach-ache, and spent the evening as "a side-line guest who drank glass after glass of [bicarbonate of] soda."¹⁹

What Did Mr. Coolidge Want?

As 1924 turned into 1925, Calvin Coolidge had to decide what he wanted in the way of an inaugural. From what we know of Calvin Coolidge, if had been given a choice, he would have preferred to pass

March 4 with minimal fuss. A simple oath-taking, minus pomp and circumstance—much like Jefferson's in 1801 and Franklin D. Roosevelt's in 1945—would have sufficed. This would have suited the character of this man known for his antipathy for personal display and was commented on at the time.²⁰ Later, he would write in his *Autobiography*:

"It was my desire to maintain about the White House as far as possible an attitude of simplicity and not engage in anything that had an air of pretentious display. That was my conception of the great office."²¹

There were other considerations as well. Politically, this inaugural would serve no grand purpose. He was a sitting president, with no dramatic changes to announce or call to arms to make. Other than for certain elaboration and minor changes in emphasis, there was to be no break with his predecessor's policies. The Harding-Coolidge program itself was established and well known, recently restated in his December message to Congress. Personally, this public spectacle put a considerable emotional and physical stress upon this quiet, private man. He had to write and deliver a major address, one to be heard by millions of American. In addition, he had to endure a long schedule of public events, meeting individuals and groups and appearing before crowds, and patiently listening to much small talk. After the effort of securing his party's nomination and conducting a national campaign, Mr. Coolidge could well have done without the added demands of the inauguration. Moreover, the Coolidge family was still in mourning for their 16-year-old son, Calvin, Jr., who had died the previous July. What personal satisfaction there might be in his day of triumph—and there would have been some, no doubt—was eliminated by his son's tragic death. "When he went the power and the glory of the presidency went with him,"²² Mr. Coolidge later said. In place of elation, there was melancholy. As concerning the oath-taking ceremony, Mr. Coolidge was critical, comparing it unfavorably with those in the Bay State. He found the Capitol ceremony lacking in dignity and with its separate ceremonies for president and vice president, a disjointed affair. Finally, having experienced over the years several inaugurations as a witness, participant, or inductee, they had probably ceased to hold any special attraction for him.²³

Mr. Coolidge, however, knew that whatever his personal prefer-

ence, he could not avoid his Inauguration Day: The Constitution and tradition and public expectations demanded his presence on stage. Equally important, Mr. Coolidge would not disappoint his family and friends, his many political supporters, and the public in general, all of whom looked forward to the event. That was not part of his nature, just as he did not disappoint those who gave him outlandish outfits to wear. He was no dour Puritan, "weaned on a pickle,"²⁴ as some would say. He had no objection to people having a good time or a laugh. So Calvin Coolidge would make the best of his inauguration day. All he would ask was that the festive side be restrained, kept within limits befitting him and reflecting his Administration's policy of economy.

Now for our story.

Planning The Inaugural — Gala or Plain Vanilla?

Presidents are often described as being the most powerful individuals on earth. Yet when faced with men and women determined to have things their way, they often encounter difficulties in imposing their will in even relatively minor matters of State. Mr. Harding, it is said, had to battle the White House housekeeper in order to obtain toothpicks on his dining table.²⁵ For his own inauguration, Calvin Coolidge would have an equally contentious time securing a program of inaugural festivities to suit his personal taste and in harmony with his administration's program of economy. It mattered not if the funding for the festivities was mostly private. If the inaugural appeared to be too elaborate and too costly, his call for fiscal restraint would suffer a loss of credibility not only among federal bureaucrats, but also among the public in general and members of Congress, whose support and cooperation he needed. How could he preach economizing while spending freely and frivolously on himself? He also wanted, of course, to avoid the Congressional criticism such as had been directed against the proposed Harding gala in 1921. Although the inaugural committee was commissioned by him, it did not respond to his wishes as would a military aide, but rather as a stubborn child, determined to have his own way. The committee, it appears, felt that Mr. Coolidge should step back and let them do as they pleased. They had, after all, a plan and the money to carry it out.

On Jan. 4, 1925, Mr. Coolidge took the first step in preparing for the unofficial side of his inaugural celebration: He named William T. Galliher, a prominent Washington businessman and civic leader, active in local Republican affairs,²⁶ as head of the Washington Citizens' Inaugural Committee. Chairman Galliher immediately set about preparing an elaborate affair, the basic form and components of which had already been decided. At a press briefing held that same day, he proclaimed that Mr. Coolidge's inaugural would be "another old fashion inauguration" and "rival those of pre-war day." These words were certain to delight his fellow Washingtonians. There was to be "a great parade, drawing on troops and civilian organizations from all parts of the country," plus "a carnival and...fireworks that will bring back memories of old-fashioned inaugurations before the war."²⁷

Chairman Galliher and his associates must have been aware of the president's wish for a simple and plain inaugural. It appears that they hoped to win Mr. Coolidge over to their grand plans, which Chairman Galliher was publicizing and which they knew would receive considerable local backing. Having a popular plan in place would make it difficult for the president to reject their work. They assumed that Mr. Coolidge would not object to an inauguration "on a gala scale," as Chairman Galliher put it, "as long as much of the money that would necessarily have to be spent did not come out of the National Treasury."²⁸ In this, they were sadly mistaken. Indeed, their thinking was rather simplistic. For it was not only the source of the money involved that concerned Mr. Coolidge—but, more importantly, the impression a gala affair would convey to the country about him and the seriousness with which he viewed the economy issue. Clearly, in Mr. Coolidge's view, a gala inaugural celebration would send the country the wrong message. There were other considerations as well: The nature of the inaugural being little understood, the public would find it hard to distinguish between public and private financing; a gala inaugural would raise indirectly federal expenditures, for troops, for instance, as well as the costs for state governments that would insist on sending large delegations; and, finally, private funding would not still Congressional critics, who would happily compare the president's gala inaugural with his call for rigid economy. Finally, the committee seems to have been insensitive to the fact that the Coolidge family was still mourn-

ing the loss of Calvin, Jr.

At his press conference, Mr. Galliher also announced that there would be no official inaugural ball.²⁹ The president had stated back in December that he would not attend a ball, but he went on to say, "I approve of people that like to dance dancing as much as they wish."³⁰ By eliminating an official ball at the outset, the president and Chairman Galliher had opened the way for others to step in, as they had done in 1921, an organized a charity ball, with which the president himself could not be directly associated. This in fact would happen.

Mr. Coolidge must have read of Mr. Galliher's gala plans with apprehension. He would not sacrifice his wishes for plain and simple festivities in order to placate local Washingtonians, who simply wanted a good time or the profits that visitors would bring. Mr. Coolidge did not wish to banish all festivities—if that had been the case, he could have done so at the beginning—but merely keep them within reasonable limits or, if need be, disassociate himself from them, as in the case of the ball. Unfortunately for all, the Washington Citizens' Inaugural Committee insisted on going beyond the limits he set.

On January 13, the Senate approved \$40,000 for the inauguration; these funds were for the official ceremonies at the Capitol and related costs, such as the use of federal troops.³¹ On the same day, the president met with Chairman Galliher and informed him that "the simpler the ceremonies the better he would like them." He indicated that he had no objection to a privately conducted charity ball, as a substitute for an official one.³² Mr. Coolidge went on to indicate his preference that the parade should be strictly military in character; that is, minus marching units of a political, social, or fraternal nature. State governors, with their staffs and escorts, were to be invited to participate. As for the troops, Mr. Coolidge ruled out, for reasons of costs, bringing in West Point cadets and Annapolis midshipmen, as had been done on occasion in the past, in favor of soldiers from nearby military post.³³ Still under consideration, the press mentioned, were plans for an elaborate fireworks display for the Washington Monument grounds. There was also talk of the construction of a Court of Honor in front of the White House for the parade. Mr.

Coolidge's wishes were clear: the festivities should be kept as simple as possible. Chairman Galliher and his colleagues, however, were not so easily dissuaded from their plan for a more elaborate inaugural affair.³⁴

Time passed, and the situation was not developing to the president's liking. On February 10, not quite a month after his meeting with Chairman Galliher, the president took matters into his own hands and spoke directly to the press about his inaugural plans. The next day, in a front page article, "Coolidge Cuts Off Inaugural Pomp," The New York Times reported that a "White House spokesman"—that is, Mr. Coolidge—had "made it plain...that President Coolidge was unalterably opposed to an elaborate inaugural ceremony. The president was represented as holding that large expenditures for such a ceremony were not in harmony with the Administration's program of economy. The White House spokesman said leaders in the Congress had told President Coolidge that the Harding inaugural was elaborate enough, and that the example of simplicity and economy then set should be followed up by his successors. It was suggested that while this year's inaugural would not attract the multitudes who have journeyed here in the past, the invisible audience listening in on the radio would mount into the millions [the estimate at the time was 25,000,000 persons]. The spokesman said the president could not see his way clear to approve a parade and other features beyond the scope indicated." With these words ended the Washington Citizens' Inaugural Committee's plans for an old-fashioned, pre-war inaugural gala.³⁵

The same day that Mr. Coolidge spoke to the press, a no doubt subdued Chairman Galliher also met with them, most likely after meeting with the president. He announced that plans for the inaugural festivities, already scaled back, would be reduced further. The inauguration would be a simple one, as the president had decreed. Only a few thousand dollars would be spent. There would be no fireworks display on the ellipse, no Court of Honor on the parade route. Reviewing stands would be limited. Most of the \$60,000 in subscriptions from private individuals to support the committee's work would be returned to the subscribers.³⁶

Mr. Coolidge had finally imposed his will on the Washington Citizens' Inaugural Committee, just as Mr. Harding had finally obtained

toothpicks on his dining table.

Public Reaction

The struggle, which had gone on for over a month, had been an embarrassing one. The outcome left many Washingtonians disgruntled. The *Commonweal* described the situation very well: Overall, Mr. Coolidge had received considerable praise for "cutting off all the decorative features" of his inauguration. It went on to note, however, that while "there has been little or no published dissent," there has been "a good deal of regret, if not exactly censure...expressed in private circles."³⁷ Indeed, some Washington social leaders, still disappointed from 1921, spoke harshly of "Puritanism" in high places.³⁸ Moreover, the Washington business community was unhappy. "The austerity of the inauguration ceremonies," observed *Current Opinion*, "disgusted them for all time with Government economy, and they laugh at the picayune savings of erasers and hand towels."³⁹ The president, however, could take comfort that the public at large and the nation's press reacted positively and were fully behind his insistence on a plain and simple inaugural.⁴⁰

One powerful voice, Adolph Ochs' *New York Times*, came to Mr. Coolidge's defense against the complaining Washingtonians. On February 12, 1925, its editor wrote: "President Coolidge is faithful to his policies and his nature in discouraging flummery and expense." Indeed, if the editor had needed proof, the previous December the president had traveled to Chicago and back using an ordinary Pullman to save the taxpayers about \$1,800. He had even reduced the White House towel allotment and substituted drinking glasses for paper cups. He had drawn a line in the sand: "These next four years will be years of continuing pressure for economy. There must be no retreat." These words furnished the cornerstone for his administration.⁴¹ The *Times* went on, hitting the locals hard:

"He wants his inauguration to cost as little as possible. This breaks the hearts of some Washington citizens. In some respects theirs is still a small town, taking a delight, as neighboring places do, in craning its neck at an essen-

tially tedious 'parade,' and cheerfully putting up \$5 a head to have its toe stepped on at an inaugural ball, a curious and rather comic function.... With all sympathy for Washington tradition, it is about time for the capital to grow up and leave off childish things."⁴²

The *Times* would continue with its support. On March 1, it ran a large cartoon based on the Cinderella fable, in which "Economy" as Cinderella enters her coach leaving behind her two frowning sisters, "Extravagance" and "Waste."

The Washingtonians' complaints made their way into the press, letters, and diaries at the time, then later into memoirs, and eventually into the history books. Their complaints would leave the incorrect impression that the 1925 inauguration was dull and boring, that Calvin Coolidge had been an "inaugural Scrooge." This was incorrect. The swearing-in at the Capitol—the principal event, especially for those outside of Washington—was impressive and stately in its "unostentatious dignity."⁴³ The festive side, while restrained, was not lacking in color, nor dull. All the major traditional events were held: parade, charity ball (private), concert, receptions, dinners. Crowds and colorful bunting were everywhere. Pomp and circumstance were not missing. While it may not have satisfied all Washingtonians, it was clearly a satisfactory inauguration and compared favorably with those of the past and those yet to come. Most important, as a presidential event, the inaugural in its final form reflected Mr. Coolidge's character and policies. It sent, as we would say today, the right message.

Electoral Vote Ceremony

Since January, messengers from the individual states had been arriving at the Capitol to deliver envelopes containing certified copies of the votes of the presidential electors. On February 11, a joint session of the Congress was convened in the House Chamber to tabulate the vote. As there was no vice president, Senator Albert B. Cummins, president pro tempore of the Senate, presided over this 40-minute Constitutional ceremony. At the end, Senator Cummins declared elected Calvin Coolidge of Massachusetts and Charles Gates Dawes of Illinois with an overwhelm



1924 GOP Ticket

ing 382 votes (72%). John W. Davis, Democrat, had garnered 136 votes (26%), and Robert M. LaFollette, Progressive, 13 (2%). This ceremony was lightly attended, since spectacle and excitement were missing. The Senate was confirming the known and uncontested results of the election of an incumbent president. In the executive gallery, there were but eight individuals, one of whom was Mr. Coolidge's loyal friend, Frank W. Stearns.⁴⁴

Interlude

2-10-25: At his press conference, the White House spokesman (Mr. Coolidge, that is) revealed his wit in discussing the inaugural address. The spokesman had indicated that "an examination of the records had disclosed that President Cleveland's second inaugural speech was delivered in less than fifteen minutes." The spokesman went on to intimate that "President Coolidge's address would be short," adding that "the president was inclined to brevity in his messages and speeches, and if he put off writing the address until a few days before its delivery it was certain to be one of the shortest in history."⁴⁵ This is an example of Coolidge playing games with the press. In coming days, the press would speculate

on whether Mr. Coolidge would achieve his goal of brevity and whether he would give the speech from memory as did Grover Cleveland. Given the final product—one of the longest inaugural addresses, containing twice as many words as Cleveland's and taking almost three times as long to deliver—there was no serious attempt to model the speech after Cleveland's. This episode, however, did give the press something about which to speculate,⁴⁶ and Mr. Coolidge would draw upon Cleveland's remarks on waste and economy.⁴⁷

2-12-25: On February 12, the same date as *The New York Times* editorial in defense of Mr. Coolidge's economy, it carried a story that the Massachusetts legislature would not attend the inauguration in a body at the taxpayers' expense, as had been planned. The president's insistence on economy in connection with the inaugural, which included his wish that states not spend large sums on delegations, was cited as a reason. Instead, a special train would be engaged to bring Bay State legislators and Governor Alvan T. Fuller to Washington at their own expense, where they would spend a pleasant three days, seeing the inauguration and enjoying dinner with the president⁴⁸. ...Economy, however, was not keeping Vice-President-elect Dawes' friends away. It was announced that three special trains would carry them to Washington for the ceremony.... Governor Franklin S. Billings of Vermont indicated that Mr. Coolidge's native state would be well represented. The new governor would lead his state's delegation, composed of an escort of 60 men and the 50-piece University of Vermont band, in the inaugural parade. The cost of all this was \$20,000, which was appropriated by the legislature. Accompanying them to Washington would be a large group of officials and private citizens, including the president's father, Col. John C. Coolidge.... Governors from other states also indicated plans to attend. The largest delegation would be from Pennsylvania, headed by Governor Pinchot. Governor Smith of New York declined to attend, citing economy, but, because of complaints, agreed to send Lieutenant Governor Seymour Lowman, who was a Republican. Also declining was the Governor of Wisconsin, Senator La Follette's home state, which upset his state's regular Republicans.⁴⁹

2-21-25: Newspapers reported that Mr. Coolidge had completed the initial draft of his inaugural speech. He had first laid out the subjects he wished to address and treated them as he desired. He was now busy

revising and condensing it. His goal, citing the Cleveland example, was to keep it within 2,000 words, taking less than 14 minutes to deliver. There was again speculation as to whether he would, like Cleveland, deliver his speech from memory.⁵⁰

2-26-25: Chairman William T. Galliher of the Citizens' Inaugural Committee, Brig. Gen. S. D. Rockenback, commander of the Military District of Washington and Chief of Staff to Maj. Gen. John L. Hines, grand marshal of the parade, reached final plans for the inaugural parade. It was reported that every branch of the nation's armed services, including the tank corps, would be represented in the inaugural parade.... The *Times* reported that Mrs. A. I. Goodhue, Mrs. Coolidge's mother, had left Northampton, Massachusetts, for Washington, where she planned to stay for about two months at the White House. Mrs. R. B. Hills accompanied her.⁵¹

2-28-25: The press carried a story—incorrect, as it turned out—on an old family Bible that Mr. Coolidge would use in taking the oath. It was reported that Col. Coolidge would bring this Bible to Washington for the inauguration. Inspired by this false story, there appeared in the *Times* on Sunday, March 1, a sentimental editorial on "The Family Bible."⁵² ...That evening at 9:23 pm, an earth tremor, centered in the vicinity of Boston and felt in the Nation's Capital, shook an area along the Atlantic Coast.⁵³

3-1-25⁵⁴: On March 1, the Sunday before the Wednesday inauguration, the *New York Times* ran several favorable articles on the inaugural and the administration. It noted that since Mr. Coolidge had traveled little about the country, and even in Washington had not been much on public view, the inaugural would offer an opportunity for citizens to see their new president. More importantly, radio would allow millions to hear for the first time a president deliver his inaugural address. It was noted that "to all appearances the president will enter upon his new term in fit condition." It was at Mr. Coolidge's request that Senator Walter E. Edge of New Jersey withdrew a Congressional resolution providing for "an inquiry to devise means of enabling the president to keep in good physical trim." "Mr. Coolidge," it was observed, "has not found the executive

office a man-killing job.... The things that stand out are that he looks well, works hard, leads the simple life, as far as he is permitted to do so, and takes no stock in proposal to make his job easier."⁵⁵

Vice President-elect Charles Gates Dawes arrived in Washington with his family and large party of guests. He was met by a delegation of the Citizens' Inaugural Committee. One of his first visitors was Frank W. Stearns.

The *Times* reports that Prohibition authorities and the Washington police "are trying to make it as hard to get a drink in Washington March 4 as it is to find a waterhole on the Sahara. They want no embarrassing indiscretions for the thousands of visitors to talk about back home." The strictest vigilance was ordered, and warning issued that there would be a shakeup in any precinct failing to do its job.⁵⁶

Representative Allard H. Gasque, Democrat of South Carolina, and a member of the House Committee on the District of Columbia, suggested that president Coolidge was subject to a \$25.00 fine for breaking the sanitary regulations of the district by substituting ordinary drinking glasses for paper cups at the White House water coolers. He was also concerned about a reduction "in the allowance of towels for the washrooms from 175 to 40 daily" and mentioned "a noticeable scarcity of soap."

3-2-24: On March 2, as the inaugural week got underway, John W. Davis, the defeated Democrat nominee, who was in Washington on business, expressed to the press his regards for Mr. Coolidge: "I wish him well. I hope he has a successful administration." "I have no doubt that the country generally is behind [him]." Asked by a reporter if he would remain in Washington for the inauguration, he replied with a smile, "Well, of course, I have no real business here on that day."

Meanwhile, Vice President-elect Dawes was briefed on his role in the inauguration. He expressed surprise to a member of the Citizens' Inaugural Committee that he would have an escort of cavalry, to which they replied it was necessary. He would also have, although not provided by law, a secret service agent assigned to him for the inauguration. George A. Sanderson, Secretary of the Senate, went over with General

Dawes the ceremony in the Senate Chamber. That evening he and Mrs. Dawes dined with the president and Mrs. Coolidge. Previously, Mrs. Dawes had been a guest of the First lady at a White House tea, where she met "a number of ladies of official society."

Mr. Coolidge continued with the day's work, which included accepting Harlan F. Stone's resignation as attorney general and presenting him with his commission on the Supreme Court.⁵⁷ Stone, indeed, was sworn in this day. Earlier, on his morning walk, he inspected the reviewing stands going up in front of the White House. One of his principal concerns was whether to sign the Congressional pay raise bill; it was a situation where he appeared damned if he did, and damned if he didn't. The Senate debated an administration request to place Prohibition Bureau employees under the Civil Service Act. Senator Borah was reported attacking it on the grounds that "it seemed the common practice under civil service to gather in all the incompetents." Senator Caraway noted that without other reforms, it "would mean simply to give life jobs to persons about whom the Senate had heard many complaints." The measure was not brought forward for consideration.

Newspapers reported that visitors were beginning to arrive in town and the hotel lobbies were filling. "Bunting and flags, literally tons of them, are appearing throughout the city. The inaugural colors, buff and blue, predominate, of course, and it is expected that by tomorrow afternoon virtually every business building will match the public structures with varied-colored drapings from roof to sidewalk. Shops and large stores have their windows appropriately dressed and their proprietors are confidently hoping for a windfall." Shopkeepers, expecting a large crowd, will remain open for business on inauguration day. "This is something unheard of on inauguration days of the past." To assist visitors in moving about the Capital City, the National Geographic Society put a large map of the city, showing all the principal points of interest, in the concourse of Union Station.

The Secret Service was busy with its preparations. During the inaugural period, the president would come in contact with and be surrounded by more individuals (singly, in delegations, and in vast crowds) than during any public event of his presidency. An expanded Secret

Service detail, headed by Richard Jarvis, was ready. The president's regular agents were Jarvis and Col. Edmund W. Starling, both veterans of previous inaugurals, along with George Drescher, Walter Ferguson, James Fitzgerald, and Arnold Landvoight. For this event, other agents from the Service would augment the detail. All were trained in guarding the president in his contacts with large crowds. Mr. Coolidge would travel a path, plotted for weeks, that would be clear and thoroughly protected at every step. Jarvis would be by the president's side at all times. He would ride with him to and from the Capitol and walk with him wherever he went. "These men have mapped out a program for the inauguration which carries the chief executive along with clocklike precision." They would be stationed along the parade route and in the stands at the Capitol. Local policemen would reinforce them. Normally, the vice president had no agent assigned to him, as it was not provided by law; however, for occasions such as this, an agent would be detailed to him. As for Mrs. Coolidge, the law did provide for her protection, and agent James Haley would serve as her guard.

3-3-25: Mr. Coolidge was described in *The Times* as being "in first-rate condition and cheerful spirits for tomorrow's inauguration ceremony," but he was not excited and appeared to be approaching the big event as "a mere part of the day's work." "In his demeanor he exemplified the slogan of 'cool, calm and collected' applied to him by his supporters." He had worked hard all day, undisturbed by the activity around him. His chief task was to approve over 100 legislative measures, including the \$41,000,000 Rivers and Harbors bill.

Much of Mr. Coolidge's time was spent in receiving visitors. Among the visiting delegations was one from Wisconsin, home of Senator La Follette and the only normally Republican state that Mr. Coolidge had failed to carry in November. They were minus their Governor, a La Follette friend, who had declined to come to Washington. They wore badges carrying these words: "Wisconsin, our Governor isn't here, but we are." (Later one of the delegates shouted to General Dawes: "We deported Senator La Follette and sent him down to Florida [he was there on vacation].")⁵⁸

There were important visitors, too. At 9:30 a.m., General Dawes

walked from the New Willard Hotel to the White House to see the president, and they talked for about half an hour. They may have discussed his role as vice president. Dawes had already declined (as had Mr. Coolidge four years before) the president's invitation to attend Cabinet meetings. While there, showing his good memory, he recognized and chatted with an African-American messenger, Charles A. Reeder, whom he had known as a footman in McKinley's day. Outside, General Dawes posed for photos in front of the White House, smoking his new pipe of the under-slung variety, while refusing to answer reporters' political questions. He then went to visit his brother, Henry M. Dawes, who was resigning as comptroller of the currency.

There were also good-byes. C. Bascom Slemp, the president's secretary, who was resigning, finished his last day on the job. It was Slemp who had done much in the early days of the Coolidge presidency to ensure Mr. Coolidge's nomination. He, too, had a long talk with Mr. Coolidge and the office staff gathered to wish him well.

On his way to Washington on March 3, Col. Coolidge's train stopped over in Philadelphia. There a newspaperman asked him: "How does the president feel about the inauguration? Did his letters indicate any excitement?" "He never gets excited," Col. Coolidge replied quickly. "He's not excitable." In reply to a question as to when the president first become silent, the Colonel said: "He wasn't even a noisy baby." All had a good laugh. Before leaving Vermont, he attended a meeting of the board of directors of the Ludlow Savings Bank, of which he was a vice president. Snowdrifts had made his journey from the Notch to Ludlow a difficult one. Col. Coolidge had informed Sheriff Wallis L. Fairbanks of Windsor County that he would not be able to attend to his duties as deputy (a post he had held for 20 years) during the week, although he did not indicate that it was because of his son's inauguration. Col. Coolidge had come down on a train carrying the official Vermont delegation of 100 persons, led by Governor Franklin S. Billings, who made available to Col. Coolidge a stateroom in his private car. The group also included John Garibaldi Sargent, a friend of the president, and Morris Bradley, a native of Plymouth. They arrived in Washington on March 3 around 2:30 p.m.

On the eve of his inaugural, the president did permit himself

some entertainment. The Coolidges opened the inaugural festivities by attending a performance of "Aïda" at the new Washington Auditorium accompanied by family members and Mrs. Frank W. Stearns and Mrs. Laura Skinner. This inaugural concert was part of the official inaugural program of the Washington Citizens' Inaugural Committee, which would receive a portion of the receipts from ticket sales. The vice president did not attend due to a previously arranged dinner engagement with Owen D. Young, a fellow member of the Reparations Commission.

*Inauguration Day – Morning*⁶⁰

Coolidge kept to his regular routine as much as possible. He arose early, around 6:30 a.m., as was his custom. At 7:30, he then went for a walk around the White House grounds, inspecting the inaugural reviewing stands; at 8:00, he breakfasted with his wife and guests on a hearty meal of fruit cup, oatmeal, wheat cakes, and New England sausage; afterwards, he went to his office to sign three minor bills, answer mail, and review his inaugural speech.

John Coolidge, the president's son, who was scheduled to arrive at 7:30 by train from Amherst, had not appeared. Mr. Coolidge showed his concern by sending a servant to learn what had detained him. It turned out that the young Coolidge's train was an hour late. When John belatedly arrived at the White House, Col. Coolidge and Mrs. Coolidge sat with him as he breakfasted. On the train coming down, John had met Florence Trumbull, the daughter of the governor of Connecticut, who was attending the inauguration. Florence and John would marry in September 1929.⁶¹

When Mr. Coolidge turned to the morning papers, he read an editorial, "The Romance of Coolidge," in *The New York Times*. These excerpts might have pleased him:

"Calvin Coolidge would not be thought of as a figure of romance, yet in assuming today, in his own name and right, the Presidency of the United States he embodies a culmination as romantic as anything in our political annals."

"President Coolidge begins his full term of office today with an unquestioned hold upon the confidence of his fellow-countrymen. They believe not only that he is safe but that he is sound. They approve of the personal quality which they have found in him. They endorse his main policies and hope for public benefit from them. Today, with the utmost good-will and with quite unusual obliteration of party animus, they cherish the hope that his extraordinary success, which he has taken without one trace of vanity⁶², may continue through the next four years."

"Others had preached economy in the vague; President Coolidge urged it in the concrete and with one definite application after another. Others had talked of relieving tax burdens in general; this man attacked the problem in detail, struck his hand upon the spot and showed where the saving could be made and that cut in taxation effected."

At around 10:30, Vice President-elect Charles Gates Dawes, who was staying at the nearby New Willard Hotel, and Cabinet officials and Joint Congressional Committee on Arrangements members, headed by Senator Charles Curtis, began arriving at the executive mansion. General Dawes was dressed in a frock coat, gray trousers, and a silk hat, a pet aversion, which he normally refused to wear. Mrs. Dawes was stylishly dressed in a blue gown with a blue hat. The Coolidges received them in the Blue Room. At 10:40, the Coolidges' guests – Col. Coolidge, Mrs. A. I. Goodhue, Mrs. R. M. Hills, Miss Laura Skinner, Dr. George D. Olds of Amherst College, Mr. and Mrs. Frank W. Stearns,⁶³ Ralph Hemingway, and John Coolidge and the Dawes children – left for the Capitol. Shortly thereafter, the president, dressed in his morning suit with top hat, and Mrs. Coolidge, with the official party, stepped out of the White House, as the bugles sounded the call to the colors. After being photographed and filmed for the newsreels, the official party left for the Capitol, escorted by a cavalry unit. Senator Curtis accompanied the president and Mrs. Coolidge in their drive up Pennsylvania Avenue. No large crowds had yet gathered. There were, however, spurts of applause here and there from onlookers, which the president recognized by raising his hat, while Mrs. Coolidge smiled radiantly and chatted with Senator Curtis. Trotting along with the procession was an uninvited but not unwelcome guest, Ginger, a

bulldog belonging to Troop F of the Third Cavalry. The president arrived at the Capitol at 11:15, stopping at the steps on the Senate side.

The weather, which had frequently treated his predecessors unkindly with snow or rain or both, looked as though it was about to do the same for Mr. Coolidge. The clouds and wind were threatening. Rain appeared imminent.

At The Capitol

The president was escorted to the president's room, off the Senate Chamber, where the president signed several bills. The last to be signed, at 11:56 a.m., after a final 10 minutes of deliberation, was a measure increasing Congressional salaries from \$7,500 to \$10,000. It violated his economy program, and he signed it without enthusiasm, which he made clear to all.

The president and Mrs. Coolidge then proceeded into the Senate Chamber for the inauguration of Charles Gates Dawes as vice president, which was scheduled for noon (the Senate clock had to be set back). The vice presidential swearing-in, while impressive and dignified in its own way, had always taken place in the shadows of the presidential inauguration and in the press received but passing notice. Mr. Dawes, who was something of a showman, a "spirited personality,"⁶⁴ was determined that his inauguration would be neither routine, nor pass without notice. He succeeded.

After being administered the oath by Senator Albert C. Cummins, president pro tempore, Mr. Dawes used his inaugural address to attack the senators' right of filibuster, upsetting senators and creating something of a sensation. "It was dramatic: it was spectacular." "He furnished the sensation of the day" in what was otherwise to be "a quite inauguration." As *The New York Times* described the situation, "Some Senators looked aghast. Others leaned forward, amazement in their faces. Others took it humorously." What cause the sensation was not so much Mr. Dawes' frank words—indeed, the public and the press mostly agreed with his position on filibuster—but his "vivid oratorical mannerisms": "his shout-

ing, his pounding the desk, shaking his finger at the Senators."⁶⁵ The president, seated beneath the rostrum from which Mr. Dawes delivered his broadside, "wore a face that gave no indication of what was taking place in him mind."⁶⁶ Radio listeners missed Mr. Dawes' dramatic oration, because of a Senate rule prohibiting wires and microphones in the Chamber.

Mr. Dawes irritated Senators further by not returning to the Senate Chamber following the president's swearing-in. Without him, the Senate could not legally reassemble and arrange for an orderly adjournment and the induction of 23 new Senators could not be completed properly. Senator Frederick Hale of Maine took upon himself all blame for Mr. Dawes' failure to reappear, thereby sparing Mr. Dawes further embarrassment on this point.⁶⁷

Following the vice president's inauguration, a few minutes before one o'clock, members of the joint Committee on Inaugural Arrangements escorted Mr. Coolidge from the Senate Chamber through the Rotunda to the inaugural platform, originally constructed for the 1921 inaugural. There followed a procession consisting of Cabinet members, "glitteringly-attired" diplomats, Senators and Representatives, governors of states, and high-ranking officials and Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. The inaugural platform was erected over the high and wide stone stairway on the east portico of the Capitol Building. It was an impressive structure of Grecian architecture and with Corinthian pillars, painted white and draped with the laurel of victory. On top of the stand was a reproduction of the Great Seal. Hidden by woodwork were the amplifier horns. There was a large U. S. flag on each of the Capitol's pillars behind the platform and two flags stood in front of the stand as well. Two baskets of roses rested on the center railing and at each end were baskets of carnations and lilies. In front of the speaker's podium was a large inaugural seal and six microphones, almost hiding the speaker. Along the front of the stand were five shields, bearing the letters, "H. R." for House of Representative, "E" for the Executive Branch, "J" for the Judicial, "L" for the Legislative, and "S" for the Senate. For the most part, the platform arrangements were the same as for Mr. Harding.

On the platform, the president "looked out upon a sea of faces

with evident interest, but without display of any emotion." He had removed his top hat but retained his overcoat. Nearby to Mr. Coolidge, was his First Lady, Grace Goodhue Coolidge, wearing an ensemble dress of gray, gray shoes and stockings, and a gray hat with a plume of burnt goose. There was also his 19-year-old son, John⁶⁸; his father, Col. Coolidge, sturdy and erect;⁶⁹ and his mother-in-law, Mrs. Andrew I. Goodhue, who, some said, had not always appreciated him. Noticeably missing from this family gathering was his younger son, Calvin, Jr.⁷⁰ In front of him was "a multitude that filled the broad and deep plaza." The crowd had been gathering since early morning. Now there was no standing space available. On the roof of the Capitol were several hundred spectators, including a dozen girls precariously perched on the sloping roof of the portico far above and just back of the platform. Reserved seating for invited guests and the press was located in front and to the sides of the platform.

The dark clouds had vanished. "Brilliant sunshine" and "a breeze with a nip and a tang in it" greeted the president and a large crowd. It was "all that could be desired." Mr. Coolidge maintained "his records of always taking office under a smiling sun." Frank W. Stearns summed it up: "Coolidge weather."

On this occasion, not his father, but the Chief Justice of the United States, William Howard Taft, wearing a black skull-cap to protect him from the cool air, would administer in "a sonorous voice" the prescribed oath to a bareheaded Coolidge.⁷¹ It was the same oath Taft himself had taken on a cold and snowy day 16 years before. The male audience remained covered with the exception of a few who followed the example of Don Juan Riafio y Gayangos, the Spanish Ambassador and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, who declined to wear his ceremonial chapeau while the president wore no headgear. Where only a few had witnessed the Homestead oath-taking, now thousands in the crowded plaza would witness it; millions more hear it on the radio, see actual photos of the event in their newspapers that evening or next morning, and view newsreels of it, even that very day, at their theatres.

As Mr. Coolidge appeared, the Marine Corps Band, seated just below the platform, sounded three trumpet flourishes and then, reviving

"an old custom," burst into "Hail to the Chief."⁷² When the music ceased, Chief Justice Taft advanced and held up his right hand. Mr. Coolidge did the same. The chief justice began:

"Calvin Coolidge, do you solemnly swear that you will faithfully execute the office of president of the United States and will to the best of your ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, so help you God?" The president bowed his head and said faintly, "I do."

Mr. Coolidge then kissed the Bible, opened to the first chapter of St. John: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." This Bible had originally belonged to his grandfather, and from it, young Calvin had learned to read when between four and five.⁷³ His grandmother had later given it to him. The oath was completed at one minute to one. Calvin Coolidge was president in his own right.

The president then turned from the chief justice squarely to the front and began his inaugural address to the nation — "My countrymen...." It was precisely 1:00 p.m. Through the ether flashed his words.

*Inaugural Address*⁷⁴

The address contained 4,059 words and lasted 41 minutes. It was not "Clevelandesque" in either length or delivery, but he did use some of Mr. Cleveland's thoughts on economy and waste.⁷⁵ Indeed, it was longer by far than the addresses of most of his predecessors and successors. Wilson's addresses, for example, ran 1,802 words in 1913 and 1,526 in 1917, a total for both of 3,328 words, while Harding's, despite his reputation for verbosity, was less at 3,318. The president "spoke distinctly and deliberately, enunciating each word so clearly that every syllable was understood." "He gestured infrequently, sweeping his right arm outward when he wanted to emphasize a point." In his biography of Coolidge, Claude M. Fuess called it "one of his ablest utterances..., punctuated by frequent applause."⁷⁶ In it, Mr. Coolidge pressed the Harding-Coolidge

program of stability and steady advance in domestic and international affairs, of efficiency and economy in government, and of tax reduction and reform. Its tone reflected his confidence and faith in the nation's future, as well as his optimism that the Old World was beginning to resolve its difficulties.⁷⁷ Problems there were to be sure at home and abroad—but good, solid, steady progress was being made in resolving them. There was nothing dramatic about the address, in either content or delivery. Many of the ideas expressed in it had been previously stated in more specific and detailed form in his message to Congress of December 3, 1924. One interesting feature was the absence of any reference in the speech to the occasion. Later, in his *Autobiography*, there would be no mention of the speech or the day.⁷⁸

The president's address focused on general themes: Overview: America is adjusting to the new environment; current conditions are generally good and getting better.... Foreign Affairs: There must be no direct involvement with the problems of the Old World but, recognizing our new prominence in world affairs, we stand ready to assist with counsel and financial support where we can do good.... Military: We desire a modern military befitting our position in the world, but we have no ambitions, we menace no nation.... Party Loyalty: If democracy is to work, party members must support and carry out the program on which they were elected, otherwise the democratic process will fail.... Prohibition (not mentioning it by name): Citizens must obey the law, without which a free society cannot long exist⁷⁹ Work With Congress: Welcomes the opportunity to do so.... Implementing Our Principles: The people have rejected appeals to nationality and class; we must maintain our freedom from intolerance and religious bigotry.

Of these themes, economic issues stand out, forming the heart of the address. Mr. Coolidge saw them as his principal problem.⁸⁰ His policy was one of "economy in the public expenditure," coupled "with tax reduction and reform of taxation." Underlying this program were these thoughts:

I favor the policy of economy, not because I wish to save money, but because I wish to save people. The men and women of this country who toil are the ones who bear the cost of the

Government. Every dollar that we carelessly waste means that their life will be so much the more meager. Every dollar that we prudently save means that their life will be so much the more abundant. Economy is idealism in its most practical form.

The closing peroration is Calvin Coolidge at his best:

"...I find ample warrant for satisfaction and encouragement. We should not let the much that is to do obscure the much which has been done. The past and present show faith and hope and courage fully justified. Here stands our country, an example of tranquillity at home, a patron of tranquillity abroad. Here stands its government, aware of its might but obedient to its conscience. Here it will continue to stand, seeking peace and prosperity, solicitous for the welfare of the wage earner, promoting enterprise, developing waterways and natural resources, attentive to the intuitive counsel of womanhood, encouraging education, desiring the advancement of religion, supporting the cause of justice and honor among nations. America seeks no earthly empire built on blood and force. No ambition, no temptation, lures her to thought of foreign dominions. The legions which she sends forth are armed, not with the sword, but with the cross. The higher state to which she seeks the allegiance of all mankind is not human, but of divine origin. She cherishes no purpose save to merit the favor of Almighty God."⁸¹

Reaction

The New York Times headlined the event as follows: "CAPITOL SCENE IMPRESSIVE: Coolidge Takes Oath, Surrounded by National Leaders and Diplomats. He Is Serene, Throughout. Never Resorting to the Dramatic, He Gets Frequent Applause from the Crowds."

The Times was generous in its praise of the address. In foreign affairs, it noted a new tone, with Mr. Coolidge making "a distinct advance" towards a fuller understanding of the role of the United States in world affairs. It is observed that "He no longer speaks of the League of Nations as something with which the United States can have nothing to do." On the domestic side, it noted favorably Mr. Coolidge's call for party

responsibility and continued tax reduction and reform. In regards to the latter, it says, "he had not changed. He is even more emphatic about it after his election than he was before."

The Times was not alone in its praise of the President. *The Literary Digest* observed that "in the main, the press seems to be heartily in sympathy with the President's aspirations."⁸² An example: "He makes articulate the best thought of America," declared the Albany (New York) *Knickerbocker Press*. Naturally, Democrats did not join in the chorus of praise, issuing forth instead blasts of partisan criticism. From the heart of Dixie, the Columbia (South Carolina) *State* complained that Mr. Coolidge's economic policies were designed "to encourage and aid the rich to become still richer," while from the metropolis of New York, the *Evening World* found in the president's address evidence of "the most frankly reactionary domestic policy the country has known since the days of McKinley."⁸³

More thoughtful, though no less harsh, criticism came from other sources, such as *The New Republic*. In its March 18th issue, its editor pictured Mr. Coolidge as having the mentality a small town lawyer, not of 1925--but circa 1895. His speech "added nothing to the public knowledge of the man and of his official program." Unlike Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, he loyally held on to old ideals, rather than adapting them to conditions of the modern world. His economic ideas were "remarkably simple" and thus not designed to meet the "bristling complexity of real life," and as for his patriotism, it was extreme. "His hair, it is true, is red, but the redness of his hair is tame compared to that of his patriotic religion whose flushed and vivid hue is comparable only to the color of the hair of the wild women of Borneo." The editor, however, offered some favorable and perceptive observations about the President: "He is sincere, dignified, consistent, self-contained, not ungenerous and personally disinterested.... He is quiet, discreet and keeps his eye fastened on his work.... He takes his job more seriously than he takes himself.... In all these respects there is a refreshing absence of bunk about his personality."⁸⁴ *The New Republic* was kind in its evaluation in comparison with *The Nation*, which had nothing good to say of the speech or Mr. Coolidge. "Being but journalists we have had to read Calvin Coolidge's inaugural for our sins. Here are old muttons spread before us....[I]t is well

for the White House that Americans have forgotten how to laugh at the utterances of their public men. Yet we give thanks that it was no worse"⁸⁵

Financial circles were pleased: Judge Elbert H. Gary, chairman of U. S. Steel Corporation, characterized the speech as "able, plain, comprehensive, specific and convincing." He thought that it would be read "with admiration and satisfaction by the peoples of all nations." "It is a masterpiece," he said, "and in these times of reconstruction and readjustment it will have an influence for good throughout the entire universe."

Stocks, however, in their perverse way, sold off on the New York Stock Exchange, with some high-priced and speculative sustaining large losses. Professionals, it seems, anticipating outside buying, had decided to take profits: "selling on the news," as they say. As it happened, there was more selling than buying. Nobody took the day's movement seriously.

While Mr. Coolidge would have been among the first to deny that there is such a thing as a free lunch, a confident businessman, Samuel L. Ginsburg, the proprietor of the Mason Grills at 80 Nassau and 9 Dutch Streets in New York City, honored the president with such. In celebration of Mr. Coolidge's inauguration, he provided a free lunch to more than 5,000 patrons and their friends. Mr. Ginsburg said: "The continuance of President Coolidge in power will mean prosperity to all"—he was not alone in his thinking—"so the drinks and sandwiches are on us."

Germany was in mourning for the death of President Ebert, whose funeral was held on March 4. Dr. Hans Luther, acting Reich president, sent a congratulatory telegram to Mr. Coolidge. On inauguration day, the German finance newspaper, *Industrie und Handels Zeitung*, gloomily reported disturbing financial data. The nation's imports continued to exceed its exports; in January the deficit had almost reached \$170,000,000. This had potentially serious consequences for the Reich's ability to repay its war debt, which depends upon an export surplus.

In Japan, the Imperial Government was surprised that there was no mention in the address of a second disarmament conference, but took comfort in Mr. Coolidge's words on arms competition and the World

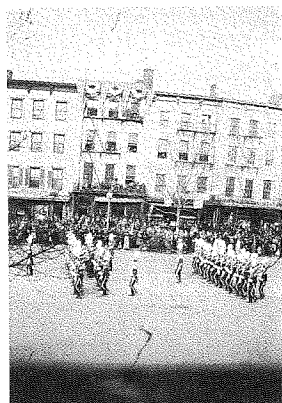
Court. His statement that the U. S. military should not be regarded "as a menace" was assailed, however, in the local press, which cited American naval maneuvers in the Pacific as a direct menace to Japan.

Return to White House

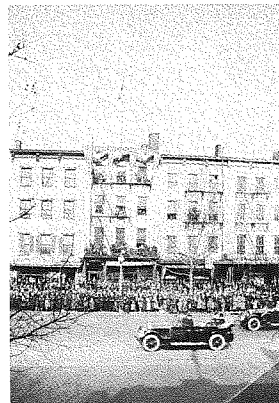
At 1:41 p.m., his grand peroration completed, the president removed his glasses, turned and shook hands with Senator Curtis. Then, as the Marine Corps Band again played "Hail to the Chief," Calvin Coolidge, now president in his own right, left the platform for his waiting car. With Mrs. Coolidge by his side, the president drove up Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House amid a warmly cheering crowd. With the ceremony over, a *New York Times* reporter noted, "the president appeared more at ease, and he smiled happily as he acknowledged the plaudits of the crowd." His escort consisted of the superintendent of police and a platoon of mounted policemen and a squadron of the Third Cavalry under Major Johnathan M. Wainwright. Along the route, police officers were stationed every 20 feet. A thin steel cable had been strung along the curb to hold back the crowd. Following the Coolidges came a multitude of cars. The first carried Vice President and Mrs. Dawes, who were escorted by a troop of the Third Cavalry commanded by Captain J. R. Finley. Members of the Cabinet and other officials of note followed in turn.

At the White House, a buffet luncheon was served the Coolidges and Daweses. It was later said that other guests, not included, felt neglected. At around 2:15 p.m., the President and Mrs. Coolidge left the White House and walked down the driveway to the north gate and then proceeded between the crowd and the railing to the small, glass-enclosed presidential reviewing stand or "kiosk." The military honor guard snapped to attention and saluted. The crowd broke into applause when they saw the President and Mrs. Coolidge enter the stand, which was heated for their comfort. The distinguished guests seated in the open stand next to the presidential box rose in their honor. Awaiting the party inside were two large baskets of red roses. The President and Mrs. Coolidge and the Vice President and Mrs. Dawes occupied the front row of seats. Later, Maj. Gen. John L. Hines, the grand marshal of the parade, joined them. Forming the second row were Col. John Coolidge and Mrs. A. G.

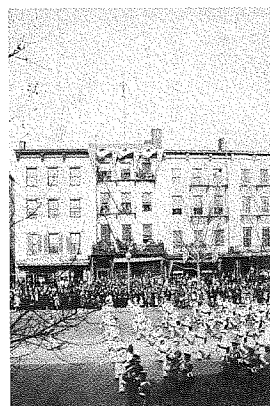
Goodhue. In third row were John Coolidge, Mrs. and Mrs. Charles E. Hughes, Chief Justice William Howard Taft, and Senator William M. Butler of Massachusetts.



"Virginia Blues," the Governor's footguard in the Inaugural Procession



President and Mrs. Coolidge, Senator Curtis being drive from the Capitol after the Inauguration to the White House, 1925



U. S. Army Band Heading the Procession. Photographs courtesy of Frank Teagle.

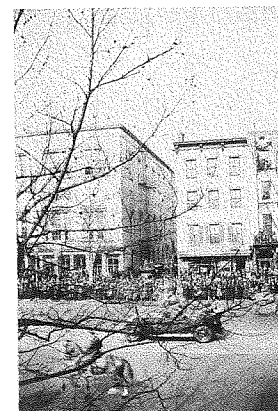
Parade

Chairman William T. Galliher of the Inaugural Committee and Brig. Gen. S. D. Rockenback, commander of the military district of Washington and chief of staff to Maj. Gen. Hines, grand marshal of the parade, had planned the inaugural parade. It was military in nature, as the president had requested. Every branch of the nation's armed services, including the tank corps, was represented. The uniforms worn were service clothes as prescribed for ceremonial occasions, and all men and officers wore their authorized medals and decorations.

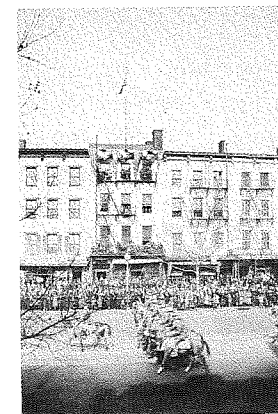
There had been concern that the parade would fail to attract a large crowd. And early in the day, when the skies were still cloudy, it appeared that this might be the case, but during the ceremonies at the Capitol, encouraged by the sun's appearance, spectators began to assemble along the one and a quarter mile parade route. In no more than 15 minutes following the ceremony's end, a good-sized crowd had gathered, up to four deep at the curb, relieving all concern about attendance, especially among the small vendors. The reviewing stands, which could accommodate about 65,000 persons, were filled. Spectators, it was said, came

mostly from the Washington metropolitan area, the last-minute rush of out-of-town visitors being less than expected.

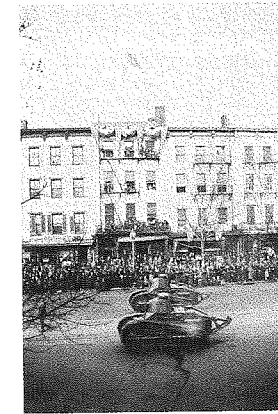
The parade was well planned and compact. It ran for 50 minutes, from 2:30 to 3:20 p.m., when the last unit passed the presidential stand. The procession consisted of two grand divisions: first, military units, composed of military personnel from stations in and around Washington;



Former president William H. Taft being driven to the Inauguration, 1925



President's Cavalry Escort in the Inaugural Procession



Baby War Tanks, Inaugural Procession, March 4, 1925

and second, governors from 19 states and their escorts. According to one estimate, participants numbered around 8,000 individuals, including 5,000 troops.⁸⁶ There was plenty to entertain the crowd: stirring music, choice horses and colorfully uniformed riders, and noted marching units, accompanied by interesting military equipment. Among the passing units was the Sixth Field Artillery, "America's Finest," which was credited with firing the first shot for America in the Great War. An artillery battalion with all white horses with red saddlecloths was a favorite with onlookers. Thirty-two tanks participated, but, reassuring to the old cavalry, only two completed the route. They crawled slowly up the avenue, emitting clouds of fumes and making a terrific racket. It was reported that as they cranked by the reviewing stand, "Mrs. Coolidge laughingly put her hands to her ears as though to shut out the din." Ignoring the prejudices of this old Southern city, two lines of African American cavalymen proudly rode by this president of Mr. Lincoln's party, who during the past year had praised

the performance of Black troops in the Great War. Moving the parade along at a snappy pace, while giving it a lively air, were several excellent bands. Of special note were the U. S. Army Band (Pershing's Own), playing "Suwanee River" for Mr. Coolidge; the 50-piece University of Vermont ROTC Band, a special treat for Mrs. Coolidge; U. S. Marine Corps Band, in their scarlet tunics, blaring "Nancy Lee;" the mounted band of the Third Cavalry; and, in their fine uniforms, the band of the Richmond Light Infantry Blues.

For most of the parade, Mr. Coolidge "was solemn and undemonstrative." He did, however, seem to take a special interest in the fine cavalry horses. After the military units came the governors, appearing in order of the date of entry of their states into the Union. Each governor was followed by two aides, color guard, and staff and escort. The president bowed or smiled as they saluted him in passing. Governors of special interest to the President and Mrs. Coolidge included Franklin S. Billings of Vermont and A. T. Fuller of Massachusetts, both of whom received especially warm greetings. Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania, who was not a presidential favorite, put on something of a show, which did not sit well with Mr. Coolidge. The Governor rode a big bay horse and wore a large black sombrero.⁸⁷ According to a *Times* reporter, "As he rode past the president's box he raised his hat in a salute, but apparently the president failed to notice the act, for he did not respond." Mrs. Pinchot, however, who rode in an automobile directly behind her husband, received a presidential smile and bow in response to her bow. One governor was the object of special attention: Nellie T. Ross, Democrat, of Wyoming, who had been elected governor to fill the unexpired term of her husband. She became the first woman governor to attend the inauguration of a president, which she considered a special honor.⁸⁸ "She appeared to enjoy the stir which her passage created." When she passed the reviewing stand, she received a warm greeting from the president and, especially, the first lady.

The other governors present were: C. J. Morley, Colorado; John H. Trumbull, Connecticut; R. P. Robinson, Delaware; Ed Jackson, Indiana; W. T. Fields, Kentucky; Ralph O. Brewster, Maine; Albert C. Ritchie, Maryland; John G. Winant, New Hampshire; George S. Silzer,

New Jersey; Angus W. McLean, North Carolina; Aram J. Pothier, Rhode Island; E. Lee Trinkle, Virginia; and Adam McMullen, Nebraska. Lieutenant governors represented New York, Seymour Lowman, and Ohio, C. H. Lewis. Cuneo H. Rudolph represented the District of Columbia.

Far from being boring, as some feared, the parade was well received. Spectators enjoyed the variety of interesting and colorful military units, the music, and the governors on display. Equally important, it was just the right length—no unending possession of unending sameness marching off into the winter darkness.⁸⁹

White House Reception

Following the parade, the president returned to the White House, where he relaxed and rested for a few minutes before the next event. At 4:30 p.m., there was a reception at which were present Vice President and Mrs. Dawes, Cabinet members and wives, and special guests. Then the president received the visiting governors, their staffs, and families. Following this group came a delegation, which must have received a warm welcome, composed of the Coolidges' old friends and neighbors from Northampton, headed by Judge Shaw, and including with them, members of Mr. Coolidge's Amherst classmates ('95) and the Massachusetts Women's Club.

Evening Entertainment

The president, following the precedent set by Mr. Wilson and Mr. Harding, had declined to attend an official inaugural ball, which had led the Inaugural Committee to withdraw plans for an official affair. Mr. Coolidge had no objection to people dancing, but thought it unbecoming for him as president to associate officially with such an exclusive and costly event. In its place, with Mr. Coolidge's blessing and the assistance of the Citizens' Inaugural Committee, was substituted an unofficial Charity Ball held at the Mayflower Hotel on the evening of March 4. As she had done in 1921 for Mr. Harding's inauguration, Mrs. John Allan

Dougherty organized the affair. Some \$30,000 was raised for children's charities. While the president and first lady were not present, the Coolidges were patrons of the ball, and the military services provided escorts, including a detail of sailors from the "Mayflower," the presidential yacht, on duty in the hotel's corridors. Mr. Coolidge's military aide, Col. Clarence O. Sherrill, was chairman of the floor committee.⁹⁰

In attendance were Vice President and Mrs. Dawes, who were the chief guests in the absence of the president. Sousa's "El Capitan" greeted the vice president as he entered the ballroom. There also were other high-ranking governmental officials, including Cabinet officials, bureaucrats, military officers, several governors, and decorated diplomats. Present, too, were politicians of all stripes mingling with prominent society figures bearing such names as Morgan, Belmont, Vanderbilt, and Hammond. Ladies wore gowns by Drecoll, Worth, and Paquin, and "coiffures of the boyish bob type." One guest was General and Mrs. William Mitchell, who was then having his troubles with the administration. During the Capitol ceremony, a small plane had circled over the crowd, generating a rumor that in it was General Mitchell who was about to drop leaflets urging a unified air service.⁹¹ Mrs. Nicholas Longworth, the wife of the new speaker of the House, was present. The vice president, who had not attended a ball in 12 years, danced away amid stately dowagers and bubbling debutantes until well after midnight, enjoying the modern steps and jazz music, provided by Vincent Lopez and Roger Wolfe Kahn and their musicians. It was reported that "he had had the time of his life, and would not have missed it for anything in the world."

The ball was a brilliant success. Under the headline, "Great Charity Ball—A Colorful Affair—Jazz and Bob Take the Places of Stately Dances and Coiffures of the Past," *The Times* reported on March 5:

"A ball came back tonight as climax to the inauguration...—a gay, sparkling ball that rivaled in attendance and brilliancy famous official affairs of other days. More than 4,000 persons... danced away the hours until dawn warned that the new presidential administration must set forth upon its four-year course and that the ceremony of its birth was at an end."

In far off Plymouth Notch, there was dancing too—of a more subdued nature, one suspects—in the meeting room above Florence Cilley's general store.

Other inaugural visitors, not inclined to dancing or hobnobbing with the Washington elite, attended a special inaugural concert at the New Washington Auditorium, at which the Daweses had appeared before the ball, or visited the Congressional Library, which was especially illuminated for the occasion.

As for the president, that evening he dined with his guests at the White House. Then, at 8:00 p.m. he left for a banquet at the Cairo Hotel, given in his honor by members of the Massachusetts legislature. Guests included State Senator Walter E. McLane, with whom Mr. Coolidge had sat for four years in the Massachusetts Senate; Senator Wellington Wells, president of the Senate; Fred E. Cooks, attorney general; Thomas W. White, chairman of the Budget Committee; Francis Prescott; and Frank W. Stearns. The president chatted with his old associates, but made no speech, his voice being strained. He returned to the White House at 9:30, where he joined the family group and then went to bed at his accustomed hour.⁹²

After such a long and tiring day, he was soon sound asleep, as, indeed, were most of his fellow citizens. And sleep well they could, for they knew the Republic was in good hands with Calvin Coolidge. So ended an almost perfect day.

The Morning After

The 30th President arose at his usual time and was in his office before 9:00 o'clock.⁹³ The morning papers awaited him. They must have pleased him with their generally favorable reaction to his inauguration, especially, editorially to his speech. One article in particular must have caught his eye. It was on the front-page of *The New York Times* and was entitled "Traits Of Coolidge Make Him Enigma: Silence and Retirement Combine to Make the Real Man Little Known." Its unsigned author sought to enlighten the public on Coolidge, "this quiet, modest man."

One suspects that this insightful piece brought a smile to Mr. Coolidge's face.⁹⁴ The flow of correspondence and official papers had not ceased for the inauguration. Putting the papers aside, Mr. Coolidge proceeded to tackle the day's work, as he would each day until his term expired on March 4, 1929.

Conclusions

The 1925 presidential inauguration of Calvin Coolidge was a successful one, on par with others before and after. The official oath-taking ceremony at the Capitol, the heart of the inaugural, was a dignified, stately affair, satisfactory in all respects, and especially historic in that radio made its inaugural debut. This ceremony, along with Harding's in 1921, set the tone and the format for many inaugurals to come. The unofficial festive celebration included a full complement of well-planned and executed events: parade, ball, receptions, dinner, and concert. As concerns traditional events, only one, fireworks, was missing. The proposed carnival was not a traditional event. The parade was short, but was interesting and colorful, and, as best we can tell, thoroughly enjoyed by the public. Many would consider its shortness a definite plus. Four years later, the parade was again strictly limited, this time to two hours. The charity ball, while not associated directly with president, received his blessing—indeed, he and the first lady were patrons—and was supported indirectly by his inaugural committee. Simply put—it was a grand success, enjoyed by all. The ball actually raised more money for charity than Hoover's four years later. In general, the scope of the festive events was in keeping with an inaugural for an incumbent president.

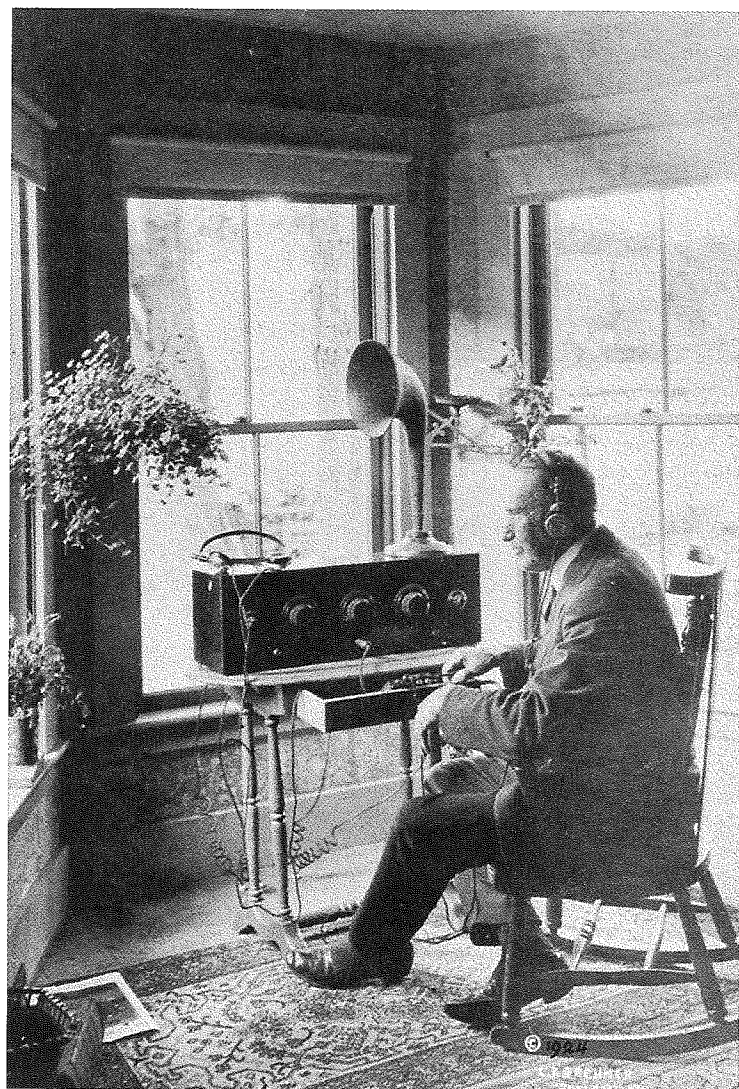
The president himself could be pleased as well. The inaugural program—official and unofficial—conformed to his character (after all it was his inaugural) and, most importantly, did not conflict with but, rather, supported his administration program of economy. It sent the right signal. The fuss with the Washington Citizen's Inaugural Committee benefited him politically by again demonstrating his seriousness about economy in government. Unfortunately, the complaints of those Washingtonians offended by his restraint did make their way into the history, leaving the incorrect impression that the inaugural was dull and colorless like, sup-

posedly, Mr. Coolidge himself. Finally, the program Mr. Coolidge presented in his inaugural address was well-received by most Americans, and thanks to radio, more Americans heard their President speak to them directly than ever before in the history of the Republic.

Mr. Coolidge's next four years would be difficult and trying ones. Congress was often uncooperative and only too ready to spend the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. There would be battles to fight, especially in the area of agricultural policy. Nevertheless, he would achieve his goals of bringing efficiency and economy to government and the reform of tax policy. In March 1929, having given the American people sound, honest government within the limits they desired, Calvin Coolidge left the presidency with his popularity greater than when he entered the office.

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This article is by Jerry L. Wallace, who served as historian/archivist of three presidential inaugural committees in 1973, 1981, and 1985. He is one of the few authorities in this area, especially concerning how inaugurals are organized and staged. Mr. Wallace is retired from the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D. C. He is now historian/archivist at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas. His interest in Calvin Coolidge and the 1920's dates from his high school years. He has been a member of the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation since 1971 and now serves as a trustee.



Col. John Coolidge at Plymouth listening in to nomination of Calvin Coolidge at Cleveland Convention, June 1924.

ENDNOTES

¹Rova Advertisement, *The New York Times* (hereafter, *Times*), Mar. 1, 1925; and various articles on radio coverage of the inauguration from the *Times* of Jan. 21 and 25, and Mar. 1, 4, and 5, 1925. The live broadcast of Mr. Coolidge's swearing-in aroused considerable interest in the new medium, boosting the sale of receivers, which, in those days before the sale of commercial airtime, was the industry's prime source of revenue. Like today with the computer, there was an effort then to bring radios into the classroom for educational uses. Many children would hear Mr. Coolidge inaugurated.

²In his second annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1924, Mr. Coolidge said: "It is gratifying to report that the progress of industry, the enormous increase in individual productivity through labor-saving devices, and the high rate of wages have all combined to furnish our people in general with such an abundance not only of the necessities but of the conveniences of life that we are by a natural evolution solving our problems of economic and social justice." *Calvin Coolidge, 1872-1933: Chronology - Documents - Bibliographical Aids* (New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1970), p. 55

Preston William Slosson, who with his *The Great Crusade and After, 1914-1928*, a social and cultural history, published in 1930 as the decade closed, might be described as its first historian, offers an early account of its prosperity in his Chapter VI. Interestingly, he noted that during the 1920's, there was considerable foreign interest in the reasons behind the success of the United States economy. There were numerous publications on the topic (he cites examples), much like those that appeared in the 1970's and 1980's on the Japanese success story. Slosson understood the significance of what was going on around him, as reflected in his quoting T. N. Carver: "The economic changes now occurring in the United States are significant in their relation to the whole history of Western Civilization—as significant perhaps as the Industrial Revolution in England...." Slosson, *The Great Crusade and After, 1914-1928* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1930), pp. 162-163.... Robert H. Ferrell said: "The 1920's saw the triumph of American industry, for its accomplishments stood at every hand. Its organization reached across the continent, its efficiency was known worldwide, its production was nothing short of astonishing.... Real wages rose, the workweek declined, unemployment was low. Real wages for industrial workers were 8 percent above the base year (1914=100) in 1921, 13 percent above in 1922, and 19 percent above in 1923. For the next two years, the figure remained at this level and then increased, reaching 32 percent in 1928. The workweek declined from 47.4 hours in 1920 to 44.2 in 1929. This meant a five-and-a-half-day week.... All the while unemployment was a low 3.7 percent between 1923-1929. This compared with 6.1 between 1911 and 1917, a fairly prosperous time for workers." *The Presidency of Calvin*

Coolidge (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1998), p. 73.... Robert Sobel noted, "In the aggregate, Americans had never been so well off, and the prospects for the future were pleasing. There were some soft spots in the economy, to be sure—coal, mining, textiles, some farm products, among others—but for the rest, prosperity was the rule." *Coolidge: An American Enigma* (hereafter *Coolidge: Enigma*) (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1998), p. 278....

An important observation from John Lukacs: The 1920's "was the last decade when the social and cultural history of the American people *was in almost every way* more meaningful than the doings and the sayings of their politicians." *Historical Consciousness* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Publishers, 1994), p. 67. I am certain that Mr. Coolidge would have wanted it no other way.

I believe that it was during the 1920's that the common man and woman came into their own. Henry A. Wallace, whose father served as Secretary of Agriculture under both Harding and Coolidge, recognize this phenomenon in a speech in May 1942: "...[T]he century we are now entering...can and must be the century of the common man." Russell Lord, *The Wallaces of Iowa* (Boston: Houghton Mufflin Co., 1947), p. 492.

³The number of radios in American home in 1924 was double that of 1923. Sobel, *Coolidge: Enigma*, p. 278. Louise Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade* (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1971, p. 146). By the end of 1926, the radio industry was becoming firmly established. The first permanent network, NBC-Red, started in December of that year, followed shortly by NBC-Blue in January 1927. Then, on February 23, 1927, President Coolidge signed the Federal Radio Act, creating the five man Federal Radio Commission. Radio was coming of age.

⁴Claude M. Fuess, *Calvin Coolidge: The Man From Vermont* (hereafter *Coolidge*) (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1940), p. 332. On December 4, 1924, Mr. Coolidge became the first President to deliver a message to Congress broadcast over the radio, an event, as Fuess noted, of national significance. Six days later, directly from the White House, Mr. Coolidge spoke again over the new medium, this time discussing his view on national issues.

⁵Sobel, *Coolidge: Enigma*, p. 301; *Washington Post*, Mar. 2, 1928.... Also, radio was not the only technological first of this inauguration. For the first time, pictures of the inauguration were transmitted electronically to the nation's leading newspapers. Once received by wire, airplanes were used to relay the pictures to other cities for publication. The desire for instantaneous distribution of the news reveals itself in the exceptional efforts made to distribute newsreel film of the inaugural ceremony, using the fastest means of transportation available. Pathé and Fox used airplanes to deliver their film to several cities across the country, but they could not outdo International News

Reel Company in offering the public the first showings. International used a high speed train, which set a world speed record, in delivering newsreel film of the event to New York, where it was shown in Broadway theatres at 4:12 p.m. *Times*, Mar. 5, 1925

⁶It was not until the ratification of the 20th Amendment (proposed by Congress March 2, 1932; ratification completed January 23, 1933) that inauguration day was move up to January 20th; the first inauguration to be celebrated on the new date was Franklin D. Roosevelt's second in 1937. The amendment also provided for the oath to take place at noon. Previously, no time had been specified. In 1925, Mr. Coolidge would take the oath just prior to 1:00 pm.... It is worth noting that in February 1926, Senator George Norris of Nebraska proposed an amendment to the Constitution changing, along with the date Congress convened, the inauguration date to noon on the third Monday of January. *Americana Annual: 1927* (New York: Americana Corp., 1927), p. 857

⁷For details, see Jim Cooke's "Dramatis Personae: Plymouth Notch, Vermont, Thursday—Friday, August 2-3, 1923," pp. 18-39, and Lawrence E. Wikander's "The Second Oath, pp. 40-43, in *The Real Calvin Coolidge*: 13 (Plymouth Notch, VT: Coolidge Memorial Foundation, 1998).

⁸Donald R. McCoy, *Calvin Coolidge: The Quiet President* (hereafter, *Quiet President*) (New York: the Macmillan Co., 1967), p. 265.

⁹The first inaugural held outdoors before the people in Washington, D. C., and the first to take place on an inaugural platform built for the occasion was that of James Monroe on March 4, 1817. Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade*, pp. 27-28. Ms. Durbin provides vignettes of each Presidential inauguration from Washington's through Nixon's first in 1969.

¹⁰Since Coolidge, two major changes involving physical location have taken place in the Capitol ceremonies: The first took place in 1937, when the vice president's swearing-in was moved from the Senate Chamber to the outside platform and the vice president's inaugural speech eliminated, and in 1981, when the ceremonies were moved from the east front to the west side of the Capitol building.

¹¹See Neil MacNeil's *The President's Medal: 1789-1977* (hereafter *President's Medal*) (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc./Publisher) for a good account of how inaugural committee organization began and has since developed....See Presidential Inaugural Ceremonies Act of August 6, 1956, 70 Stat. 1049.

¹²Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade*. See pages 1-10 for an account of Washington's two inaugurals; see also the pertinent sections on second inaugurals.... Eisenhower was

eager to balanced the federal budget and had made it a campaign issue. He and his party were much embarrassed in 1957 when his inaugural committee reported that it had failed to cover its costs. The total loss was \$160,438. Neil, *Presidential Medals*, p. 123.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 76; and McLean, *Father Struck It Rich*, 1936), pp. 254-256.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 76-78. There were other unspoken considerations as well: President Wilson's physical condition was a matter of concern. As it turned out, the President was able to ride to the Capitol with Mr. Harding, but was unable to remain for the ceremonies. Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade*, pp. 145-146. Then, just before the inauguration, on March 2nd, the popular former Speaker of the House Champ Clark died. This, of course, added to the pressure for a subdued inaugural. Clark's funeral was scheduled for the Capitol on the morning following Harding's inauguration. *Champ Clark: Memorial Addresses* (Washington: GPO, 1922), p.85.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 77-78. As concerns Coolidge's statement, Neil MacNeil has said: "The difference between Harding and Coolidge was that Coolidge really meant what he said."

¹⁷Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade*, pp.145-148; and Robert K. Murray, *The Harding Era* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), pp. 109-112.

¹⁸McCoy, *Quiet President*, p.p. 133-134; and Fuess, *Coolidge*, pp. 282-283. After the speech was over, Fuess quotes Mr. Coolidge as saying, "I don't feel half as important as I did on the day I graduated from Black River Academy." Also see Ishbel Ross, *Grace Coolidge and Her Era* (hereafter *Grace Coolidge*) (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1962), pp. 60-61, and Calvin Coolidge, *The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge* (hereafter *Autobiography*) (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corp., 1929), pp. 156-158.

¹⁹MacNeil, *President's Medals*, p. 79; Evalyn Walsh McLean, *Father Struck It Rich* (Boston, 1936), pp. 254-256; and Ross, *Grace Coolidge*, pp. 61-62.

²⁰From Irvin Hood Hoover, *Forty-Two Years in the White House* (hereafter *Forty-two Years*) (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1934), p. 143: "It was a most unusual inauguration day, quite different from anything that had gone before. The occasion had always been looked upon as one for celebration. Certainly, there was nothing of the kind this time. I am sure the President would have had even less had it been physically possible. It was remarked by those who knew that he would have liked to walk to the Capitol, take the oath of office, and return to the White House for his

nap!"...Then there is this from William Allen White, *Puritan in Babylon: The Story of Calvin Coolidge* (hereafter *Puritan*) (New York: The Macmillan Co, 1938), p. 316: "He had no taste, no talent for and little patience with raw splash, the strut and splendor, the solemn mockery of a triumphal pageant."

²¹Coolidge, *Autobiography*, p. 216:

²²*Ibid.*, p. 190.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 157.

²⁴McCoy, *Quiet President*, p. 164. "Weaned on a pickle" comes from Alice Roosevelt Longworth. McCoy says the story made most of Washington laugh when she circulated it. One senses that regardless of appearances, Mrs. Longworth was not really the Coolidges' friend.

²⁵Francis Russell, *The Shadow of Blooming Grove: Warren G. Harding in His Times* (hereafter *Shadow of Blooming Grove*) (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1968), p. 438.

²⁶*Times*, Jan. 4, 1925. William Thompson Galliher (b. July 29, 1856; d. June 30, 1929) was a prominent Washington businessman (self-made, it appears), with varied interests, principally in banking, lumber, and real-estate, and a public-spirited civic leader, much involved in fraternal and business organizations and in community and charity work. In religion, he was a Methodist and held the high post of trustee and treasurer of the Methodist Board of Temperance, Prohibition, and Public Morals. He was active in local politics, serving as chairman of the District of Columbia Republican Committee, 1916-24, and as a delegate to the 1924 Republican National Convention. For further details see *Who's Who in American: 1926-27* (Vol. 14). Mr. Galliher later served as treasurer of Herbert Hoover's 1929 inaugural committee.

²⁷*Times*, Jan. 4, 1925.

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰Howard H. Quint and Robert H. Ferrell, eds., *The Talkative President: the Off-the-record Press Conference of Calvin Coolidge* (hereafter *The Talkative President*) (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1964), pp. 40-41. Hendrik Booraem states that Col. John Coolidge, like his son, did not dance but had no objections to others dancing. His attitude was based on personal preference, not religious grounds.

As for young Calvin, Booraem says, "Most young people seem to have enjoyed these affairs [dances] and joined in energetically, but not Calvin. As often as not, he found a health reason for not going to dances. When he went, he avoided dancing." Booraem also notes that there was a local saying, "The Coolidges never dance." See Hendrik Booraem, *The Provincial* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1994), pp. 61, 64, & 210.

³¹*Times*, Jan. 14, 1925.

³²In 1921, it was estimated that it would cost \$200,000 to prepare the Pension Building for the official inaugural ball. See MacNeil, *President's Medal*, p. 77.

³³In 1921, it was estimated that it would cost \$62,000 to bring the cadets and midshipmen in for the inaugural. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

³⁴See *The Times*, Jan. 14, 1925, for a full report on Chairman Galliher's January 13th meeting with the President; also, *Ibid.*, Jan. 21, 1925..... In January 1953, despite Dwight Eisenhower's request that the parade be kept short and simple, his inaugural committee was determined that it be grand. It was. The parade went on until almost 7:00 p.m., when the last elephant passed. Like Coolidge, he vetoed fireworks display for the evening. Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade*, p. 178.

³⁵*Times*, Feb. 11, 1925; and Quint and Ferrell, *Press Conferences*, 41-42. In speaking on February 10, the White House spokesman had gone on to reveal his wit in discussing preparations for the inaugural address. The spokesman had indicated that "an examination of the records had disclosed that President Cleveland's second inaugural speech was delivered in less than fifteen minutes." The spokesman went on to intimate that "President Coolidge's address would be short," adding that "the President was inclined to brevity in his messages and speeches, and if he put off writing the address until a few days before its delivery it was certain to be one of the shortest in history."... At a January 23 press conference, Mr. Coolidge had said: "I don't know what I am going to put in my inaugural address. I suppose that will be a standard question from now until the address gets into the hands of the press." He then went on to invite them to submit to him any ideas they might have. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³⁶*Times*, Feb. 11, 1925; also, an article in Feb. 24, 1925, issue, which notes that Mr. Coolidge's inaugural, while aimed towards economy, "will be a much more pretentious affair than that of four years ago."

³⁷*Commonweal* (Feb. 25, 1925), 421-422.

³⁸Within Washington social and political circles, there were those who never accepted Mr. Coolidge. They looked down their noses on him and were quick to criticize.

Mr. Coolidge described the situation well in his *Autobiography*, p. 166:

"[Washington's] official circles never accept any one gladly. There is always a certain unexpressed sentiment that a new arrival is appropriating the power that should rightfully belong to them. He is always regarded as in the nature of a usurper."

In Boston, Mr. Coolidge had encountered social condescending attitudes before from its Back Bay elite. "I have known Calvin Coolidge," Senator Henry Cabot Lodge is quoted as saying, "only as long as it has been necessary to know him." White, *Puritan*, pp. 172-73, 177. And again in 1920 at the Chicago Convention, "Nominate a man who lives in a two-family house? Never!" Allison Lockwood, *A President in a Two-Family House: Calvin Coolidge of Northampton* (Northampton, MA: Northampton Historical Society, 1988), p. 1. They were the same snobbish types who pronounced that the President looks as though "he had been weaned on a pickle." Alice Roosevelt Longworth, *Crowded Hours* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933), p. 337. Ishbel Ross noted this attitude: "Mrs. Coolidge had already felt the chill of Back Bay, even though she and her husband exemplified the best New England traditions of thrift and simple taste. In her early days in Washington there was some of the same hauteur among the sophisticates toward the austere Coolidges, and one New England hostess icily inquired: "How do you suppose they will adapt themselves to using an automobile?" *Grace Coolidge*, p. 64.

³⁹"The Coolidge Gospel of Economy," *Current Opinion* (April 1925), p. 397.

⁴⁰There was some negative comment in the press, however. The April 1925 issue of *Current Opinion* (pp. 397-398) quoted Denver's *Rocky Mountain News* as saying, "Practical politicians are wondering whether the White House may not be going too far in its thrift policy for the need of the times. It is a far cry back to dear old Ben Franklin. What was all right for the eighteenth century may not be all right for the twentieth...." More on this point: As his term neared its end, Mrs. Coolidge remembered Mr. Coolidge telling a member of his Cabinet: "I know how to save money. All my training has been in that direction. The country is in a sound financial condition. Perhaps the time has come when we ought to spend money. I do not feel that I am qualified to do that." Ross, *Grace Coolidge*, p. 226, and McCoy, *Quiet President*, p. 389.

⁴¹What Mr. Coolidge meant by economy was *good business administration*. See *Times*, Mar. 1, 1925: "From all appearances it is an attractive policy to the majority of Americans." He insisted that the taxpayers' money be spent wisely and properly on needed and appropriate activities and projects and that government administration be carried out in an efficient, effective, and orderly manner. He was willing to spend

money on worthy undertakings befitting the Republic, but not on wasteful boondoggles or pork-barrel projects or to satisfy special interests.... Mr. Coolidge desired a Federal governmental establishment worthy of the American people and reflective of their new position of prominence in the world. This would take concrete form in plans for the Federal Triangle, which was to include a national archives building and a national gallery of art. But, in all of this, Mr. Coolidge was determined that the American taxpayer would get his/hers money's worth. On May 25, 1926, he signed the Public Buildings Act appropriating funds (around \$60,000,000) and giving the Public Buildings commission over what buildings were to be built and their cost and location. Design and construction would come under Andrew Mellon, the Secretary of the Treasury. See Chapter IV, "A Mandate for Grandeur: 1923-29," in Sally Kress Tompkins' *A Quest for GRANDEUR* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993), pp. 37-52)

⁴²As noted these comments are from *The Times* of February 12th. A follow-up article appeared in the post-inaugural March 5th issue. "Trade in miniature elephants, bronze badges, tiny replicas of the Capitol and the Washington Monument and similar articles hawked along the sidewalk seemed to be pretty dull today. Perhaps Washington is a last getting wise. On the other hand, Washington turns out—for the crowd that watched the parade was in overwhelming majority a local crowd—to see the same old exhibits that have been on display every four years since the beginning to time. The marching clubs march in automobiles now, but otherwise it is the same old story. The average small town has revolted against precisely this thing. After seeing the same old Fourth of July parade every year—the band and the fire engine, the Knights of Pythias and the Junior Order of United American Mechanics—most small towns have turned like the worm in recent years, and have insisted that either the parade must have some new element, such as the Klan in robes and masks, or there must be no parade at all. But Washington meekly submits to the same old stuff." (This sounds like something from Mencken's *American Mercury*.)

⁴³Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade*, p. 153-154.

⁴⁴*Times*, Feb. 12, 1925, and *Presidential Elections Since 1789* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly, 1975), p. 87.

⁴⁵*Times*, Feb. 11, 1925.

⁴⁶At a January 23 press conference, Mr. Coolidge had said: "I don't know what I am going to put in my inaugural address. I suppose that will be a standard question from now until the address gets into the hands of the press." He then went on to invite them to submit to him any ideas they might have. See Quint and Ferrell, *The Talkative President*, p. 25.

⁴⁷See note 75 below.

⁴⁸See *Inauguration Tour of the Massachusetts Legislature, March 3-7, 1925*. This pamphlet was issued by the Colpitts Tourist Co. of Boston, which was in charge of arranging the tour. The Committee-in-Charge consisted of Hon. Walter E. McLane and Rep. Victor F. Jewett. The tour group consisted of around 115 members, including Governor Alvan T. Fuller, members of the State Legislature, and their wives and guests. The group left Boston from South Station on the "Federal Express" at 7:30 pm on March 3rd and arrived at Washington's Union Station at 8:30 am, inauguration day. While in Washington, the group stayed at the Cairo Hotel (located a few blocks north of the White House). Besides the inauguration itself, they attended the theatre and visited the Congressional Library and various historic sites. The group return to Boston on the "Colonial Express," arriving Saturday, March 7th, at 8:05 pm.... Undoubtedly, the highlight of their stay was the dinner for President held at the Cairo on the night following his inauguration. Mr. Coolidge arrived about 8:00 pm and spent an hour and half with the group. He enjoyed himself chatting with old friends, but he gave no speech. Afterwards, Mr. Coolidge returned home to his family and shortly was in bed. *Times*, Mar. 5, 1925.

⁴⁹*Times*, Feb 13, 21, 1925.

⁵⁰*Times*, Feb. 22, 1925.

⁵¹*Ibid*, Feb. 27, 1925.

⁵²*Ibid.*, Feb. 28 and Mar. 1, 1925.

⁵³*Ibid.*, Mar. 1 and 2, 1925.

⁵⁴The items that follow in this "Interlude" section cover the immediate pre-inaugural period and are taken, unless otherwise noted, from *The New York Times*, beginning with the Sunday, March 1st issue, and continuing through March 4th, inauguration day. For reference purposes, an item for March 2nd, for example, usually will be found in the following day's issue, in this example, March 3rd. With March 1st, the *Times*' inaugural coverage intensifies; one finds numerous articles, leading up to the swearing-in itself, on various aspects of the inauguration and related stories on Mr. Coolidge and his Administration. *The Times*' overall coverage of the inauguration is excellent, especially in that it is thorough while not being overly detailed or redundant. The paper, of course, was then Republican in sympathy, but, apart from editorials, the coverage was balanced.

⁵⁵Not all was so well. The following is from an article, "President Coolidge's

Efficiency: His System Brings Joy in Official Life," by George W. Hinman, Jr., in *The Current History Magazine* (August 1925), p. 711: "With his party's endorsement won, the president turned at once to the work of building a machine to carry on the national campaign. Suddenly and viciously fate struck a stunning blow—the son that bore his name died. The man who had fought unscathed through one of the most bitter political battles of recent years tottered under the force of this stroke. For the first time in the memory of those who knew him best Calvin Coolidge was visibly affected. The power of his marvelously developed self-control could not conceal the overwhelming sorrow. Slowly the President regained his poise and shouldered the task of directing the campaign that meant a great personal triumph or repudiation. He won again."...In September 1926, Mr. Coolidge would make this statement at a press conference at his vacation retreat, "I sometimes tell people that I have one distinction. I suppose I am the healthiest President that they ever had." Quint & Ferrell, *The Talkative President*, p. 47. For an interesting perspective on Mr. Coolidge's mental and physical health at this time, see Robert E. Gilbert's *The Mortal Presidency*, Chapter 2, "The Trauma of Death: Calvin Coolidge."

⁵⁶Chairman Gallihier was a good Methodist and as such, most likely a strong supporter of Prohibition. Perhaps he encouraged this enforcement activity. For another factor, see note 79 below.

⁵⁷It is interesting to note that President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who considered Mr. Coolidge a reactionary, would raise his predecessor's sole appointee to the Supreme Court to the Chief Justiceship.

⁵⁸The governor of Wisconsin, Senator La Follette's home state, which he had carried in 1924 with 54% of the vote, had declined to participate in the inauguration, which upset regular Republicans in the Legislature. On inauguration day, however, to the surprise of all, progressive legislators secured unanimous support of a resolution for two minutes of silence in honor of Mr. Coolidge's induction in Washington. One suspects they saw humor in this moment of silence for Silent Cal. *Times*, Mar. 5, 1925.

⁵⁹In a matter of days, the Senate would reject Charles Beecher Warren as attorney general. Then Mr. Coolidge would turn to Mr. Sargent, who was confirmed unanimously. See McCoy, *Quiet President*, pp. 280-281.

⁶⁰Unless otherwise noted, the details provided on the inauguration are taken from various articles appearing in *The New York Times* for March 4th and 5th, with follow-up items from March 6th.

⁶¹The young John Coolidge arrived in the morning about 8:00 and left that evening around 7:00. He wanted to stay longer, but his father felt "he could not spare the time from college." Hoover, *Forty-Two Years*, p. 142.

⁶²Soon after Mr. Coolidge's inauguration, Congress authorized the issuance of special commemorative half-dollar to mark the Sesquicentennial of American Independence. His portrait, along with that of George Washington, appeared on the obverse. This is the only time a serving president has been depicted on a United States coin (all other have been deceased). It is difficult, indeed impossible, to image the Congress of the United States, composed of many great egos, authorizing such an exceptional honor other than for a man lacking all appearance of vanity, that is, like Calvin Coolidge. See R. S. Yeoman, *A Guide Book of United States Coins* (Racine, WI: Western Publishing Co., 1980), p. 211, for a picture of the coin and further details.

⁶³William Allen White said of Frank W. Stearns in *Puritan in Babylon*, p. 311: "Stearns was really the belle of the ball and seemed to be, more than anyone else in the White House, radiant and happy."

⁶⁴General Dawes was noted for his unusual under-slung pipes (the American Legion, Post #64, of Marietta, Ohio, Dawes' birthplace, presented him with a gavel fashioned like the famous pipe and made from the piano stool on which he sat while practicing as a boy), his phase, "Hell 'n Marie!" and interest in driving trains. *Times*, Mar. 5, 1925. As concerns the latter, he brought his favorite engineer, George A. Miller, formerly of the Pennsylvania Railroad, with him to Washington for the inauguration. *Ibid.*, Mar. 2, 1925.

⁶⁵The reason for Dawes' attack on filibustering (Senator Rule 22) was its use by certain senators to keep important legislation, such as the Muscle Shoals bill, from coming to a vote, especially at the end of a session. The day following Dawes' speech, Senator Oscar W. Underwood of Alabama introduced a resolution, which would have, if adopted, placed a limit on debate, thereby ending filibustering tactics. The Senate Rules Committee, however, would not report it. See the front-page article, *Times*, Mar. 6, 1925. It is worth noting that the *Nation* in March 1897 had suggested that Vice President Garret A. Hobart sharply criticize the Senate for allowing filibusters, but Hobart's remarks fell short of Dawes' in intensity of words and body movement. Stephen W. Stathis and Ronald C. Moe, "America's Other Inauguration," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (Fall 1980), 570.

⁶⁶In *Puritan in Babylon*, p. 314, White said "Coolidge's face hardened, expressing disapproval." He goes on to note that "If Dawes irked the new [sic] President, nowhere does he record his irritation." White also claims that Dawes was "nominated by Congressional leaders, the men who nominated Harding," at the Republican Convention; see p. 305.... Claude Fuess said in his *Calvin Coolidge*, p. 361: Coolidge "listened with poorly veiled indifference to Dawes' unexpected and ardent attack on the Senate's time-honored right to filibuster."... As for Coolidge's reaction, he may have been relieved to see Dawes weakened. Dawes had been impressive—up

to this point, that is. There was talk of General Dawes as a possible presidential candidate in 1928. Now, this talk would fade ("That day," according to Robert Sobel in *Coolidge*, p. 321, "he took the first step toward becoming a joke.") and very soon indeed, after he missed the Warren tie vote in the Senate, it would become a whisper. It also worth noting as a curiosity that the one vote against Dawes in the Michigan delegation at the Republican Convention was cast by Charles Beecher Warren, who voted for Herbert Hoover; see White, *Puritan*, p. 322.

⁶⁷General Dawes' troubles were not yet over. Word reached him on March 5 that his dog, Marico, a wire-haired fox terrier, had disappeared from his home in Evanston, Illinois. *Times*, Mar. 6, 1925.

⁶⁸John Coolidge went on to live a long, productive, and satisfying life. His later years were dedicated to restoring and perpetuating his father's memory. He died on May 31, 2000, at the age of 93.

⁶⁹Just a little over a year later, on March 18, 1926, in his 81st year, Col. John C. Coolidge, would cross over. He rests with his ancestors and immediate family in the hillside cemetery at Plymouth Notch.... Writing to his father on August 2, 1925, Mr. Coolidge said this: "It is two years tonight since you woke me to bring the message that I was President. It seems a very short time. I trust it has been a great satisfaction to you. I think only two or three fathers have seen their sons chosen to be President of the United States. I am sure I came to it largely by your bringing up and your example." Edward C. Lathem, editor, *Your Son, Calvin Coolidge* (Montpelier, VT: Vermont Historical Society, 1968), p.211.

⁷⁰For the president and his family, who were still in mourning, young Calvin's loss greatly diminished the pleasure and happiness normally associated with such a grand occasion. About the president, there was an air of melancholy. See note 55 above.

⁷¹Due to a technical problem in switching microphones, a few words of the first part of the oath-taking were not heard by the radio audience.... There were other technical problems as well involving the amplifiers. Some complained that at certain locations in the Capital plaza, they could not hear as well as in 1921. Also, in the area immediately around the speaker's podium, the amplifiers produced an annoying echo effect.

⁷²Before the ceremony, the Band played a medley of songs, including "When You and I Were Young, Maggie," which was popular around the time Mr. Coolidge was at Amherst. *The Outlook* (Mar. 11, 1925), 408. (This was also a favorite song of President and Mrs. Harding, who used to sing it with friends at White House gatherings. Mark Sullivan, *Our Times: 1900-1925: The Turn of the Century* [New York]: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936], p. 259.)

⁷³There was confusion about the Bible to be used in the ceremony. It had been first been announced that a large family Bible, including genealogy, would be used. It was to be brought down from Vermont by Col. Coolidge. This led the *New York Times* (March 1st) to write a sentimental editorial about such family Bibles.

⁷⁴The full text of Mr. Coolidge inaugural address was reprinted in *The Times* on March 5th. The full text may also be found in *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1989), pp. 247-256; and in Mr. Coolidge's *Foundations of the Republic: Speeches and Addresses* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926), pp. 193-205.

⁷⁵This is pertinent section from Grover Cleveland's second inaugural address of March 4, 1893. It is taken from *Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States* (hereafter *Inaugural Addresses*) (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1989), pp. 189-190.

"Every thoughtful American must realize the importance of checking at its beginning any tendency in public or private station to regard frugality and economy as virtues which we may safely outgrow. The toleration of this idea results in the waste of the people's money by their chosen servants and encourages prodigality and extravagance in the home life of our countrymen.

"Under our scheme of government the waste of public money is a crime against the citizen, and the contempt of our people for economy and frugality in their personal affairs deplorably saps the strength and sturdiness of our national character.

"It is a plain dictate of honesty and good government that public expenditures should be limited by public necessity, and that this should be measured by the rules of strict economy; and it is equally clear that frugality among the people is the best guaranty of a contented and strong support of free institutions."

Robert Sobel offered this insightful comment in his *Coolidge*, p. 6: "Of all the presidents, an argument might be made that Coolidge resembled Cleveland more than any other."...Horace Green observed in his *Life of Calvin Coolidge* (New York: Duffield & Co., 1924), p. 99-100, that no president since Cleveland had been so strong a supporter of the party system of government.

⁷⁶Not all historians agreed with Dr. Fuess' assessment: William Allen White: "His message, which gave color to the superficial political thought of his day." White, *Puritan*, p. 312. "Long before the forty-seven minutes had passed which were

required to deliver his inaugural address, the crowd began milling about, scattering to their places in the parade, drifting to their mid-afternoon trains." White, *Puritan*, p. 315.... Donald R. McCoy: "...The President faced the radio microphones and the audience to tell how good things were in America and to urge the defense and realization of the nation's unique ideals.... The applause the President received was deservedly polite." *Quiet President*, p. 265

⁷⁷That October the Locarno Agreements would be signed. "...I regard it [the agreement]," Mr. Coolidge said, "as one of the most important events that have occurred since the adoption of the Dawes Plan." Quint and Ferrell, *The Talkative President*, p. 207. For a time, the agreement produced in Europe a favorable and hopeful climate, known as the "Spirit of Locarno."

⁷⁸It also worth noting that while Mr. Coolidge's formal inauguration is not mentioned in the *Autobiography*, there are discussions of the 1921 Harding affair, the Homestead Inaugural, and other Massachusetts oath-takings (see pp. 108, 157, 175).... William Allen White in *Puritan in Babylon*, p. 315, said this: "He has left not a scratch of the pen to recall his satisfaction, much less a man's natural vanity."

⁷⁹On February 15, 1924, Senator Frank L. Greene of Vermont, an innocent bystander, was accidentally shot and seriously wounded in a shoot-out between Prohibition agents and bootleggers on the streets of downtown Washington. Mark Sullivan, *Our Times: 1900-1925: Volume VI: The Twenties* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), P. 611. See also note 56 above.

⁸⁰The problem of government action which [carries] its benefits into the homes of all the people [is] almost entirely confined to the realm of economics." Calvin Coolidge, *The Autobiography* (New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corp., 1929), p.181.

⁸¹This is from William Allen White, *Puritan in Babylon*, p. 315: "Probably nothing he said or wrote elsewhere represents so perfectly the Coolidge ideal, the Coolidge literary style, which in itself deeply reveals the man; a sentimentally aspiring man, full of good will, a man not without an eye to the political main chance, a man always considering the vote-giving group. Shrewdly eloquent about accepted beliefs, never raising debatable issues, a good man honestly proclaiming his faith in a moral government of the universe."

⁸²*Literary Digest* (Mar. 14, 1925), 7. The *Digest* compiled and printed press reaction—brief excerpts—to the inaugural address from around the country.

⁸³Quoted in the *Literary Digest* (Mar. 14, 1925), 7.

⁸⁴"The Week," *The New Republic* (March 18, 1925), 83-84. After finishing with Mr.

Coolidge, the editor turn his attention to Franklin Roosevelt, then still a private citizen, who was proposing to revive the fortunes of the Democratic Party through a return to Jeffersonian values. The editor did not see much value in Mr. Roosevelt's proposal.

⁸⁵"The Inaugural," *The Nation* (Mar. 18, 1925), 283-284.

⁸⁶For Wilson's 1917 inaugural, with war in the air, 25,000 troops had marched. See Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade*, p.144.

⁸⁷Former Governor Pat Neff of Texas had given Pinchot the hat to wear at the Republican Convention, but Pinchot was unable to do so, as the voters rejected Pinchot as a convention delegate.

⁸⁸Miriam "Maw" Ferguson, who had won election as governor of Texas, chose not to attend the inauguration. She was only nominally governor; her impeached and removed husband still ran the show. Paul A. Carter, *Another Part of the Twenties* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p.102.

⁸⁹See listing in *The Times*, Feb. 27 and Mar. 5, 1925.

The order of the parade was as follows:

Platoon of mounted Metropolitan Police

Grand marshal, Major Gen. Hines and attendants

Color guard

Chief of staff to the grand marshal, Brig. Gen. Rockenbach

Grand marshal's staff

US Army Band ("Pershing's Own")

FIRST GRAND DIVISION

Marshal of the First Grand Division, Major Gen. Marlin Craig, and aides

Two messenger officers in motorcycle aide cars

• Regular US Army Section, Col. H. C. Hawkins Commanding, with staff

--Commanding Officer and Staff

--3rd Battalion, 12th US Infantry

--Engineer band

--Battalion of engineers

--56th Service Squadron, Air Service

--Two lines of Negro cavalymen

--3rd Cavalry band

--1st Battalion, 16th Field Artillery

--6th Field Artillery Band

--2 Battalions, 6th Field Artillery

--Tank School band

--Battalion of light tanks

• Navy Section, Adm. H. H. Hough Commanding, with staff

--Quantico Marine Band

--5th Marine Regiment

--Navy Band

--Seamen Regiment

SECOND GRAND DIVISION

--Marshal of the Second Grand Division, Major Gen. Anton Stephan of the District of Columbia National Guard, and aides

--Two messenger officers in motorcycle aide cars

--US Marine Band

--Commissioners of the District of Columbia, escorted by 16 mounted officers of the 121st Regiment of Engineers of the District of Columbia National Guard
 --Governors of the states, appearing in order of the date of entry of their States into the Union. Each Governor followed by two aides, color guard, and staff and escort. Governors included: F. S. Billings of Vermont; A. T. Fuller of Massachusetts; and J. G. Trumbull of Connecticut.

⁹⁰The last official inaugural ball had been held in the Pension Building in March 1909 for William Howard Taft. There were no inaugural balls under Woodrow Wilson. In 1921 and again in 1928, there were charity balls similar to Mr. Coolidge's, with the vice president in attendance. In 1933, the official ball returned for the first time since Taft, but Franklin D. Roosevelt would not attend. The affair was rescued only when it was agreed that Mrs. Roosevelt would attend in his stead. There were no balls at Roosevelt's three other inaugurals. The inaugural balls, as we know them today, finally came back with Harry S. Truman's grand inaugural in January 1949. See Durbin's *Inaugural Cavalcade*.

⁹¹Durbin, *Inaugural Cavalcade*, p. 153.

⁹²See note 48 above for further details concerning the Massachusetts group.

⁹³*Times*, Mar. 6, 1925. The AP story noted: "Apparently unfatigued by the strenuous activities of inauguration day, the President was at his desk before 9 o'clock this morning and immediately plunged into routine work."

⁹⁴*Ibid.*, Mar. 5, 1926. This article is well worth reading today. It was unsigned, listed simply as "Special to the New York Times." Certainly, the author was someone who knew Mr. Coolidge well or had access to someone who did.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE OF THE CALVIN COOLIDGE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION, INC.

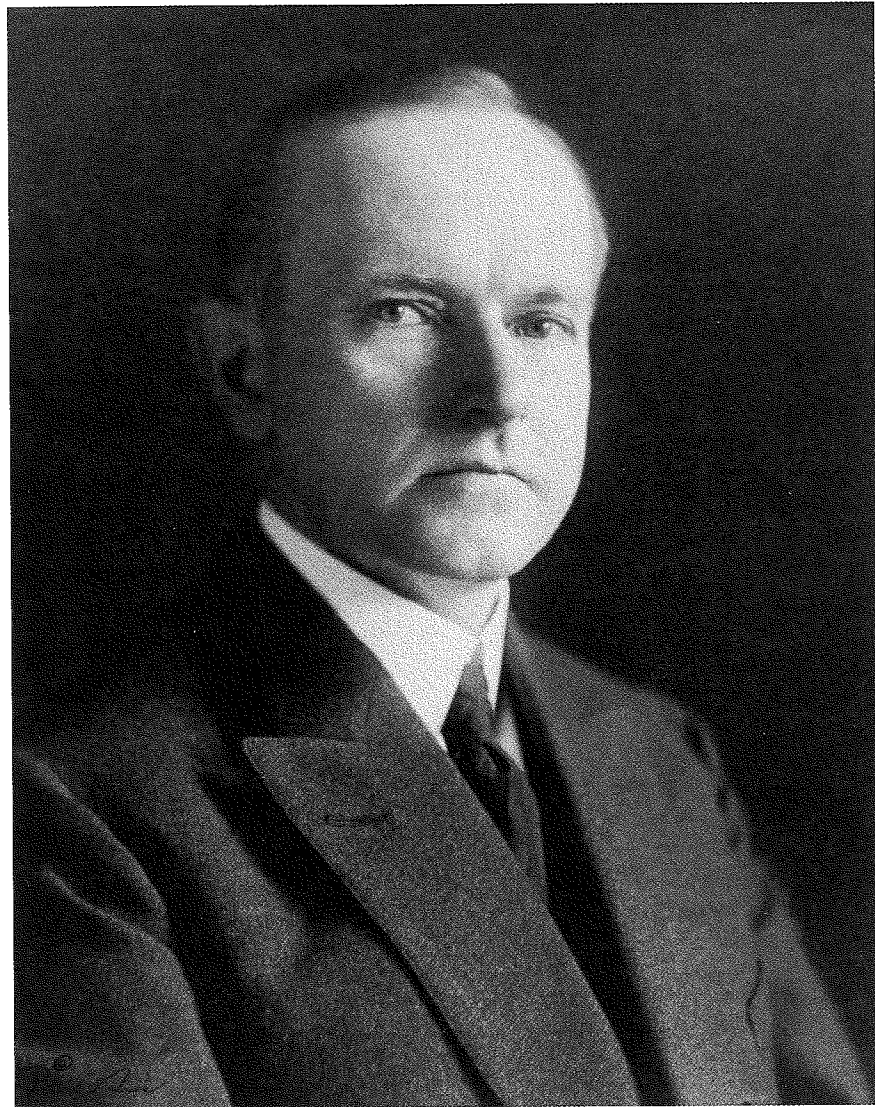
The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation was established in 1960 as a nonprofit educational organization. The Foundation's membership is over 800 individuals of every stripe and all political parties from throughout the nation who recognize the sterling character and remarkable accomplishments of President Coolidge and who work together to preserve the memory of his life and career. The mission of the Coolidge Foundation is: "To increase understanding of the life, ideas, values and times of Calvin Coolidge."

Through educational programs, publications, public presentations and preservation of historical collections, the Foundation strives to present a balanced portrait of Calvin Coolidge.

In addition to initiating its own activities, the Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation cooperates fully with the efforts of other groups and individuals having special Coolidge interests, gathering and disseminating information about their activities and participating in them whenever appropriate. The Coolidge Foundation owns and maintains the Union Christian Church at the Presidential Site. The Coolidge Foundation collects and documents memorabilia of President Calvin Coolidge and his family. The Foundation encourages and assists the Division for Historic Preservation at the Plymouth Notch Site.

AN INVITATION

As the only membership organization devoted to President Coolidge, the Coolidge Foundation warmly welcomes new members. For information on membership, contributions, publications and public events, please write to The Calvin Coolidge Memorial Foundation, P. O. Box 97, Plymouth Notch, Vermont 05056.



President Calvin Coolidge
(1923-1929)