



*The Real
Calvin Coolidge*

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Fran DeSimone Becque is the Archivist and Director of Fraternity Education for the Pi Beta Phi Fraternity with its headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri. Fran is based in Carbondale, Illinois and has just completed her dissertation for Southern Illinois University. She traveled to Northampton, MA to present many of the Pi Beta Phi materials on Grace Coolidge in an exhibit for the Coolidge Foundation Symposium on Grace Coolidge in 1999.

In this issue of the Real Calvin Coolidge, Ms. Becque describes the involvement of Grace Anna Goodhue in the Pi Beta Phi Fraternity. Miss Goodhue (to become Mrs. Calvin Coolidge) was a founding member of the University of Vermont chapter of Pi Beta Phi in 1898. Ms. Becque traces Miss Goodhue and her life at the University of Vermont and then shows how she moved to wider horizons. Perhaps the highpoint of this Pi Beta Phi history is the unveiling of Mrs. Coolidge's portrait by Howard Chandler Christy by a gathering of 1,300 sorority sisters in the White House. Resplendent First Lady Grace Coolidge is wearing her fraternity pin in the portrait!

The correspondence of sorority sisters beginning in 1915 in California is also important for that gives historians a glimpse of Grace Coolidge's life through these "Round Robin" letters saved by her sisters. Mrs. Coolidge's first letter from the White House is one to her sisters in which she calls herself "Alice in Wonderland or Babe in the Woods." Mrs. Coolidge continued to write her sisters into the 1950's.

The Arrow, the fraternity's magazine, is the source for much of Ms. Becque's material. We are all in her debt for her extensive research and writing from these archives.

The Communications Committee wishes to thank David Pietrusza for his editing and formatting of this article. We also appreciate Cyndy Bittering's managing of this issue from inception to completion.

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First Lady Grace Coolidge (1923-29), courtesy CCMF

Grace Coolidge: Pi Beta Phi

Fran DeSimone Becque



Grace Goodhue Coolidge, 1913
(Photo credit: Pi Beta Phi Archives)

Long before becoming First Lady, Grace Coolidge was a proud Pi Beta Phi and a member of whom the fraternity was most proud. Her dedication to Pi Beta Phi ideals shone through in all she did for the fraternity. The friendships she forged as a collegian grew as she became an alumna. The bonds of wine and silver blue, so important to fraternity life, were a part of her life from her days at the University of Vermont to her last days at Road Forks in Northampton. This is the story of Grace Coolidge: Pi Beta Phi.

Born on January 3, 1879, in Burlington, Vermont, Grace Anna Goodhue graduated in 1897 from Burlington High School, entering the University of Vermont in fall 1898. There, the dark-haired young extrovert befriended a group of women who sought to form a chapter of Pi Beta Phi. Founded on April 28, 1867, in Monmouth, Illinois, by twelve Monmouth College students, Pi Beta Phi patterned itself after local male fraternities. Originally known as I. C. Sorosis; it changed its name to its motto, the Greek letters "Pi Beta Phi" in 1888. A second chapter developed at the end of 1868. In 1892 Pi Beta Phi ventured east to Pennsylvania's Swarthmore College and then, in 1893, to Vermont's Middlebury College. Other eastern chapters followed: Syracuse in February 1896; the Massachusetts Alpha chapter at Boston University a month later.

The University of Vermont already featured two women's fraternities when Grace Goodhue arrived in 1898: Kappa Alpha Theta, founded in 1891, and Delta Delta Delta, founded in 1893. On November 24, 1898, she became a Pi Beta Phi Vermont Beta Chapter charter member, one of two freshmen mentioned in *The ARROW*, the national Pi Beta Phi magazine:



Grace Coolidge as she appeared in an issue of *The ARROW*



Grace Coolidge (center-right) at the 1915 Pi Beta Phi Convention



The University of Vermont's Pi Beta Phi Chapter. Grace Goodhue is front row, third from the left.



The 1901 Pi Beta Phi Syracuse Convention

"We hope to be quite largely represented at Syracuse, and are looking forward to it with a great deal of pleasure, but we cannot enjoy the anticipation to its fullest extent until the finals are safely over:"

Grace Goodhue
(Grace Goodhue is front row,
third from the left)

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Just when the Burlington girls first began to work upon . . . establishing a chapter of Pi Beta Phi is hard to determine, but we know that it was talked over among them and with the utmost enthusiasm during the greater part of the last college year. The idea originated with Ada Hurlburt [a charter member of Middlebury's chapter], who was initiated by Vermont Alpha, and it is to her untiring effort and firm perseverance that Vermont Beta owes its establishment. At first, there were only a few girls who cared to venture upon the new scheme, but the zeal of the few soon spread; and last spring found twelve willing workers holding their secret meetings. The girls hoped to have some decisive answer from the grand council before college closed for the summer, but this was not to be. They were to receive first an initiation of patience; and so the uncertainty dragged on. When fall came and Kappa Alpha Theta and Delta Delta Delta were pledging the new girls, our girls in their position of doubt had little to offer; but nevertheless added two to their list of new members.¹

Delegates from the Boston University and Middlebury chapters interviewed the women and reported favorably on their application. The installation, on Thanksgiving night, November 24, 1898, at Grace's parlor at 312 Maple Avenue, saw all but two members of the Middlebury College Vermont Alpha chapter arrive in the midst of a hard New England blizzard.

Shortly thereafter, Vermont Beta filed its first report in *The ARROW*: Our girls have been very busy with college work all the fall and winter, and have just finished with the terrible mid-year examinations, and are now beginning afresh on the last half year. The hard work during the week, however, only makes us appreciate the more our fraternity meetings on Saturday nights when we have such jolly and helpful times together. We have no chapter room this year, but we meet in turn at the homes of girls who live in town.²

Grace Goodhue, as Vermont Beta Corresponding Secretary, wrote the quarterly chapter letter to *The ARROW*:

It is with renewed spirit and energy that the corresponding secretary

of Vermont Beta writes her first chapter letter of the year to the ARROW, and this is due in a large measure to the visit we have just enjoyed from our Grand President (Elise Bradford). She left us this morning for Syracuse and it was with sincere regret that we bade her good-bye. Her visit was a means of great inspiration to one and all of our eleven members and has spurred us on to renewed efforts in behalf of our beloved fraternity. Miss Bradford came to us in the very midst of our "rushing season," for our college did not open until the twenty-sixth of September.

The freshmen girls are rather few in number this year, there being only fifteen in all, and several of them are specials.³ We have not any pledges to present you in this letter, but we hope to have several new sisters in time for the next.

We are happy and proud possessors of a nice large room this year, a studio which we have rented of an artist who is away for the winter. We have a private entrance and hall, so we consider ourselves quite nicely provided for. We received the new girls in our room last Thursday evening.

The November ARROW will find a cordial welcome here, for it will bring us news of our sister chapters' success in "rushing."

Vermont Beta sends glad and hearty greetings to all who are and who are to be her sisters in Pi Phi.⁴

Grace Anna Goodhue

In the January 1901 ARROW, Grace told of Vermont Beta's fall semester activities:

Christmas recess is near at hand and already some of the more fortunate students who have "saved their cuts" for this occasion may be seen, with their dress suit cases in hand, walking across the campus in the direction of the station.

Our annual initiation and banquet took place November the twenty-first, when we received four new girls into our circle, one sophomore, Frederika Abraham, who entered from Mt. Holyoke, and three freshmen, who are all classical students, Lillian Bean, Bertha Miller and Carrie Preston.

It is at times such as this that we find it so pleasant to be near a sister chapter, four girls from Vermont Alpha came up to help us. The

following Saturday night they held their banquet and three of our sisters went down.

After the Christmas recess we are intending to have a "Pi Phi Christmas" when each sister is to bring something for our rooms and something particularly nice for a "real swell cookie-shine."⁵ We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, hoping that nineteen hundred one may be one of the most prosperous years Pi Beta Phi has ever enjoyed.⁶

Grace Anna Goodhue

In Grace's letter covering the spring 1901 semester, she mentioned the examination on fraternity history and organization all chapters were to take:

It is with mingled feelings of relief and dread that the corresponding secretary of the Vermont Beta writes her letter for the Arrow; relief because mid-year "exams" are safely passed and dread because of our fraternity examination is now near at hand. Vermont Beta is very anxious to stand well this year and the freshmen are studying hard. They sighed very audibly and became "pictures of despair" when we told them the chapter roll must be learned.

As a chapter we have done nothing in the social line since our last letter. The Sophomore class has had its annual hop and there has been one Military Hop which those of our girls who attended reported highly enjoyable.

The girl's Glee Club is to give an opera in the near future, entitled "The Dress Rehearsal," and the college men are working hard preparing for their play, "The Silent Woman," which is to be given April the fifteenth.

The Sophomore class has elected its "Ariel" board for next year, and one of our girls is the lady member of the board.

Vermont Beta sends love and best wishes to all of her Pi Phi sisters.⁷
Grace Anna Goodhue

Grace Goodhue's last chapter letter as Corresponding Secretary mentioned the upcoming 1901 Convention in Syracuse, New York:

Another year of college life has nearly passed. We shall soon scatter again for the summer, some of our number never to return again, as students, to their Alma Mater. We lose five girls this year, so that we are particularly sorrowful. Only one year more and all the charter members will have departed from the scenes of their college days and from active fraternity life. We have passed a quiet but very happy year together and the ten of us who will be left are anticipating another year of renewed life and energy inspired by the coming convention. We hope to be quite largely represented at Syracuse,⁸ and are looking forward to it with a great deal of pleasure, but we cannot enjoy the anticipation to its fullest extent until the finals are safely over.

Vermont Beta recently entertained her patronesses at afternoon tea, and we had a nice informal time together. There have been several social events lately among the college students, all highly enjoyable. During the last week there has been a tennis tournament here with Dartmouth, in which we won, and if our baseball had only been a little more successful we should be feeling in pretty good spirits. We wish to say to our Syracuse sisters that it is now our turn to offer congratulations to them and we do so most heartily, but with a rather forced smile.

Wishing you all a very pleasant summer, Vermont Beta sends love and kindest greetings.⁷

Grace Anna Goodhue

Grace Goodhue attended the Syracuse convention as chapter delegate. She voted on matters of fraternity importance and partook in social doings, attending a banquet at the local Alhambra Hotel. Every member wore a knot made of ribbon in the fraternity colors, wine and silver blue, with the state name and chapter name on one ribbon. Delegate duties include reporting back to her chapter on convention proceedings. The ARROW noted that the Vermont Beta delegate fulfilled them with her usual charm:

We have enjoyed very interesting tales about the convention from our

delegate Grace Goodhue, who has made us feel closer to all Pi Phi chapters. If only we all might have been there! . . . At the close of the college year our chapter held its annual banquet in the fraternity rooms. In spite of the feeling of sadness that would come with the thought of losing five seniors, we had the thoroughly good time that we always have at our spreads, having been made especially happy by the presence of two of our alumnae.¹⁰

Grace Goodhue spent four active years in chapter life. Founders' Day during her senior year featured a car ride to picturesque Red Rocks on Lake Champlain. "A jolly 'cookie-shine' at the home of one of our seniors, Grace Goodhue"¹¹ highlighted the return trip.

A Pi Beta in Northampton

After graduation, Grace Goodhue moved to Northampton, Massachusetts, to study to be a teacher at the Clarke School for the Deaf, a fact noted in the November 1902 ARROW Vermont Beta Personals section. Though now in Northampton, she still played a role in chapter life:

It seems queer not to see our seniors of last year here, but their places are being filled from the ranks of freshmen. . . . Thursday evening, October second, we gave a reception at the home of Grace Goodhue, one of our alumnae. Most of the freshmen and several of our patronesses were present and all seemed to enjoy the evening. . . .¹² We opened the term with a cookie-shine on August eleventh in honor of one of our last year graduates Grace Goodhue, . . . now a teacher in the Clarke Institute . . . This occasion brought together a number of our alumnae and all spent a very pleasant evening. . . .¹³

A fellow Vermonter lived next door to Grace's Clarke School residence. Legend holds she saw him shaving as she watered flowers outside his window. He wore a derby. Upon seeing a figure so attired she laughed but carried on watering the flowers. One can envision the scene as it may have happened. The two young people met and began to court. Although Calvin Coolidge's fraternity was misidentified as Delta Kappa Epsilon, a

marriage announcement appeared in *The ARROW*. Grace and Calvin, actually a Phi Gamma Delta, married on October 4, 1905. The announcement also noted, "They will reside at Northampton, Mass., where Mr. Coolidge practices law."¹⁴

Upon marrying, Mrs. Coolidge gave up teaching to begin a family. Two sons, John and Calvin, Jr., kept her busy. The Coolidges' home, a duplex at 21 Massasoit Street, became a regular meeting place for Pi Phis and in 1910 she became president of the recently organized Western Massachusetts Pi Beta Phi Alumnae Club.

The club, with members from a wide area, strove to "get the Pi Phis together!" Meetings were largely social in nature. "We have had thimble parties and luncheons and picnics; and it has been very pleasant indeed to meet the Pi Phis of other chapters." Club members in 1911 represented nine different chapters, living in eleven towns covering a radius of forty or fifty miles. "No two meetings have ever had the same people present. Sometimes we meet in one city, sometimes in another, usually in or near Springfield." *The ARROW* reported:

Two regular meetings have been held. The second one took place on April 16 . . . Ten Pi Phis enjoyed a delicious luncheon at "Boyden's" the famous lunch room, dear to the hearts of all Smith College girls, and afterwards were taken on a tour of inspection across the campus of Smith College. The business meeting was held later in the afternoon at the home of Mrs. Coolidge, the president of the club and the wife of the mayor of Northampton.

The third meeting, the last before the vacation season, was held on the top of Mt. Tom, during the afternoon and evening of May 21. Owing to the threatening weather, only seven members of the club were brave enough to gather on the mountain top but those felt repaid for their effort.

The business of the afternoon was a discussion of the topics to be considered at the Swarthmore Convention and the election of a new secretary. After the meeting which was held on the mountain side, the members adjourned to the piazza of the Summit House and ate their supper in cookie shine style.¹⁵

The July 1911 ARROW noted that "Mrs. Calvin Coolidge (Grace Goodhue, '02) president of the Western Massachusetts Alumnae Club, took part in an elaborate historical pageant given in Northampton, Mass, in June."¹⁶

A 1912 *ARROW* told of 1911-1912 Western Massachusetts Alumnae activities:

Mrs. Calvin Coolidge (Vt. B) was president. The most successful of the meetings was the one at which Miss Sarah Pomeroy gave us a talk on her trip abroad. She gave us several valuable suggestions on club matters and encouraged us to make the club useful.¹⁷

Mrs. Coolidge did not attend the 1912 Convention held at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, but it was there she began her career as an elected fraternity officer, being voted Vice President of Alpha Province, an area stretching from Toronto to Florida. *The ARROW* described her:

"Always full of enthusiasm for her fraternity, Mrs. Coolidge met with other loyal members in Springfield in 1909 and organized the Western Massachusetts alumnae club. The club when organized chose Mrs. Coolidge for its president, an office which she has held ever since. During the Easter recess last spring, Mrs. Coolidge accompanied the girls of the graduating class of the local high school to Washington as their chaperon. Mrs. Coolidge's many friends congratulate the fraternity upon having secured her services in this new capacity and are sure that she will prove herself capable and efficient."¹⁸

Although serving as a Province Vice President, overseeing several alumnae clubs, Mrs. Coolidge also served her own club as President:

This has been a very pleasant year for the Western Massachusetts Alumnae Club. We have had four meetings. The first one, in October,

was given up to reports of the Evanston Convention. This was held at the home of our president, Mrs. Calvin Coolidge (Grace Goodhue, VT. B), in Northampton. The Settlement School¹⁹ was the topic of our second meeting and the discussion proved very interesting as well as instructive. This meeting was also held with Mrs. Coolidge and occurred soon after the Christmas holiday.

While Mrs. Coolidge worked her way up the Pi Phi officer ladder, her husband made great strides in his political career. A 1917 ARROW noted, "An honor has to come Mrs. Calvin Coolidge . . . of Northampton, Mass., the Vice-president of Alpha Province. Her husband, at one time mayor of Northampton, is now in the Massachusetts Senate."²⁰

During this time, Mrs. Coolidge's friend Sarah Pomeroy edited The ARROW. No doubt she requested Mrs. Coolidge to write a lengthy article about Northampton's Municipal Theater.²¹

The 1915 Berkeley Convention and the Beginning of the Round Robins

In 1915 Pi Beta Phis across the country--including Grace's Western Massachusetts Alumnae Club--were excited about their national convention held in Berkeley, California. "We hope to derive much benefit from the (Berkeley) convention as Mrs. Calvin Coolidge . . . , Edith Baker (Missouri B, '10), Amy Wallon and Louise Richardson (Massachusetts A) will be there."²²

Louise Richardson wrote a first-hand account of the Boston-to-Berkeley train ride for the December 1915 ARROW, providing a glimpse of cross-country travel when rail transportation was king. The Massachusetts delegation first traveled to Chicago where the Convention attendees would board the "Pi Phi Special", ten chartered cars filled with Pi Phis bound for Berkeley:

June 30, 1915--It took a few minutes to make us feel really glad we

were all aboard and the one with a husband [most likely Grace], and the one with a sweetheart wished they had never started- but only for a short time for soon we began to eat . . . It was such fun squeezing into the limousine - that's the drawing room which three of the girls occupy; (we call it that on account of their flowers in the corners)--and trying to eat the contents of our big boxes. . . .

The girls who went to bed early missed it, for we did have a hilarious time in the "limousine" doing stunts and I laughed till I was tired. Our porter thinks we are a nuisance for I heard him mutter, "Women folks sit up too late. What do they have to talk so much for?"

July 1--I'm so excited that I can never follow the law of coherence! I'm on the Special and it has been a wonderful day - so wonderful that I can't believe it will last. But I must go back a bit first. This morning we wrote reams - when we were not talking. Our only excitement was when we had found we had lost the Vermont delegate. Through a mistake she had found a seat in the car back of us which to our surprise--and to her dismay--was switched off during the night to a different line. At nearly every station some of us would hop out, for we untraveled New Englanders wanted to see all we could. On one account we decided we had "nevermissitus" (accent on the fourth syllable).

I cannot realize I was in Chicago this noon. I always thought Boston immense, but it's nothing but a little town after all. On our arrival Miss Kate Miller met us and guided us to the C. & N. W. Station. . . I never felt so big in all my life as when I saw a huge placard announcing Pi Beta Phi headquarters in the station. I wished I had on an arrow a foot long so that every one could see that I belonged to that sign. Into Mr. Allen's office, where the greatest kindness was shown us, arrow-bedecked girls kept pouring, all smiling, all talking and all introducing themselves at once. There we were given reservations, marked these on our Pi Phi Special tags, left our bags and were piloted to the Chicago College Club rooms. Here we registered, met more college Pi Phis, had luncheon, heard Miss [May Lansfield] Keller [Grand President of Pi Beta Phi 1908-1918] speak, also the president of the College Club--a Pi Phi, and the president of the alumnae club, and had a chance to identify the active delegates. About 5:30 the clans began to gather for the Special and what a

crowd it was! Everybody was looking at us and wondering what the sign announcing our train could mean. When the train backed in bearing on the rear that big circular light with Pi Beta Phi Special in white on it we Ohed! and Ahed! and everybody gazed still more. We soon found our sections and at 6:05 mid picture-taking, the staring of the crowd, and the singing and cheering of the Evanston girls, we started westward. Sailing for Europe can be no more thrilling!

July 2--Denver. Had breakfast in the Omaha station and by doing so we missed meeting those Omaha Pi Phis whom everybody said were so splendid. But we didn't miss their gift - a big basket of mouth-melting home made candy for each car--tied with wine and blue. . . This afternoon Miss Pollard showed pictures and talked so interestingly to a few of us about the Settlement School that we were ready to go as teachers at once.

It did seem like a big house party this evening when nearly everybody in the seven cars squeezed into the observation car till there was not an available inch of room left. We sang and sang, and when we ran out of songs we all knew, some sang chapter songs.

July 3--Observation car. Leaving Glenwood Springs. I don't believe I can keep my eyes open long for I slept only from 11 to 4 last night, but I do not begrudge the loss of sleep. What a rush there was about 4:30 for breakfast! Pat's Lunch near the station at Colorado Springs did a flourishing business on dry sandwiches, weak coffee and poor fruit. It was a shame more people did not see our imposing parade of auto busses and pleasure cars. In our bus we were fortunate to have Sophie Woodman²³ who could give us all kinds of interesting information. My first view of Pike's Peak I shall never forget! And the strange grandeur of the Garden of the Gods! It was there that our bus was unruly and we had to get out and walk away. . . I did so want to stay longer at Manitou and Colorado Springs! From there on I sat glued to my chair as the wonders of the mountains appeared. At Canyon City we took open observation cars where we had unobstructed views of the Royal Gorge with its stupendous rock walls. Then late this afternoon came the canyon of the Grand with its windings and verdure.

The Glorious Fourth.²⁴ Crossing Salt Lake--We are in a truly Pi Phi train for every porter, brakeman, steward and waiter is decorated with a Pi Phi seal. They seem to enjoy the Special and are all so courteous - especially our Pullman conductor who is a great favorite. . . . At Helper, where two more engines were added to our train, we got out for ice cream cones and fruit again. Then at Top of the World we all sent cards home.

July 5--Midnight. Sigma Kappa House, Berkeley. I do not believe any crowd has ever had such a trip as we have had - wonderful country, luxurious train, splendid attendants, grand girls and a gorgeously good time every minute. There has been nothing but absolute harmony. I'm almost ready to say that this alone is worth the whole six weeks. . . . The friends we've made and the broader vision of Pi Phi I shall never forget. . . . If I live a century I'll be a better Pi Phi on account of this past week and never, never forget the Pi Beta Phi Special.

The Boston group visited the Pan-American exposition in San Francisco, took in the local sites in the Bay area, and planned to attend a house party thrown by Mrs. Perce H. Curtis in Glendale, California. At the convention Grace won election as Alpha Province president. She was talking with Sophie Woodman when a telegram arrived from Calvin announcing that he made up his mind to seek the lieutenant governorship; Mrs. Coolidge cut her trip short, returning to Massachusetts to help her husband campaign.

The Massachusetts Alphas who were at the Glendale House Party, along with Elizabeth Coates, a convention guide, started a Round Robin letter. Vermont Betas Edith Carpenter and Grace Coolidge joined soon afterward. All told, 14 Pi Phis participated in the Robin.

A Round Robin letter is a packet of letters-one from each participant, or "Robin," as participants were called. Letters were mailed from Robin to Robin, with the recipient taking out her own letter and replacing it with a new one. Through the forethought of one Robin, with Mrs. Coolidge's permission, some of Mrs. Coolidge's Robin letters exist today.

Mrs. Coolidge once wrote of how the Secret Service intercepted the Round Robin:

I must tell the story of one letter which went into their files. I am one of fifteen women belonging to the same college fraternity who have kept in circulation a round robin letter . . . It makes the rounds quite regularly, once in three months, and travels from coast to coast. Anyone who has ever seen a round robin knows what they all look like, for they have the same general appearance. Each contributor writes on paper of different size and color, some are written by hand, others are typewritten, and all together they present a strange appearance to one unaccustomed to them. In August, 1926, this round robin was reported missing for the first time, and inquiries were sent out. Each member was asked to make diligent search for the lost letter. Not until all others had reported did they appeal to me. Unable to locate it in my own files, I asked the Secret Service to have a look in theirs, and sure enough, there was the bird, looking very much bedraggled, duly numbered in blue and marked, "Seemingly silly letters"--and all written by college graduates of some years standing!²⁵

The Robins

Jennie B. Allyn, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated May 23, 1902. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa, graduated in 1904 with a Litt.B. and an M. A. in 1905.

Helen D. Barrett, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated December 4, 1897, graduated in 1901 with a B.A., elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Elizabeth A. Coates Theobald, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated November 11, 1898.

Blanche Charlton Curtis, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated November 19, 1904, graduated in 1908, elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

(Mary) Lillian Horne Bacon, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated December 13, 1902, graduated in 1906.

Emily C. Gordon McWade, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated February 18, 1910, graduated in 1912.

Anna Robinson Nickerson, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated November 3, 1899, graduated with an A.B. degree in 1901.

E. (Elizabeth) Louise Richardson, Massachusetts Alpha. Initiated February 20, 1901, graduated in 1904 with an A.B. degree.

Helen Richardson Corkum, Massachusetts Alpha. Louise Richardson's younger sister, initiated December 5, 1913.

Sarah Pomeroy Rugg, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated December 13, 1902. Boston University *Beacon* Editor-in-Chief, graduated with a B.A. in 1906 and a M.A. in 1909, studied at the University of London in 1910-1911 on a Pi Beta Phi Fellowship.

Gertrude Jackson Rhoades, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated November 14, 1908, graduated with an A.B. in 1912.

Amy L. Wallon, Massachusetts Alpha, initiated November 7, 1903, graduated in 1907.

Edith L. Carpenter, Vermont Beta, initiated November 24, 1898, graduated with a Ph.B. cum laude in 1900, elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Grace Goodhue Coolidge, Vermont Beta, initiated November 24, 1898, graduated in 1902.

In a time when few women went to college, the Robins were an educated group. Most graduated from college. Several went on to graduate work. Four were Phi Beta Kappa.

All were later employed, though most did not have to support themselves. Those not marrying spent their lives teaching. Those teaching included Jennie Allyn, Helen Barrett, Lillian Horne, Emily Gordon, Edith Carpenter, Amy Wallon, Louise

Richardson, and Grace Goodhue. But teaching was not the only Robin career. Elizabeth Coates served for a time as private secretary to a physician. From 1908-1910 Blanche Charlton worked for the Massachusetts Anti-Saloon League. Anna Robinson clerked for the Metropolitan Park Commission for part of 1902 and then in the State House until marrying in 1905. Sarah Pomeroy authored books and freelance articles.

Grace Coolidge's life as a political wife

Although Grace was no longer a fraternity officer, The ARROW frequently mentioned her regarding alumnae activity, "Mrs. Calvin Coolidge . . . is receiving hearty congratulations and good wishes because her husband has just been elected Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts by an overwhelming majority."²⁶

The Western Massachusetts Alumnae Club celebrated the 1916 Founders' Day with a luncheon in Springfield:

The guest of honor . . . was Edith Gates, Vermont B, the daughter of Governor Gates of Vermont. This might have well been called a gubernatorial party, for one of our own members present was Grace Goodhue Coolidge, the wife of Massachusetts' Lieutenant Governor."²⁷

The March 1918 ARROW mentioned that "Mrs. Calvin Coolidge . . . wife of the lieutenant governor of Massachusetts, has recently visited her parents in Burlington."²⁸ The next issue gave news of the Western Massachusetts Alumnae Club, "Our first meeting of the season was held November 3 . . . We were glad to have with us again, after several months' absence, our Lieutenant-Governor's wife, Mrs. Calvin Coolidge . . ."²⁹

"Mrs. Calvin Coolidge . . . is having a busy social season, as wife of the Governor of Massachusetts," noted a Vermont Beta personals entry in the March 1919 ARROW and quoted the Springfield Republican about

Inauguration Day festivities.³⁰ Later that year the Western Massachusetts Alumnae club boasted of:

considerable pride . . . in the fact that Mrs. Calvin Coolidge . . . one of the most active in the organization of the club and an efficient and popular president of it for several years, is now the "first lady" of the state, her husband having been inaugurated as Governor of Massachusetts in January.³¹

Her own chapter showed its pride: "As Governor Coolidge is to be the Commencement orator this year, we hope to have his wife (Grace Goodhue, '02) with us for our June spread."³²

The December 1920 ARROW's lead article, "Our next vice president and his wife" told about Mrs. Coolidge's fraternity service, noting she "has a wide acquaintance throughout the fraternity and every Pi Beta Phi wishes her good fortune as she enters upon her new responsibilities in Washington."³³

The Boston Alumnae Club, to which several Robins belonged, honored Mrs. Coolidge with a large Panhellenic tea at the College Club on the Saturday preceding the election. The ARROW printed a verbatim account from a Boston paper:

Mrs. Calvin Coolidge . . . was assisted in receiving by Miss Bertha Carr, president of the Boston Alumnae Club, and by three national officers of the fraternity: Mrs. David Nickerson . . ., Mrs. Francis Rugg . . . and Miss Jennie B. Allyn . . . Rena Bisbee, Vermont A and Martha Luther, Massachusetts A, who assisted at Mrs. Coolidge's initiation, were both present.

Each of the eighteen national Greek-letter fraternities associated in the National Panhellenic Congress was represented, several by national officers, and the formal programme included short addresses by each of these special guests in the social and philanthropic work of her own organization. Miss Edna Holmes of Melrose gave vocal solos and there were orchestral selections. . . . Previous to the

tea Mrs. David Nickerson and Mrs. Francis Rugg gave a luncheon in honor of Mrs. Coolidge at the College Club. The guests . . . all . . . traveled together on a special train . . . in the summer of 1915 [to] Berkeley, California. This is the third reunion [of] the fellow-travelers . . .³⁴

The New York Republican Women's State Executive Committee gave a tea on October 4 (the Coolidge's wedding anniversary) at the Hotel Vanderbilt, New York:

Members of the New York Alumnae Club were invited to meet Mrs. Coolidge . . . Mrs. Coolidge's charming personality impressed all, and the group of Pi Phis present was greatly pleased when she was able to withdraw for a short time from the general reception and talk with them in a more intimate manner.

After the election, the Washington, D.C. Alumnae Club welcomed Mrs. Coolidge with a tea in her honor. Over 200 local Pi Phis attended. May Brodhead Wallace, an Iowa State Pi Beta Phi alumna, wife of Henry Wallace, the Secretary of Agriculture, and their daughter Ruth Wallace, a Pi Phi at the University of Iowa and Goucher College were also in the receiving line.³⁵

The alumnae club that Mrs. Coolidge had a part in founding was very proud of her new role:

We, as a club, have taken particular interest and pride in the election of Governor Calvin Coolidge to the Vice-Presidency of the United States. Mrs. Coolidge . . . was one of the founders and the first president of our club, and reports of her share in the social life of Washington are vividly illuminated for us by our loving memories of her charming personality.³⁶

A photo of Mrs. Coolidge knitting was included in the June 1921 ARROW in a section entitled "Pi Phis in the Public Eye." The caption read:

The wife of the Vice-President to the United States is an expert needlewoman and her fingers are rarely idle. At the Republican State Convention held in Boston last September, many interested glances followed the eyes of the Governor of Massachusetts as he looked frequently from his seat on the stage toward a quiet corner in the gallery where sat his wife, a most attentive listener, while her knitting needle flew. Knitting in public is not a pose with her for it has been her custom for years to fill all odd minutes with this work. She learned to use the needles when a little girl and has perfected herself in the art by always knitting winter stockings for her boys. Consequently her personal friends regard this photograph as very characteristic.³⁷

The June 1922 ARROW noted a *Christian Science Monitor* article that described Mrs. Coolidge as:

one of the most popular women in the Washington official set. . . . The second lady of the land is about as far removed from the stereotyped conception of an austere New Englander as could easily be imagined. Authorities who keep tab on such things say she knows more people by name than any other woman in Washington.³⁸

Vice President Coolidge became President Coolidge upon the untimely death of Warren G. Harding. Mrs. Coolidge wrote her Round Robin friends a letter after spending her first night in the White House:

Tuesday Aug. 21, 1923
The White House Washington

All you dear Brood,

I don't know where the Robin has been since Amy sent it to me but I suppose it may have gone to Northampton and roosted a spell before it resumed its flight. Anyhow, it lighted on its perch here at the Willard last Saturday. I have held it until the third day because I thought maybe you'd all like my contribution to be the first letter I wrote in the White House. Just now it occurred to me that I would

begin my letter here in the only home I have known in Washington, take it with me as I go and finish it in that great white house on Pennsylvania Ave.--one which must now become my home to me for a year and a half. I wish I could tell you all that is in my heart at this moment-but there is so much that even I am bewildered. I want you all just love me and pray for me.

Wednesday morning in the White House. 9 o'clock.

Good morning to you all. Alice in Wonderland or Babe in the Woods--however you wish to regard me-I'm here and nothing has happened to me. I wish I could describe my varied sensations as we came in and took up our residence here. Our first meal was dinner last night at 7:30. Mr. Stearns was our only guest. Mrs. Stearns had to go home last Thursday but she came back last night and arrived this morning. I think likely they will spend the night and be here for a few days.

I must not tarry longer writing to you now but I send you all my love and I hope Robin will find his way in many times during the year and a half.

One of the Brood, (signed) Grace

With the death of Warren G. Harding and the swearing in of Calvin Coolidge as President of the United States, a fraternity first occurred. The nation had its first Greek letter society member First Couple. The December 1923 ARROW highlighted this fact:

Both Phi Gamma Delta and Pi Beta Phi are indebted to President and Mrs. Coolidge not simply for reflected glory but for the earnest enthusiasm and constructive aid which they have given their respective organizations during the past. President Coolidge has not merely assisted his "Fiji" brothers with advice but was one of two men who negotiated a loan of \$2,000 in order to help his chapter buy a lot when they most needed substantial aid. Mrs. Coolidge has given years of her life to unselfish service in various fraternity offices. "Youthfulness, cheerfulness and friendliness," says a recent writer

for the newspapers, "are three of the most evident characteristics of Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, the new First Lady of the land, whom it has been repeated time and again by all circles of national society everybody likes." Mrs. Coolidge is probably the youngest mistress of the White House since the days of Mrs. Grover Cleveland. She is fond of society, dancing and seeing that other people have a good time. She has always said that she loves people-meaning the whole human race-and that people are her favorite books from which she gets both recreation and knowledge.

It has been many years since a woman has entered the White House as well acquainted with the wives and families, not only of the officials of the nations and diplomatic corps, but Washington society in general, as Mrs. Coolidge.

As the wife of the Vice President, no matter how busy she was Mrs. Coolidge never forgot little courtesies to her friends, such as a little token on their birthdays or a telephone call to inquire about their welfare. When friends from Northampton or Boston come to Washington, they received exactly the same welcome in the suite in their hotel as on the veranda or the Northampton home. President and Mrs. Coolidge have two sons, Calvin, Jr., and John B. [sic], real boys, and who are now away attending school.³⁹

The National Panhellenic Congress, the umbrella organization for college women's fraternities and sororities, met in Boston in October 1923. Among the Congress's actions was this telegram to Mrs. Coolidge, "The Eighteenth National Panhellenic Congress representing 150,000 Sorority Women in session at the Parker House, Boston, Mass. sends greetings and best wishes to you as the first Sorority Woman to grace the White House."⁴⁰

The 1924 Pi Beta Phi Eastern Conference

The March 1924 ARROW offered Pi Phis the opportunity to visit the District of Columbia and partake in a historic event, the presentation to the White House of Howard Chandler Christy's portrait of Grace Coolidge. The event, Pi Beta Phi's Eastern Conference, was an unquali-

fied success. Anna Robinson Nickerson played an integral role in planning the conference. The June 1924 ARROW provided this background:

The Presentation of the Portrait of Mrs. Coolidge--In the fall of 1923, when in a letter to Anna Robinson Nickerson, Grand Vice President, Katherine Tower Barnes, Michigan B, broached the idea of presenting to the White House a portrait of Mrs. Coolidge, there began a delightful new chapter in Pi Beta Phi history. It culminated on April 11 in the now nation-heralded presentation to the White House of the beautiful portrait of our First Lady.

Mrs. Nickerson took up the idea with enthusiasm, presented it to the other members of the Grand Council who unanimously voted for it . . . Because Mrs. Nickerson has long been a personal friend of Mrs. Coolidge, she was able to assist wonderfully in this fraternity project. She wrote to Mrs. Coolidge that Pi Beta Phi would be proud to present a portrait of the first wearer of the golden arrow to become the First Lady of the Land. Upon hearing that "Mrs. Coolidge would be deeply touched and greatly pleased to receive such a mark of affection and recognition from her college fraternity," Mrs. Nickerson wrote immediately to May Brodhead Wallace for suggestions as to artists and other details.

Mrs. Wallace at once talked the matter over with Mrs. Coolidge and found that at that time Mr. and Mrs. Howard Chandler Christy were guests at the White House as he was painting portraits of the President and Mrs. Coolidge. Mrs. Wallace had a conference with Mrs. Christy who at once became heartily interested; and later with Mr. Christy and arrangements were made for Pi Beta Phi to purchase the portrait of Mrs. Coolidge.

Information was prepared under the supervision of Mrs. Nickerson and sent to every club and chapter in order that every individual Pi Phi might . . . help in the purchase of the portrait.

The Pi Beta Phi Eastern Conference, held in Washington, D.C., April 11-12, 1924, was the largest gathering of fraternity women ever held, according to The ARROW:

On Thursday morning, when the influx of Pi Phis began, it was clear that the list of 800 reservations would not be adequate, and before

the conference closed, approximately 1350 wearers of the arrow, from every state . . . , were in the capital. With an ease and swiftness remarked by the manager of the Willard Hotel . . . the Washington Alumnae Committee . . . enlarged its arrangements, greeted its guests, validated tickets, arranged accommodations, registered and gave badges to visitors, and still had time to give attention to individual needs. It was discovered that the New Willard, heretofore able to accommodate any banquet in Washington, would not be able to serve every one on Saturday evening. In a day a second banquet at the Raleigh, with identical menu and program was arranged, from which the guests were to adjourn for the speeches and ceremonies at the Willard.

Registration and a continuous reunion . . . were held in the spacious red room of the Willard, where organ concerts were given each afternoon. On the tenth floor the ball room served as the conference hall. At the south end an exhibit of Settlement School products was shown . . . , and the Grace Coolidge portraits were sold for the benefit of the School.

The festivities began on Thursday evening, when the Red Room at the Willard was crowded by incoming Pi Phis, and old friends met again. . . .

The Chicago Alumnae Club and Northwestern University, Illinois E, presented a special radio program. The manager of Kathryn Browne, Illinois Z, set aside the ruling against broadcasting by Grand Opera stars, so that she might sing fraternity songs. From Station WHG Chicago, she sang Speed Thee, My Arrow and The Pi Phi Anthem. . . Miss Brown wrote to Mrs. Coolidge that the words of her solo were greetings of the West to their sister, the First Lady.

The Banquet-- . . . was held in the large ball room of the Willard Hotel at seven-thirty, Saturday evening, April 12, with 950 Pi Beta Phis as guests. . . . at the Raleigh Hotel [held] another 150. After dinner . . . the guests at the Raleigh came to the Willard for the program.

The Presentation of the Portrait of Mrs. Coolidge--Would that every member of Pi Beta Phi might have assembled a famous Peacock Alley of the Willard Hotel at four on the afternoon of April 11, en route to the White House. . . .

The 1300 persons, including 100 Pi Beta Phi mothers and honored guests, were welcomed through the east entrance of the White House, passing on the way, the lawns of the White House, lovely with magnolias, pansies, jonquils, and crocus. They represented a far larger group, each of whom had a part in the gift.

The guests assembled in the historic East Room, forming a semi-circle about the panel on the west wall, where hung the curtains, in wine red velvet, with cords of silver blue, which covered the portrait. The presentation party was assembled in the Green Room. Promptly at four-thirty a section of the Marine Band began to play, announcing the opening of the simple ceremony. The presentation group, led by Miss Onken and Mrs. Nickerson, came first from the Green Room, taking their places on the inner side of the circle, facing the portrait. On either side of the portrait stood the two active girls who were to draw the curtains.

Through the double doorway appeared the Army, Naval, and Marine Aides to the president. With the Senior Aides as escort, came Grace Coolidge, . . . She wore a soft grey georgette crepe afternoon dress trimmed with crystal, and, as jewels, a diamond eagle on her shoulder, a chain with a crystal pendant, a gold bracelet, her wedding ring, and the diamond studded arrow which had been presented the day before by a group of personal friends in Pi Beta Phi.⁴¹ Wonderfully slim and straight, with arms at her side, she stood very still through the entire ceremony, except for a constant play of understanding appreciation, which lighted her expressive face.

Mrs. Nickerson . . . introduced first, Miss Onken, who said: "For the first time our Nation has as its First Lady a member of a national college fraternity. From the days of Martha Washington until now, never has it had as the wife of its President a woman more universally admired and loved. It seems distinctly fitting that to Pi Beta Phi, the first national college fraternity for women, the first to organize its alumnae, the first to adopt a big national altruistic work, and the first to instigate many of today's accepted standard lines of development, has come the signal honor of claiming as its own Grace Goodhue Coolidge, First Lady of the Land. . . .

As Grand President of Pi Beta Phi, it is an exceedingly great pleasure and privilege to present to the White House in the name of the

Fraternity and as an expression of its pride and affection this beautiful portrait of Grace Goodhue Coolidge . . . who has brought honor to her fraternity, not only through the distinguished position which she now fills so graciously and so well, but also through her life which has ever made apparent her faithfulness to the pledges of loyalty, service, and noble womanhood made by her to Pi Beta Phi." [Representatives from Michigan Beta and Vermont Beta] drew the silver blue cords, the heavy wine-red curtains parted, and the portrait was revealed.

Mrs. Coolidge stands on the White House lawn, with the White House collie, Rob Roy, by her side, and the south front of the Executive Mansion in the background. The long line of her brilliant red velvet evening gown is unbroken from shoulder to hem, save by the golden arrow. About her shoulders floats a gauze scarf. The artist has caught in a most successful way the poise, youthfulness, and vivid personality of the First Lady of the Land.

An oblong brass plate at the base of the frame bears this inscription in black: Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, Wife of the 30th President, Painted by Howard Chandler Christy, Presented by Pi Beta Phi Fraternity.

The Army Aide, Colonel Clearance O. Sherrill, Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds and Custodian of the White House, received the picture for the United States. He said: "The graceful act of Pi Beta Phi Fraternity commemorated here today is the presentation of this portrait of Mrs. Coolidge to the White House to remain here for all time, for the present and future generations to admire, is a fitting occasion for our gratification that the official collection of the White House is to be thus assured of a splendid portrait of Mrs. Coolidge to add to the ones that are here now." Then, as Mrs. Nickerson put it, to express a little of what was in their hearts, the whole assemblage, with Mrs. Coolidge joining as heartily as the rest, sang together the Pi Beta Phi Anthem, which will hold for every person present a new significance.

The Marine Band began to play again, while Mrs. Coolidge, accompanied by the ranking Aides, moved to the Blue Room. The guests formed in a single line and were presented by name to Mrs. Coolidge. To each she gave a smile, and individual word of greeting, and a warm handshake.

The lower floors were thrown open, so that every person there had an opportunity to see the state rooms. At the conclusion of the reception, the guests were welcomed into the gardens. Here the entire group, with Mrs. Coolidge the central figure, was photographed, as well as Vermont B, her own chapter.

Reluctantly, Pi Beta Phi went away, taking the memory of two pictures, one of the portrait, and the other the living, breathing original, whose spiritual beauty no artist can paint.

Mr. Christy and the Portrait--Busy with a group portrait, at his interesting New York studio, Howard Chandler Christy stopped his brush to talk about painting the wife of the President. "Photographs of Mrs. Coolidge seldom do her justice," he said. "for she has an alertness that the camera cannot often portray. She radiates energy. . . .The line of tree and scarf, the upturned face of the collie, lead toward her face. I have not portrayed her, for the sake of effect, more or less slender than she seemed to me, but her slim straightness is just as I saw it. Her erectness and poise, her slender strong arm, her straightforward gaze, with a sparkle in her hazel eyes - these evidences of youthfulness with which one is impressed on the first meeting, I have endeavored to retain."

Pi Phi Mirrors of Washington--As the First Lady of the Land left the White House grounds after the picture, she turned at the doorway, and said to the girls near her, "This is the loveliest thing I have seen here. I should like to keep you here always, to make beautiful the White House lawn." . . .

The Pi Phis who left the White House by the front door brushed close to four men walking rapidly up the curving path to the north portico. So quickly did it happen that they were almost past before some one discovered that the President was returning from an afternoon walk.⁴²

Mrs. Coolidge's chapter and the Burlington Alumnae Club took pride in the love and recognition showered upon one of their own:

We held an enthusiastic celebration of the 25th anniversary of the



Photo Credit: The White House Collection

founding of Vermont B in the fall. . . .Wine carnations, the gift of Grace Goodhue Coolidge, were the decorations used in the fraternity rooms and on the banquet tables.

The big interest in the last few weeks has been the Washington Conference and our share in the gift of Mrs. Coolidge's picture presented to the White House. Our peculiar pride in and love for her as our own Grace Goodhue, is great indeed.⁴³

The ARROW included a print of the portrait in every issue--and no wonder: Mrs. Coolidge had after all requested Christy to paint a gold arrow Phi Beta pin on her red gown. The dress color in the prints was more orange red than in the actual portrait. This advertisement gave the details, "Photographs of the portrait of Grace Goodhue Coolidge are far lovelier than the print which appears in this issue of the ARROW. The photographs which are 13x7 inches can be procured from Mrs. David Nickerson for \$2.00 each. Autographed copies of the portrait photograph may be procured for \$3.00. Pi Phis

may take orders for these from their friends." Proceeds from photograph sales benefited the Settlement School library.⁴⁴

The Pi Phis' visit to the White House was happy and memorable. In the Round Robin letter Mrs. Coolidge wrote later in 1924, she shared a much more sorrowful event, the death of her son Calvin:

White House

Saturday

Dear Robins on the Wing:

I thus address you feelingly and enviously because you can all come and go as you will. When I wrote the word I was looking out the window and wishing I could steal away without being seen and have one day unaccompanied just to go about unrecognized all by myself. The poor Prince! Someday I will again be a humble citizen while he can never be just himself. . . . I want to say a word in appreciation of all your kind words of sympathy. I did not try to reply except by the little card but knew you would understand. I knew that the Robin would come along before a great while and that I could then tell you how deeply I felt your loving sympathy. No longer can we see and touch Calvin but in a very real sense he is with us and has his place in our family circle. Two years ago this year he taught me how to swim - not because I wanted to learn but just because he wanted to teach me. He put his hand under my chin and I just had to do my best to please him. I'll never forget how happy he was when I took a few strokes, and heard his encouraging voice and I am not going to disappoint him.

Honorary Degree from Boston University

Grace Coolidge and Edith Carpenter were the only Robins to not attend Boston University. Boston University conferred an honorary degree upon Mrs. Coolidge and one can try to guess the influence the Robins had upon their alma mater's decision. The ARROW reported:

Grace Goodhue Coolidge, student, university graduate, teacher, daughter, wife, mother, in every station exemplifying the finer qual-

ities of mind and heart we most admire in women; your own works praise you; you have gained the confidence, admiration and love of the American people. Upon the recombination of the university council I have been authorized by the Board of Trustees of Boston University to admit you to the degree of Doctor of Laws.

With these words, President Lemuel H. Murlin of Boston University on December 12, conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws upon Grace Goodhue Coolidge . . . The exercise . . . took place in the Old South Church to which 1100 guests had been invited. Among the guests were several prominent members of Pi Beta Phi.

After President Murlin had characterized Mrs. Coolidge as "exemplifying the finer qualities of heart and mind we most admire in women," and the purple velvet hood symbolic of the doctorate was being adjusted about her shoulders, the audience burst into a storm of applause.⁴⁵

Mrs. Coolidge's Round Robin letter told friends about the presentation of the degree:

The White House

Dear Birdies:

You have to sit and pay attention to me now that I am a full-fledged alumna of your own university. Having felt like a rank outsider when the invitation came from Mr. Murlin to be present at the induction into office of the first Dean of Women and to receive at his hands an honorary degree. But, I want to tell you that I got all wobbly when he announced the magnitude of the degree as I stood before him there in the New Old South Meeting house. And I have not yet recovered. It never occurred to me that I should rise to the heights of an L.L.D. I had not given any consideration to the particular degree that would be bestowed upon me but in thinking it over afterwards I decided I very likely expected a new one to be created to fit my case and it seemed to me that D.D. would have been a good one, standing not for Doctor of Divinity, oh no, but for Doctor of Domesticity! The fleeting glimpse of about half our little band was very tantalizing at the tea which followed that induction ceremonies but you who were there will never know how good you looked to me as you gathered on the balcony. My life now seems made of tantalizing glimpses. It is terrible to have to spread out so thin.

Mrs. Coolidge continued to remember her chapter. For the 1926 Commencement, she presented the chapter with a beautiful autographed portrait.⁴⁶ The opening of the 1928 semester saw distinguished visitors in Burlington:

President and Mrs. Calvin Coolidge were in the city for an hour, making the brief stop to pay homage at Mrs. Coolidge's father's grave, and to revisit the scenes of her youth. The party motored by the university campus, while thousands of students and citizens stood by. Mrs. Coolidge was a graduate of the University of Vermont and a member of Vermont B. The chapter presented her with flowers at the train.⁴⁷

Pi Phis nationwide honored the First Lady and her connection to the fraternity:

The Pi Beta Phis of Kansas City will long remember Armistice Day of 1926, as it brought to the city for the dedication of its memorial, President and Mrs. Coolidge. Since their stay was only a few hours duration it was impossible for the Pi Phis to obtain any time for the entertainment of Mrs. Coolidge. Anxious, however, to do something to express their admiration and love for her, and feeling that flowers would bring only a moment's pleasure and would then be lost to her in the myriads of other bouquets, these Pi Phis decided that a gift from Settlement School at Gatlinburg, Tenn., might bring her lasting pleasure.

When this idea was transmitted to Miss Evelyn Bishop, Head Resident at the School, it received her hearty endorsement and she straightway set the School's most expert weaver, Edna McCarter, a girl of fifteen, to work upon the weaving of a lovely dress pattern in soft cream wool, with a deep clock pattern of self color. The material arrived in Kansas City just a day before the time for its presentation and was greatly admired by those who had a glimpse of it were, with a picture of the young weaver at her loom, it went into its snowy wrappings, and was bound about with ties of wine and blue. . . Several days after the presentation a most cordial note of thanks came from Mrs. Coolidge to the Kansas Alumnae Club.⁴⁸

In announcing the Coolidge Fund for the Clarke School for the Deaf, the ARROW reprinted a comment from the *New York Herald* and then added:

Mrs. Coolidge long ago won all hearts by her natural grace and the flawless tact of her deportment as the mistress of the White House, the First Lady of the Land. Her buoyancy, her complete friendliness, her shining sincerity, the unfailing rightness of her bearing in every vicissitude of her high station have endeared the President's wife to Americans.

Perhaps, too, there is another source of satisfaction in Mrs. Coolidge's popularity and success. In American households without number are daughters with fine native qualities of upbringing, education, environment and social contact like those of Grace Goodhue. Their families may be proud to feel that Mrs. Coolidge is their true representative decorating and cheering the elevated sphere.⁴⁹

When Calvin Coolidge died in January 1932, one of the condolence letters Grace Coolidge held most dear came from Amy Onken, still grand president of Phi Beta. Grace responded, that her "two Calvins [were] now reunited in life everlasting."⁵⁰

During World War II a photo in *Banta's Greek Exchange* featured Mrs. Coolidge in front of a Northampton tearoom where she lunched with a group of Smith College Pi Phi Waves. She told her Robin friends about the lunch, giving a list of the chapter to which each Wave belonged.

Grace Goodhue Coolidge's loyalty and affection for Pi Beta Phi never faltered, never wavered. Neither did the organization's love for its most prominent alumna. As one of the nation's first Greek letter First Ladies, Grace Coolidge set a sterling example for all to follow.

NOTES

- 1 The ARROW, January 1899, p. 69-70.
- 2 The ARROW, April 1899.
- 3 Special students were not enrolled in the regular course of study.
- 4 The ARROW, November 1900.
- 5 A Cookie Shine is a Pi Phi tradition. It began as a "spread," a typical "everyone bring something to eat" party of the day. University of Kansas Chancellor John Fraser dubbed the event a "Cookie Shine" in the 1880s and the entire fraternity soon adopted the term and the tradition of the Cookie Shine.
- 6 The ARROW, January 1901.
- 7 The ARROW, April 1901.
- 8 Grace Goodhue was Vermont Beta's delegate to the Syracuse Convention.
- 9 The ARROW, July 1901.
- 10 The ARROW, November 1901.
- 11 The ARROW, July 1902.
- 12 The ARROW, November 1902.
- 13 The ARROW, July, 1903.
- 14 The ARROW, November 1905. Grace and Calvin were married in the same room of her parent's home that saw the founding of Pi Phi's Vermont Beta chapter (*Grace Coolidge and Her Era*, p. 5).
- 15 The ARROW, April 1910.
- 16 The ARROW, July 1911.
- 17 The ARROW, July 1912.
- 18 The ARROW, November 1912.
- 19 The Pi Beta Phi Settlement School located in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, was a result of legislation passed at the 1910 Swarthmore Convention that several of the Robins attended. The Settlement School opened in 1912 and educated the children of this impoverished area. Arrowcraft, a cottage industry using the alumnae clubs to sell native handicrafts made by the local residents, was an outgrowth of the Settlement School's mission.
- 20 The ARROW, March 1914.
- 21 The ARROW, December 1914.
- 22 The ARROW, April 1915. Calvin Coolidge had originally planned to accompany Grace Coolidge on this trip to the West Coast-to attend the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego. His having to remain in Massachusetts to arrange for his planned bid for the lieutenant-governorship cancelled his plans, however.
- 23 Sophie Parsons Woodman took many photographs of the trip and several photos appear in this ARROW article.
- 24 Calvin Coolidge's birthday was the fourth of July.
- 25 *Grace Coolidge: An Autobiography*, Wikander and Ferrell, Eds., 1992.
- 26 The ARROW, March 1916.
- 27 The ARROW, June 1916.
- 28 The ARROW, March 1918.
- 29 The ARROW, July 1918.
- 30 The ARROW, March 1919.
- 31 The ARROW, June 1919.
- 32 The ARROW, June 1920.
- 33 The ARROW, December 1920.
- 34 The ARROW, December 1920.
- 35 The ARROW, June 1921.
- 36 The ARROW, June 1921.
- 37 The ARROW, June 1921.
- 38 The ARROW, June 1922.
- 39 The ARROW, December 1923.
- 40 Proceedings of the 18th National Panhellenic Congress meeting, 1923
- 41 The Robins gave Grace the diamond arrow badge.
- 42 The ARROW, June 1924.
- 43 The ARROW, June 1924.
- 44 The ARROW, June 1924.
- 45 The ARROW, March 1925.
- 46 The ARROW, November 1926.
- 47 The ARROW, November 1928.
- 48 The ARROW, February 1927.
- 49 The ARROW, May 1929
- 50 *Grace Coolidge and Her Era*, p. 293